

## PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 40 deemed to have been moved.

### EXTERNAL AFFAIRS—SALE OF ARMS BY FRANCE TO SOUTH AFRICA—CANADIAN POSITION

**Mr. Heath Macquarrie (Hillsborough):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday I inquired of the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Sharp) concerning the apparently well-founded reports of new, large French sales of military aircraft to South Africa. Recalling that the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) had recently referred to the South African area as a potential Viet Nam, I asked what representations the government had made to the French government on this very important matter.

It was my impression that this country was resolutely opposed to trafficking in military arms; we have heard many proclamations by members of the government along these lines. Certainly the British Prime Minister and government learned by letter and otherwise about our viewing with alarm the proposed sale of military supplies to South Africa under the Simonstown agreement. I do not suggest that strong expression of views within the Commonwealth membership is improper or inappropriate, although the handing of the famous letter from Prime Minister to Prime Minister was something less than thoughtful diplomacy.

But it is not thoughtlessness that I complain about in the minister's answer. I am appalled at the distinction he made when he confessed that this government had not made representations to France against the sale of arms to South Africa. Only to Great Britain had such representations been made. These were made, in the minister's words, on the basis of "trying to avoid a rupture in the Commonwealth". I have no hesitation in proclaiming my belief that the Commonwealth is a valuable international institution, the breakup of which would not be a contributor to world peace. But, surely, trafficking in arms can be judged in a more direct and explicit way than by checking the international membership of the country engaged in this practice. Are we to believe that the sale of naval frigates by Great Britain is a more serious threat to world peace than the sale of 100 Mirage jets by France?

● (10:00 p.m.)

If the Canadian government sincerely believes that arms sales threaten world peace, they should say so, regardless of what state is playing the role of merchant of death. Latest statistics indicate that only the Soviet Union and the United States export more military equipment than France. But not a word, not even a letter, has been exchanged. We read about improving relations between Paris and Ottawa—and if anyone can help the

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cause, our most excellent ambassador can. Canada and France are charter members of the United Nations. We are in the Francophonic organization, and while that body is seized of cultural and technological issues, surely it should allow for freedom of expression on a bilateral basis on a matter of such frightful urgency.

The Secretary of State (Mr. Pelletier) was in Paris recently. He is a very important minister. Could he not have advised the French government about Canada's long-standing opposition to arms sales? It is hard to believe that this government can give its thoughts no tongue except when conversing with Whitehall. I hope the government will muster its courage and tell France, as it told Britain, that we view military merchandising as a deterrent to peace-making. I would not like it to appear that all the talk in the Far East recently about purity, and all the protestations, are mere hypocrisy. I hope we may soon hear of some consistency in respect of this very grave and frightening matter.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. André Ouellet (Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, while listening to the hon. member's remarks, I was wondering whether he was giving more importance to the sale of arms to South Africa than to the Commonwealth itself. Perhaps the translation was not accurate. This might be a thought that crossed his mind following a question that he asked also last week concerning the future of the Commonwealth and the possible withdrawal of Canada from it. That question had been transferred by the Speaker for debate at ten o'clock. I came here but the hon. member did not show up. Then, I asked myself if he had not completely forgotten his love affair with the Commonwealth and, listening to him tonight, I am inclined to ask if he has really abandoned all the respect and the love he had for the Commonwealth.

At any rate, Mr. Speaker, in brief I believe the hon. member's question should be dealt with in two ways: on the one hand, there can be no doubt of any kind as to the Canadian government's quite clear and straightforward stand on the sale of arms to South Africa. The Canadian government clearly expressed on several occasions its opposition to such a sale and the minister informed the House, in answer to the hon. member's question, that Canada has repeatedly expressed this point of view at the United Nations.

In regard to apartheid, I clarified the Canadian government's position during a debate at the United Nations General Assembly on December 8 last when I expressed the hope that all member countries, including of course France and all the other countries which sell arms to South Africa, would abide by this embargo.

The second point I would like to deal with concerns the hon. member's question: why did Canada not make direct representations to the French authorities. I wonder why the hon. member blames France rather than other coun-