

Adjournment Debate

The minister said that the limitations on air services between Canada and the United States are a major impediment to tourism and development, particularly the convention industry in Halifax.

The position of the Nova Scotia government is that the aviation industry supports economic development in the Atlantic region and that the better Canada-U.S. air services will benefit Halifax and the rest of the province.

This sentiment was also echoed by Nicholas Carlson, President of the Hotel Association of Metropolitan Halifax, who also urged the government to liberalize the Canada-U.S. air service in order to give a boost to the local tourism and hospitality industry.

So I say to the hon. member, listen to your constituents, listen to the informed voices of Halifax and Nova Scotia who say that the government and its deregulation has benefited Atlantic Canada and deregulation has led to better service, more fair options and more choices for consumers and carriers.

CONVENTIONAL FORCES IN EUROPE AGREEMENT

Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce): Mr. Speaker, on November 19, NATO and the Warsaw Pact concluded an historic agreement to significantly reduce their military weapons in Europe and virtually end the cold war. Under the agreement signed on that day, 54,000 tanks, artillery, aircraft and helicopters on both sides will be destroyed or decommissioned. I must point out that most will be on the side of the Warsaw Pact but, nevertheless, it is a two-sided agreement and it is very significant.

Under that particular treaty it would limit each side to no more than 20,000 tanks, 20,000 artillery pieces, 30,000 armoured combat vehicles, 6,800 combat aircraft and 2,000 attack helicopters in Europe. That may sound like a lot but, as I said, it was a significant reduction in what has been there already for over 40 years, and this agreement brought about the end of the cold war.

As a result of that agreement on November 19, I put a question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs asking him about the impact of this agreement on Canada's military and foreign policy and what plans the government was making for Canada's forces in Europe. Did it have in mind that it should adopt a new role in Europe or should those troops be brought home?

In answer to my question, the Associate Minister of Defence said that Canadian troops, for the most part, would not be affected by the agreement other than the reduction by 1,400 in the number of troops in Europe, but that a new role was possible and that was being studied.

At the same time, I asked the Minister about the 1987 White paper on Defence, a white paper that was drafted at the time of the cold war and was drafted with the cold war scenario in mind. I reminded the Minister that that white paper had never been withdrawn although parts of it, the very controversial part that proposed the acquisition of nuclear submarines for Canada, had been dropped.

My point was that if the defence white paper was developed at a time when the cold war was still under way and has never been withdrawn then it should be withdrawn and the government should come forward with a new white paper that would deal with the threats of today, with the realities of today.

Following that historic agreement, the countries of Europe and North America, the 34 states that make up the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe met in Paris to confirm those agreements and to officially put the cold war to rest and to examine new arrangements for security in Europe. The meeting of the CSCE in Paris was the launching of a new method of collective security and co-operation for all of Europe, including Canada and the United States.

About that conference, it has been said that it attempted to enunciate the principles for peace and prosperity with respect to the future of Europe. It was an attempt to put forward a dream of a European continent free of opposing military alliances, united from one end to the other by its commitment to democracy, economic co-operation and human rights.

In view of all of this, where does Canada stand with respect to the new realities in the world? How is our foreign policy going to change to adopt to this new reality and what about our defence policy? What about our Canadian forces? Where is the new defence white paper and how will it define the role of our defence and military forces with respect to these new challenges.

It appears to me that with respect to these matters the west has been too slow to move in relation to the east.