

HOUSE OF COMMONS

PROSPECTIVE DATE OF SUMMER RECESS

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Prime Minister whether the answer he gave a moment ago means that it is the government's intention that the house will adjourn on June 27 even though certain important business may not have been concluded?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Yes, Mr. Speaker, we will do all we can to adhere to that timetable. We realize, of course, that we cannot do the impossible, but this is still our intention. We still hope to adjourn at the end of June. We also hope the opposition parties will co-operate with us in pressing a lot of important legislation through the house by then, in spite of the time that was lost by opposition folly.

NATIONAL DEFENCE

NATO—REQUEST FOR REPORT ON DISCUSSIONS WITH ALLIES

Hon. J. A. MacLean (Malpeque): Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact the Minister of National Defence will by now have placed before the NATO ministers the proposals of the government as to the reduction of Canada's role in NATO, will the Prime Minister state to the house what the proposed reduction involves?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the minister indicated he would discuss this with the house when he returned on Monday. This is still the government's plan.

Mr. MacLean: Mr. Speaker, in view of the uncertainty that exists not only in the minds of the general public but among the members of the forces, will the Prime Minister give an indication as to whether or not it is true that the government intends to replace the air and mechanized brigades in Germany by a 4,000 man mobile force?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I suggest to the hon. member that it is not in order to ask simply whether a statement is true or inaccurate.

Mr. MacLean: Perhaps I might rephrase my question, Mr. Speaker. Let me ask the Prime Minister whether the reduction proposed will be as extreme as those speculated in the press?

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, it is difficult to know what might seem extreme in the minds of opposition members. I remember that when we announced the planned phased reduction, we were told it did not mean anything at all. Hon. members opposite will soon see if this means anything.

NATO—POSSIBLE CANADIAN INELIGIBILITY TO PARTICIPATE IN NUCLEAR PLANNING

Mr. Ray Perrault (Burnaby-Seymour): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Can the Prime Minister tell the house whether Canada's intended NATO plans will make this nation ineligible for membership in NATO's nuclear planning group?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, may I be permitted to answer this question? This allegation, made by others as well as the gentleman to whom the hon. member refers, is completely unfounded. NATO ministers in December, 1966, established two permanent nuclear planning and policymaking bodies. The first is called the nuclear defence affairs committee. It is a sub-committee of the defence planning committee. Membership is open to any interested country, whether it is nuclear or not. At present it has 12 members, Canada being one of them.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I had serious doubts about the question as asked by the hon. member. I took into account that I had ruled him out of order yesterday on a related question and allowed the new question today. But I have the impression that the minister is now making a statement of a nature that ought to be made on motions.

[Translation]

NATO—POSSIBILITY OF OTHER NATIONS REDUCING FORCES

Hon. Martial Asselin (Charlevoix): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a supplementary question to the Prime Minister.

In view of the government policy to reduce the size of its military contribution to NATO, I would like to know whether there are any indications to the effect that other NATO allied member countries are going to follow suit?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of that. Upon his return, the Minister of National Defence will undoubtedly tell us whether other NATO