

Inquiries of the Ministry

Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Bonavista-Twillingate): I did not interrupt the hon. lady while she was replying, but I should like to raise a point of order; not, I hope, a very controversial one. It was ruled by your predecessor, sir, when questions of this sort were first asked that it was improper for questions about individual cases, giving a lot of details about people's private lives, to be asked and answered in this house. If that policy is to be reversed I think it should be the understood policy of the house and not done in a specific case only.

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order which the hon. member has raised, there are from time to time immigration cases which attain a publicity and importance which seems to give them an urgency which would warrant their discussion here, and it is difficult for me to determine in advance whether or not any particular case is of that kind.

I think it is inappropriate to deal with individual cases, and the history of immigrants, on the floor of the house during question time when no issue of general importance is raised. It is much better that they should be dealt with privately, either directly in consultation with the department or, if necessary, by means of the order paper.

[Later:]

Mr. L. D. Crestohl (Cartier): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a further supplementary question to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration with respect to the doctor who was deported to Korea. Apparently on X-ray—

Mr. Speaker: Order. The hon. member doubtless heard the point of order which was raised by the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate about this particular question. I intimated that I felt it was a dubious question and, if so, a supplementary would not be in order.

NATIONAL DEFENCE

NATO—REQUEST FOR STATEMENT ON PARIS MEETINGS

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Paul Hellyer (Trinity): I wish to direct a question to the Minister of National Defence. Has the minister any information he can give the house following his meetings with General Norstad?

Hon. G. R. Pearkes (Minister of National Defence): At the December meeting of the ministerial council of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization it was agreed that the supreme allied commander in Europe would review with each defence minister and his principal military advisers the manner and

extent to which the military commitments of each NATO country had been fulfilled.

In accordance with this agreement I left for Paris on Friday last, accompanied by General Foulkes, chairman of the chiefs of staff committee. We met the supreme allied commander, General Norstad, and his principal staff officers on Saturday and heard his report. It was shown that Canada has lived up to her agreed commitments. Subsequently various problems regarding equipment, administration and logistic support of the Canadian forces in Europe were discussed.

Mr. Hellyer: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister tell us whether there was any discussion as to the advisability or otherwise of continuing with the CF-104 project?

Mr. Pearkes: The CF-104 program is proceeding. The supreme allied commander is very pleased with the decision this government took to replace the F-86's with that aircraft.

Mr. Hellyer: A further supplementary question, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The hon. member for Kootenay West has a supplementary question.

Mr. H. W. Herridge (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a supplementary question to the Minister of National Defence. Can the minister inform the house why his flitting to Paris was veiled in such secrecy by the refusal of his officials or anyone else to give out information on this subject? This kept us all in a state of suspense.

Mr. Pearkes: I did not think it was necessary for me to obtain permission from the hon. member in order to attend any particular conference. This meeting had been arranged for many weeks in advance.

Mr. Hellyer: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Could the minister tell us whether he had the opportunity to discuss with officials of the French government the continuing use of air bases in that country when the F-104 with its atomic armament is available for squadron service?

Mr. Pearkes: No, Mr. Speaker, my time was spent at SHAPE.

Mr. Herridge: Mr. Speaker, the minister did not answer my question. Why was his visit veiled in such secrecy, which was considered very unusual?

Mr. Pearkes: Mr. Speaker, I took a normal routine flight over to Paris on the rotational work of the troops which are overseas. There was no secrecy so far as I know.