

North Atlantic Treaty

brigade which are arriving there. The men in Korea cannot, I think, help but observe the fact that the troops in Europe are only just arriving on the spot, and the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Claxton) is over there now to make certain that the arrangements for their reception and so forth are all that the people of Canada would have them; whereas the Canadian troops have been in Korea for a year and a half, and while it cannot be denied that senior officials and officers have been over there—the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Mayhew) himself has just recently visited Korea—it is not quite the same thing as having there the minister in charge of the Department of National Defence.

Now that this controversy has arisen—and it can properly be described as a controversy—and in view of what the hon. member for Calgary East (Mr. Harkness) has just told us as to the attitude of the soldiers returning from Korea, I think it would be most advisable for the minister to make the special effort necessary to get to Korea, even if only for a short visit, in order to see for himself what the position is and what the feeling of the troops is. With the minister's well known desire to get things done when he gets to the bottom of a situation and finds out what the problem actually is, I am sure that, if he goes there and finds out what the problem is, we will have every confidence, as will the troops, that a fair and proper solution will immediately be implemented. Unless something like that is done, there is bound to be left with the troops the feeling that the matter has not received sufficiently thorough consideration.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the house to adopt the motion?

Mr. Knowles: Is the parliamentary assistant not going to reply?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The parliamentary assistant has already spoken. If he wishes to speak again he will have to obtain the consent of the house.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the house to adopt the motion?

Some hon. Members: Carried.

Motion agreed to and bill read the third time and passed.

NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY

AGREEMENT AS TO ARMED FORCES STATIONED IN OR PASSING THROUGH NATO COUNTRIES

Hon. Alphonse Fournier (for the Minister of National Defence) moved the third reading of Bill No. 22, to implement the agreement between the parties to the North

Atlantic treaty regarding the status of their forces, signed on the 19th of June, 1951.

Mr. J. H. Blackmore (Leithbridge): Mr. Speaker, before this bill is given third reading I should like to say some things that have been on my mind since we have been considering it. The time in which we live is a time in which the utmost clarity of thinking is essential if our way of life is even to survive. In this bill are clauses that could cause Canada much embarrassment. It is not the kind of bill I like to see go into our statute books. The only justification this parliament could give for passing this bill is the hope that in the Atlantic pact arrangement, called NATO for short, we might find means of increasing our security from war, means of augmenting our striking force both in defence and in offence.

Let us be careful not to delude ourselves. We are in grave danger of deluding ourselves in Canada today and all over the North American continent. The mere signing of the Atlantic pact can avail us but little. Already the indications of possible ineffectiveness of NATO constitute reasons for genuine alarm. Hon. members will recall that not so long ago General Eisenhower was to have an army of sixty divisions. By November 8 the hoped-for army had shrunk to forty-three divisions, and by November 12 it had shrunk to twenty divisions. Russia alone is reported to have 14 million men ready to march. To meet that massive array even sixty divisions were pathetically inadequate. What must we concede in respect of only the twenty divisions that we are assembling now?

The question that ought to come, and must be coming, into everybody's mind is this: Why in the world is it that all these nations in Europe that, with us, have formed NATO, are unable to put into the field large forces of men whereas in world war I and world war II they were able to contribute tremendously? What has gone wrong? The reason, Mr. Speaker, is economic. They simply cannot produce the necessary goods. If they cannot produce the food, clothing and shelter to keep troops fit, and if they cannot produce the necessary guns and munitions of war, then certainly they cannot put the men into the field. What are we going to do about it?

I will say this in a general way. Unless the British nations, including the United States, can find means of bolstering the economies of such nations as France, Belgium and other continental countries—the NATO nations—then the passing of this bill is about as important to security through NATO as would be the addition of the five-hundredth bit of tinsel to a highly decorated Christmas tree. If Canada is to have any substantial