

However, since the Cyprus situation remains potentially explosive, the UN Security Council decided, on December 18, that it had no feasible alternative to the extension of the mandate of the UN Force for another three months. As I announced in the House the same morning, the Canadian Government decided to agree to a request by the UN Secretary-General that it continue its participation in the Force for an additional three-month period. This provides further evidence of Canada's support of UN peace-keeping efforts. We played an active role in the negotiations which led to the establishment of the Force and have been contributing and financing the largest contingent in it.

Canada now has approximately 1150 officers and men in Cyprus. The Canadian contingent, which includes the First Battalion of the Canadian Guards and a reconnaissance squadron of the Lord Strathcona Horse, is deployed along the strategic Kyrenia Road and is responsible for operating the convoy system on that road. It is also responsible for the Kyrenia Pass and St. Hilarion areas. Until the beginning of December, it was responsible for patrolling the "Green Line" in Nicosia, but has now handed over this responsibility to the Norwegian and Finnish contingents and has assumed instead responsibility for the western sector of the Nicosia Zone. In addition, Canada provides the commander and headquarters staff of the Nicosia Zone and contributes a considerable number of personnel to the UN Force headquarters.

Despite the improvement in the situation which has taken place on the island, no acceptable solution has yet been reached to the differences of opinion on the future of Cyprus that continue to divide Greece and Turkey as well as the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot communities. These differences between Greece and Turkey, two allies in NATO, are a matter of continuing concern to Canada and to the other members of the NATO Alliance. This problem was reviewed at the recent ministerial meeting in Paris, where I appealed to the sense of responsibility of the two Governments and urged that they do all they could to exert a moderating influence on the two communities in Cyprus.

The Canadian Government has followed a policy of avoiding comment on the basic issues in the Cyprus dispute because it is important for us to maintain our present reputation for strict impartiality on this question. Unless we maintain this reputation, it will be difficult for Canada to continue to play a useful role in the UN Force. This does not mean, of course, that the Government is not concerned over the continuation of the dispute and the effect it is having in Cyprus and on the relations between two NATO allies. We believe, however, that the best way to help is to continue to give full support to the UN peace-keeping and mediation efforts in Cyprus.

QUESTION (11):

Can a country's foreign policy affect its domestic problems?

ANSWER:

The effects that the facts of life in Canada have on our diplomacy and our diplomacy has on our domestic problems are obviously closely linked. A foreign policy that enjoys the support of the large majority of the population, as ours does, is in itself a unifying factor. In the economic field it is a factor that clearly favours our wellbeing and, in the field of cultural relations, a source of reciprocal enrichment and influence.