

North-South Relations

in camera. I was shocked a week ago today when defence officials would only give evidence on personnel strategies to the committee if the meeting was in camera.

Having some experience in this area, it is my opinion that if the minister and the Department of National Defence do not develop an ability to become self-analytical and stop being so self-protective, then sometime, sooner rather than later, there will need to be a royal commission of inquiry into the administration and structure of that department. This country is not getting \$6 billion worth of defence this year. When I say that, I am thinking particularly of the troops that are up front, the number of ships we have and the number of sailors to man the ships; the number of aircraft we have and the number of people we have to fly the aircraft; the number of tanks and other army weapons we have and how many men we have to man them. It does not seem to me that we are getting \$6 billion worth of defence. The Canadian people are willing to pay, but they want to, and have a right to, know that their money is being spent wisely.

To become an equal partner instead of a reluctant ally in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Canada must review its defence policy. It must bring the defence policy to the people for approval and support.

Our way of life depends on the western world being able to protect itself. If we are not willing to defend what we consider to be right in this world, then we could well lose it.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Chas L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, I should like to express my support for the motion before us and to congratulate the government and the NDP for making time available for this two day debate on foreign affairs issues. It is unfortunate that members of the official opposition played the role of Scrooge in this respect, by refusing to donate one day for this purpose despite their great declaration this afternoon in favour of making Canadians more aware of foreign affairs issues. It is typical of the Conservative party to preach in one way and to act in another.

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): What a distortion.

Mr. Caccia: I realize from the silence into which the hon. member for Edmonton-Strathcona (Mr. Roche) has sunk, that he is inclined to agree with me.

What I have to say this evening is this, in summary, Mr. Speaker. It is a three-way plea to the government in connection with the July summit and the United Nations, starting from the premise that there can be no successful North-South dialogue and policy without East-West relations in good shape and without peace in the world. I will also make an up to date, brief report on the CSCE in Madrid. Finally, I will put on record some passages from the United Nations report on nuclear weapons and conclude with some brief questions flowing from it.

● (2100)

Let me start with my first plea to the government which has to do with the July summit. The monetary policy pursued these days by Washington is putting the economic health of the western nations in serious danger because of the effect that monetary policy is having on Canada and on western European nations. As hon. members know, the tight money policy has driven interest rates to an all-time high. In addition, the policy pursued by Washington is coupled with a tax cut, which really puts more consumer money into circulation. The combination of the two has created a situation whereby capitals in neighbouring countries find it very attractive to take advantage of the interest rates which prevail at present in the United States. This has put quite a strain on our currency and on the currencies of western European nations. I plead with the government to put this issue on the July summit agenda for an airing and to establish what will happen if this policy is not reconsidered.

At present, there is nothing wrong with the economic situation in Canada except one thing, namely, the monetary policy being pursued by Washington.

My second plea has to do with the summit and with the question of political will in East-West relations. This afternoon we had several interventions. All of them helped to cast some light on this problem and different approaches were taken concerning this rather complex issue. Hon. members should look at what is happening in Madrid and in Vienna at the disarmament conference, and as well at what the committee on disarmament is doing in Geneva. They will notice one common trend, namely, that in all three places where East meets West everyone is stalling. In other words, no progress is being made. What is going on in these three places is a highly organized and very interesting form of a modern minuet whereby alternative delegations make highly sophisticated interventions on a number of complex subjects motivated, I am sure, by good will, but when it comes to the crunch, no progress is made.

Why is progress not being made? It seems to me there is no political will. Where is the political will? Political will is an important aspect which ought to be explored and established.

Because of what happened in Afghanistan two years ago, the Western nations, Washington among them, have to make a decision as to what should be done in the light of the Afghanistan situation. Two years later it still seems to be the major bone of contention standing in the way of modest progress in relations between East and West. I agree with those who say that the invasion of Afghanistan was a reprehensible act; it was condemned by Canada and the west, and rightly so, and in Geneva, Vienna and Madrid at every forum and at every meeting which has taken place since that invasion it has been condemned. That invasion has damaged the Afghan people. It has also seriously damaged East-West relations. Serious damage has been done to detente; otherwise we would not be talking about it even in this House of Commons today.

The question that comes to mind in June, 1981 is how long should the world suffer the damage flowing from this action? That question leads to a number of different conclusions. I can