

Oral Questions

NUCLEAR ARMAMENTS

PROPOSED DEPLOYMENT OF PERSHING II MISSILES IN WEST GERMANY

Mr. Paul E. McRae (Thunder Bay-Atikokan): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs or the Prime Minister, whichever would like to answer it. This year NATO Forces will be deploying 108 Pershing II missiles in West Germany. This missile is one which can deliver on a target 1,000 kilometres away in six minutes. There is no defence except launch on warning, and the Russians have indicated that that will be their defence.

I would ask the Minister what efforts we are making to persuade the Reagan Government to get down to serious bargaining before deployment, as part of the two-track proposal, in view of the fact that in the last week Eugene Rostow, a hawk, was fired and replaced by a super hawk named Kenneth Adelman, whom many Hon. Members here know. It looks as though there will be no serious effort to sit down and make a deal involving deployment unless that is done.

Mr. Shields: All the doves are in Russia!

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs): Madam Speaker, the Hon. Member began his question by saying that NATO intended to or would deploy Pershing II in western Europe this year. It would be my deepest wish that that deployment would not take place. That is why the NATO Alliance has offered to enter into negotiations with the Soviet Union, in order to ensure that the Pershing II would not be deployed and in order to remove the SS-20. It is therefore the view of the NATO Alliance that, if concrete results are obtained in the all-important negotiations, it would not be necessary to go ahead with the deployment of either the Cruise or the Pershing II. Therefore, as the Hon. Member knows, the two-track NATO decision which was taken in December, 1979, involves not only the possibility of deployment of new weapon systems, but also the necessity of serious negotiations.

In so far as the Government of Canada is concerned, we will do everything possible to ensure that the negotiations take place in good faith and that every serious proposal will be seriously examined. I can simply assure the Hon. Member—

Some Hon. Members: Time.

Mr. MacEachen:—that that is the attitude of the Government of Canada, and it is the one which was taken by the NATO Alliance in its last meeting in December.

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VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF REMOVAL OF SPOUSAL TAX EXEMPTION

Mr. Walter McLean (Waterloo): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State of Canada who,

in his role as Minister advocate for the voluntary sector, will be aware of the long-delayed release last week of Statistics Canada's selected financial statistics on charitable organizations based on a 1980 survey, which shows that the total economic activity of the voluntary sector amounted to \$11 billion in 1982, excluding universities and hospitals, or roughly 3 per cent of the country's gross national product. The Minister will also know that the recent proposals of his colleague, the Minister responsible for the status of women, have had a destabilizing effect on the voluntary sector. Will the Secretary of State tell the House what will be the financial implications of the proposed removal of the spousal tax exemption for the voluntary sector and its caring work?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Serge Joyal (Secretary of State): Madam Speaker, I am perfectly aware of the report made public by Statistics Canada. Here in Ottawa yesterday I met with the national representatives of the coalition of voluntary organizations in Canada. We reassessed the economic impact of the voluntary sector in Canada and agreed on a work schedule which, in the coming months, would enable us to review the legislation and the context within which the Canadian Government cooperates with the voluntary sector.

[*English*]

NECESSITY FOR TASK FORCE

Mr. Walter McLean (Waterloo): Madam Speaker, the question concerning the stability of the voluntary sector and its important input, as the Minister will know, is vitally important, given the situation in the country today.

On November 10 the Secretary of State told the National Conference on Philanthropy that he would seek Cabinet approval for the creation of a task force to study the financial and legal situation of the voluntary sector. He confirmed that announcement in committee on November 23. In light of the inaction of his two predecessors, the studies which have been ongoing, and the frustration of leaders of the voluntary organizations, will he now indicate to Canada's over three million volunteers what progress he is making in convincing his Cabinet colleagues, particularly the Minister of Finance, of the urgent need for such a task force in order to draw together the reports which are available, including the last report of Statistics Canada?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Serge Joyal (Secretary of State): Madam Speaker, we have made much progress and I would urge the Hon. Member to support my efforts to convince Members opposite to expedite the passage of legislation stemming from the budget so that we might at last have the Speech from the Throne and I would then keep the commitment I made before the Parliamentary Committee.