

HOME-BUILDING CONTINUES TO RISE

Figures released recently by Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation show the rate of residential construction in Canada is continuing well ahead of the rate in 1968. During March, a total of 11,657 dwellings were started in urban centres, 33.4 percent above that in the same month the year before. All types of dwelling contributed to the increase, with starts of single-detached dwellings up by 24.6 per cent and apartments and other multiple dwellings up by 37.5 per cent.

When seasonal factors are taken into account, March activity for all areas, urban and rural, continued for the sixth consecutive month at a rate in excess of 200,000 units a year. For the first quarter of 1969, starts were at an annual rate of 261,400 units. This compares to the fourth-quarter rate in 1968 of 231,000 units.

Starts in urban centres during the first three months of the year totalled 33,945 dwelling units, some 11,000 units, or 47.4 percent more than the corresponding total in 1968.

CANADA'S FOREIGN POLICY AND NATO (Continued from P. 2)

will lead other countries to withdraw from NATO, I don't admit this. I don't admit that Europeans or even Americans won't follow their own wisdom, that they don't have their own foreign policy. And I don't admit that our friends and allies will be guided in their decisions and determined in their actions by what Canadians do, and if they think that we are doing the wrong thing that they will imitate us just because we have done it. I don't believe this. I believe that each country must have its own foreign policy. And in our case, where our contribution to Europe, I repeat, is marginal, but where we still believe that NATO is an important force in the world, we are entitled, we have a right to ask questions about our participation in NATO....

POLICY PRIORITIES

And NATO today - I am afraid, in the situation which we had reached, NATO had, in reality, determined all of our defence policy. We had no defence policy, so to speak, except that of NATO. And our defence policy had determined all of our foreign policy. And we had no foreign policy of any importance except that which flowed from NATO. And this is a false perspective for any country. It is a false perspective to have a military alliance determine your foreign policy. It should be your foreign policy which determines your military policy.

So all we have done - and it is pretty important - last week in Ottawa, was to stand the pyramid on its base. It was standing on its head. We have decided to review our foreign policy and to have a defence policy flow from that, and from the defence policy to decide which alliances we want to belong to, and how our defences should be deployed. And that is why we gave a series of four priorities. In our statement last week, we said that the first priority for Canadians was not NATO, important though it is, and we have said that we wanted to remain aligned in NATO with those countries who believe in deterring the Soviet aggression in Europe. But this is not our first priority. Our first priority in our defence policy is the protection of Canadian sovereignty, in all the dimensions that it means....

GENERAL POSITION

That is why last week, because of the deadlines, because there was a meeting of the foreign ministers of NATO countries in Washington, we had to then state our general position. And we did. We stated we were remaining in NATO but we would not be pressed into making decisions now about our contributions to NATO, which I repeat we will only make after our foreign policy has been determined over all. This is going on apace. We have made several announcements. We have talked about recognizing Peking; we have talked about our policy in South America; we have even talked about the Vatican to the scandal of a lot of people. We have talked of a lot of areas where we are reassessing our foreign policy. But until this policy has been presented, I repeat, to the Canadian people, we will not close our options and say that all of our military strength will be oriented towards NATO.

We have a right to ask questions of our allies. If they want to keep us on these terms we will be very happy because our friends in NATO we want to keep them. We want to continue dialoguing with them in the political sense. We want to keep these channels of communication open. We want to keep friends in Europe. But we don't want their military policy to determine our foreign policy. That's why we will ask questions. It's right now, I believe, that we ask questions of ourselves about NATO and we ask questions of our allies about NATO....

...I am not promising any revolutionary changes. There may be some and they may not be very great. But I say that whatever our contribution will be in a military sense will flow from our foreign policy. And that is the purpose that our Government, your Government, is pursuing in Ottawa. It is an attempt to re-define our policies in all spheres. We have done it in the cultural, in the constitutional, in the trade spheres. We are doing it in the area of our foreign policy and of our defence policy....