

asked for that kind of advice. I direct the hon. member to the answer I made last year.

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

DEPLOYMENT OF NUCLEAR MISSILES IN EUROPE

Mr. Douglas Roche (Edmonton South): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Last week President Reagan made a speech that has been hailed as the most important speech of his presidency. In it he said that the United States would cancel plans to deploy new intermediate range nuclear missiles in Europe if the Soviet Union would dismantle comparable weapons trained on Europe. This initiative has been endorsed by NATO.

What action has the Canadian government taken to press the Soviet Union to respond with a positive, constructive proposal so that a favourable international climate can be established before arms negotiations begin next week in Geneva?

Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Madam Speaker, the initiative which President Reagan announced last week in general terms had been discussed with the NATO allies. We were and are fully in support of it. I have said publicly that I hoped the Soviet Union will respond. But before we could take steps of any kind, the general response from the Soviet Union tended to be an unfavourable one. We are consulting with our NATO allies as to the best form of pressure or demarche which collectively we can take.

I know the hon. gentleman realizes that talks between the Soviet Union and the United States will be commencing very shortly in Geneva. I do not know how much likelihood there is that we could influence the Soviet Union before that time, but I can assure him that we will be considering that question fully.

REQUEST FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY SUB-COMMITTEE

Mr. Douglas Roche (Edmonton South): Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is also addressed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Will the Canadian government establish a parliamentary sub-committee on disarmament so that the views of the public and parliamentarians can be gathered on the arms race, a race which is now costing in excess of \$500 billion a year, and so that recommendations be made to the government prior to the United Nations special session on disarmament next June?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mark MacGuigan (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Madam Speaker, I would not recommend to my colleague, the government House leader, that we establish a special committee on disarmament. But I have offered to give

Point of Order—Miss Jewett

the Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence an order of reference on this subject. As I understand it, they chose the reference on Latin America and the Caribbean last year over this one. Nevertheless my offer still stands, and I am prepared to do my best to persuade the House leader at any time to give a reference to the standing committee on the subject.

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CORPORATE AFFAIRS

EXPORT FINANCE CORPORATION OF CANADA

Mr. Jesse P. Flis (Parkdale-High Park): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. The Export Finance Corporation of Canada Ltd. was federally incorporated on June 4, 1959, under a special act of Parliament. Would the minister inform this House on the success or failure of this corporation in meeting its objectives in financing and facilitating exports and imports?

[Translation]

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Madam Speaker, of course it is not a simple matter to determine a corporation's ability or inability to achieve its objectives. As was mentioned by the hon. member this corporation was incorporated under a special act of Parliament, and therefore there is no legal or even political obligation that would allow us to make sure whether or not it is meeting its objectives successfully.

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● (1500)

[English]

PETITION

MR. ROSE—PROPOSED INCREASE IN POSTAL RATES

Madam Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that the Clerk of the House has laid upon the Table the one hundred and thirty-fourth report of the Clerk of Petitions stating that he has examined the petition presented by the hon. member for Mission-Port Moody (Mr. Rose) on Friday, November 20, 1981, and finds that it meets the requirements of the Standing Orders as to form.

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POINTS OF ORDER

MISS JEWETT—DISARMAMENT—REPLY OF MINISTER DURING QUESTION PERIOD

Miss Pauline Jewett (New Westminster-Coquitlam): Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I am sure the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. MacGuigan) did not intend to mislead the House in his last answer, but in fact