

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Howard: I was paired with the hon. member for Burin-Burgeo. I have no idea how he would have voted had he been here.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**NATO—WITHDRAWAL OF FRENCH CONTRIBUTION TO MILITARY EXPENDITURES**

On the orders of the day:

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, would the Acting Prime Minister advise the house what, in his opinion and that of the government, will be the effect of France notifying NATO that after January 1, 1967 that country will make no further contributions to the military expenditures of NATO? To what extent will the failure of France to make that contribution add to the amount that may have to be paid by Canada and other nations?

Hon. Paul Martin (Acting Prime Minister): The information that I have, Mr. Speaker, in addition to what has been given publicly, is not clear as to whether this decision of France refers only to obligations that she might have with regard to the infrastructure program of NATO. Until I know the precise answer to that I do not believe I would want to answer the question at this time. There has been no final decision, of course, with regard to the disposition of French forces in Germany, nor has there been any decision with regard to overflights. I think I should like to take my hon. friend's question as notice and, if there is more information tomorrow, perhaps give a precise answer.

NATO—MOVE OF CANADIAN AND U.S. AIR BASES FROM FRANCE

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Harold E. Winch (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, I should like to address a question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Can he explain the report that as a result of the policy of General de Gaulle which requires that the United States and Canadian air forces must leave France the Canadian air force is moving to Germany and the United States air force to the United Kingdom? Can he explain why there is this peculiar arrangement?

Hon. Paul Martin (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, as my hon. friend knows, last March the government of France announced that it was not going to continue in the integrated force structure of NATO or in the integrated command structure. To that end it served notice on the

[Mr. Robichaud.]

United States and Canada to vacate the air bases within France that these countries had, in the case of Canada two and in the case of the United States five. The decision to be made by the government of the United States as to relocation is, of course, a matter for the government of the United States. Canada has made its decision with regard to relocation in Germany.

Mr. Winch: A supplementary question. May I ask the minister whether he can explain to the House of Commons why it is that the Canadian air force is being transferred to Germany but the United States air force is going to Great Britain?

Mr. Martin (Essex East): I am sure that the United States is not transferring all of the bases that it had in France to the United Kingdom, only a portion.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**INQUIRY AS TO CONSIDERATION OF MEDICARE AND OLD AGE PENSIONS**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Acting Prime Minister. It is supplementary to questions I put to the Prime Minister on Monday and Thursday of last week. I asked whether we would proceed during this portion of the session with action on old age pensions and medicare. The Prime Minister said there would be a statement in a few days as to what we would do. What day may we expect that statement?

Hon. Paul Martin (Acting Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I will take a look at what the Prime Minister said and perhaps be in a position to answer this question tomorrow.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Réal Caouette (Villeneuve): Mr. Speaker, could the Acting Prime Minister tell us whether it was agreed that the old age pension and social security questions would be revised as the session would resume on the normal date set for that, next October 5?

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank the hon. member.

That is the question which was asked by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) and which I had promised to consider in the light of the reply given by the right hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) a few days ago.