

other areas of the world as well. In the past several years, we have seen the organization go through all kinds of problems. For instance, let us recall the dispute between England and Iceland with regard to fishing activities in the territorial waters of Iceland. Let us recall another problem not yet solved opposing Greece and Turkey, two countries members of NATO, about Cyprus. Let us not forget what is now happening in another country also a member of NATO, Portugal. All those are fairly recent problems that the organization must consider. We must therefore see to it that the organization does not crumble so that it will oppose the Warsaw Pact bloc which, in my opinion, has not quit pursuing its objectives to impose its rule all over Europe and perhaps others areas of the world.

Until now, NATO has assumed its responsibilities, and I feel it should continue to do so. On the other hand, after 25 or 26 years of protection in Europe, might the time not have come for the European countries to assume a greater part of their own defence by participating economically, for instance, in the number and quality of the troops and weapons needed to ensure the defence of Europe. Doubtless, the Canadian participation has its own objective, that of making as remote as possible the danger of a widespread conflict such as that of 1914 or 1939-45, which, if it were to recur in the future, could have much more serious consequences for America. Seen in that light, I feel that the countries of Europe that want to protect themselves should contribute to a greater extent to those defence organizations.

There is another problem which was mentioned before, that of modernizing our defence and surveillance equipment. We will soon have to make considerable improvements because we are becoming aware that our aircraft, for instance, are almost obsolete; they will have to be replaced in the relatively near future. Now, to do so will require astronomical expenditures and, as in all parliamentary democracies the government must submit its credits to Parliament and to the people, something that is not done on the other side of the barricade, at least not in the member countries of the other pact; one wonders if the U.S.S.R. is not thus in the process of winning a war of attrition.

In any event, Mr. Speaker, I feel that those meetings can only help better understand the needs of that organization; what the right hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) proposes could complement what has been done in the past, and so give us a better overall view of the problems at hand, help us find the required solutions, to keep that group to face the other party which, to my mind, continues to constitute a threat.

I feel therefore that if we are to continue watching its activities closely, serious meetings must be held as often as possible.

[English]

Mr. Stanfield: Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the right hon. gentleman about the contractual link which I understand consists of a structure to be put in place making provisions for consultation between the EEC and Canada as questions arise from time to time. That was my understanding. Perhaps the hon. gentleman will correct me if I am wrong.

NATO Summit

I should also like to ask whether his discussions with representatives of the EEC this time went beyond that point. Did he have the opportunity of discussing France's attitude with the President of France, or the attitude of the government of France toward such a contractual link between the European Economic Community and Canada? The Prime Minister has visited all the EEC countries now and has given us a good deal of information about the attitude of various governments, with the single exception, I think, of the attitude of the government of France.

Mr. Trudeau: On the first part of the question, Mr. Speaker, the answer is yes, we did go beyond that. As the hon. gentleman knows, the commission has now agreed with us on the form of the term of reference which could be the basis of an agreement between the community and Canada giving form and substance to the contractual link. So in reality we did go beyond discussing the mere term of reference. That is already in the mill. The discussions I had with the president and the two vice-presidents of the commission were directed mainly to the accepted order in which the council of ministers would authorize the commission to negotiate the terms of reference, and what specific action Canada might take while waiting for the council of ministers to give that authorization.

I suppose that leads into the second question as to what specific action we took with France. I might first correct the hon. gentleman who has said I have not reported the attitude of the government of France. I did that after my meetings in Paris last October. At that time I had not yet been in Brussels, and I have not since then raised the question officially with the President or Prime Minister of France. As the hon. gentleman perhaps knows, the Prime Minister was not at the NATO meetings, nor was the President. However, he did come to the banquet on Thursday night, I believe. As far as I know, he arrived just for the banquet and left right after. Being the senior Prime Minister present, I guess, I was seated opposite the President of France. We did a bit of talking, but the table was at least ten feet wide and it was a bit difficult to get into any detail.

● (1640)

Mr. Stanfield: We have no difficulty communicating here.

Mr. Trudeau: That is correct, but we have microphones here. I might say that the King of Belgium did not think it was appropriate to set up telephone or telegraph assistance between the people invited to his table. I might add that I could not even kick him under the table as I would love to do if I were sitting opposite the hon. member for Peace River. I would kick him above the table, too, if I came that close.

The Government of Canada will very soon be receiving visits from the French minister of commerce and from one of the important ministers of state, Mr. Poniowski, in the coming weeks. Of course, this is likely to be the kind of subject we will raise with them. Whether I will be able to report to the House on this is not known at this time.

Mr. Stanfield: Mr. Speaker, I have a question relating to détente. I should like to ask the Prime Minister whether he had any discussions with his NATO colleagues on the