

Adjournment Debate

in 1981 may have more serious consequences for East-West relations than the political situation.

Poland is in desperate need of food. Perhaps one aspect that could be explored by the Minister of State for Trade (Mr. Lumley) is trade by barter. That is, since Poland is rich in coal and other natural resources and since she requires food and hard currency, perhaps a system of mutual exchange could be established, similar to some of the exchange trade systems used by the Swiss government.

All in all, Mr. Speaker, I trust that as a nation we will do our best to act together with all concerned to maintain peace and stability in Poland. Perhaps the Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Duclos) could give Canadians an update of the government's plans to help solve this critical situation in Poland.

[Translation]

Mr. Louis Duclos (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member will be happy to learn that according to the information we have the situation has not deteriorated along the Polish border over the past few days. There is no evidence that the Deutsches Democratic Republic has mobilized its forces; on the other hand, even if the Soviet power is in full strength, we have no reason to believe that it has deployed its troops along the border or decided to invade Poland.

On the other hand, in the communique issued following their recent summit in Moscow, the member states of the Warsaw Pact have indicated their determination not to use intimidation or force in their relations with other states, but to seek negotiated settlements to conflicts. Those are key provisions of the Helsinki Final Act and Canada repeatedly emphasized that they should govern foreign relations of all signatories to the Final Act. Those provisions are particularly pertinent to present relations with Poland. Canadian representatives have made known that point at the Madrid conference and in capitals of eastern Europe and in our political dialogue with European countries, we always stand up for the respect of the non-interference principle in domestic affairs of other countries.

[English]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS—POLAND—INQUIRY REGARDING CONTEXT OF PRIME MINISTER'S NOTE TO CHAIRMAN BREZHNEV

Mr. Benno Friesen (Surrey-White Rock-North Delta): Mr. Speaker, someone said "He who sups with the devil needs a long spoon." Many Canadians across the country today wonder whether the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) has a spoon long enough, if he is going to sup with the devil.

There is growing concern in the country about the situation in Poland, about the manoeuvres taking place on both sides of its borders, and even more concern about the silence of our government in face of that threat to world peace.

Canadians wonder why the Prime Minister is so quiet about the situation in Poland. I am reminded of the situation a year ago when he was leader of the opposition and a member of the Privy Council. At that time we were concerned about the trouble in Iran. As a Privy Councillor, he had been briefed about that situation but he taunted the prime minister of that day with questions and was on the verge of endangering the lives of those Americans who were in our embassy in Tehran.

With that background in mind we wonder what he is trying to pull off concerning Poland. Yesterday in the House I asked him whether it was because of the friendship protocol, that he, as Prime Minister, signed with the Soviet Union nine years ago, that he had finally written a secret letter to President Brezhnev. He replied that it was not because of that. I then asked him whether as a gesture of solidarity between the Canadian people and the Polish people, he would break off that protocol with the Soviet Union, and he declined.

That is not all that concerns me, Mr. Speaker. About a month ago at a news conference he said that as a result of that friendship protocol he regularly briefed the Soviet ambassador in Ottawa if he met with world leaders like President Carter, Prime Minister Thatcher or Chancellor Schmidt.

● (2210)

Mr. Speaker, can you imagine a member of the NATO alliance meeting with other members of the NATO alliance and, having met with them, going to a member of the Warsaw pact and briefing a member of the Warsaw pact about the discussions he had had with NATO alliance members? Can you imagine that? Can you imagine the reverse being true where Chairman Brezhnev would meet with members of the Warsaw pact about concerns they have in their alliance and, after that meeting is over saying, "Now that we, as members of the Warsaw pact, have met I had better brief a member of the NATO alliance about our discussions." That is sheer stupidity. Yet the Prime Minister frankly, openly and gratuitously gives the information at his news conference that such is his regular custom. What in the world does he think he is pulling off? I might add that at the time of the debate in 1971 when the friendship protocol was going on, the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) said, the protocol was "like a couple of boys meeting at summer camp and agreeing to continue in close touch after they had returned to their homes". Isn't that sweet? These are like boys coming home from camp. All they do is share the secrets about the alliance.

Let me quote the actual terms of that treaty. It is taken from "Keesing's Contemporary Archives." I quote clause 2 of that protocol:

In the event of a situation arising which, in the opinion of the two governments, endangers the maintenance of peace or involves a breach of the peace, the two governments will make contact without delay in order to exchange views on what might be done to improve the situation.

There we have the terms to which the Prime Minister signed in 1971. If those are the terms then we can come to only one of two conclusions. First, that there are other secret messages which the Prime Minister has sent to Chairman Brezhnev,