

NATO—European Defence Community

possibilities involved in it, I am not in conscience joining my group with him in committing Canada to the extended obligations to which this treaty binds us.

If he feels it is essential that the house put its seal of approval on the protocol now, then I warn him that before Canada deposits her ratification with the United States we must make mighty sure that we know every detail of the obligations the Canadian people will have to assume as a consequence of it; and furthermore, as the hon. member for Peel (Mr. Graydon) expressed himself this morning, the Canadian people ought to be made fully aware of just what they are getting into. With that warning, Mr. Speaker, I shall simply have to throw this responsibility right back on the minister's doorstep, as I do not feel that I can commit my group to the support of it at this time, knowing as little about it as we do.

Mr. G. R. Pearkes (Nanaimo): I welcome this opportunity to take part briefly in this debate on the resolution which is before the house. In the resolution it is stated that one of the objects is to permit the closer association of the countries of western Europe. It was my privilege last December to attend the Council of Europe in Strasbourg where the whole question of a greater unity of the European countries was discussed at very considerable length.

I was pleased to hear the minister state that he considered the so-called functional approach was more acceptable at the present time. When I was speaking in the house on March 11 of this year in the throne speech debate I also mentioned that I considered the functional approach was the only practical approach to this problem at the present time. Briefly the functional approach is that of the setting up of specialized authorities to ensure European co-operation in certain definite and specific fields in which there is a very definite prospect of a solution being found to specific problems. Opposed to that idea is the rather more speedy solution advanced by certain statesmen in France and Italy for the federal approach. The congressmen from the United States who attended the consultative assembly last year seemed to be rather anxious that the federal approach should be adopted. But my impression, which apparently is the same as that of the Secretary of State for External Affairs, is that the functional approach is the only practical one at the present time, and that we must move slowly in this matter.

The countries of Europe have century-old traditions behind them. They are not all bad; it is not all a question of national

[Mr. Low.]

hatreds. There is much national pride in the development of their national cultures and so forth. It is upon those particular aspects of the gradual development in Europe that emphasis is laid. These countries are hesitant about abandoning all that their forefathers have created. They are proud of their national traditions, and they do not consider the work of their fathers as being that of fools and liars. There is an old quotation that when a land forgets its legends, when it sees fears in the past, it is a sign of its decay. Europe is not decaying at the present time.

The minister went on to refer to Germany as being the key to Europe at the present time. I could not agree more with any statement. I certainly do believe that Germany is the key to Europe at the present time. While I was there I heard many statesmen indicate the importance of German unification being brought about. Statesmen from West Germany repeatedly emphasized the goal of German unification. I heard it said that this was an imperative necessity. But those statesmen of West Germany were not prepared to sacrifice the West German republic to soviet Russia in order to bring about unification. They wanted unification brought about along democratic lines rather than along communist lines. The impression I got was that the statesmen of West Germany would rather wait for proper unification to be brought about through democratic processes than to have unification brought about by the communist approach. As the minister said, Russia could withdraw behind Poland and the occupational forces of the United States, France and Great Britain could be withdrawn behind the Rhine, but that would be paramount to handing over Germany to communism. It would create a vacuum in which communism certainly would flourish.

There is no question about the determination of the Germans to eventually have a unified Germany. I heard evidence that some 10 million or 12 million East Germans had been expelled from their country and sent into West Germany. I shall never forget what one statesman of the West German republic said. He told me that their places had been taken in East Germany by Poles and Mongols. You could feel the pent-up determination of that man to one day see those Poles and Mongols removed from the farms of East Germany and those expellees who were living in West Germany returned to the eastern provinces of their country. We must not be led away by the fact that at the present moment West Germany is anxious to work with the other countries of the North Atlantic treaty, with the western powers, and is prepared to forget