

Mr. SMITH (*Hastings-Frontenac*): I cannot disclose cabinet decisions, but the only one I know of is this order in council.

Mr. KNOWLES (*Winnipeg North Centre*): I think it should be clear that none of us is criticizing the joint defence arrangements. What we are concerned about, as Mr. Stick says, is the principle, namely that the superiority of the civil authority over the military be as clear as General Norstad insisted it must be so far as SACEUR (Supreme Allied Command—Europe) is concerned. The minister says that his department knows nothing about it, yet in reply to our questions he did seem to have a prepared statement telling us what is going on, and I presume whoever was Secretary of State for External Affairs at the time in the cabinet must have seen whatever interim notes were being exchanged. It seems to me that, in a sense, External Affairs has been in this picture, but what we would like to know—

Mr. SMITH (*Hastings-Frontenac*): I can state definitively that there has been no exchange of notes.

Mr. KNOWLES (*Winnipeg North Centre*): No exchange of notes between External Affairs and the Secretary of State in Washington? Just one point further. Have the exchanges between Canada and the United States been only between the Canadian defence department and the opposite number in the United States; or have they in some way been exchanges between the Canadian government and the United States government?

Mr. SMITH (*Hastings-Frontenac*): I am unable to answer that, though I am speaking from the standpoint of this department.

Mr. JONES: I have a question in connection with a consultation among NATO members which you mentioned in your earlier remarks and you did not elaborate on it at the time. I would be very interested to see encouraged not only consultation on matters of military and political affairs but also in regard to those economic affairs that so directly effect the members of the NATO alliance. It is my hope that when the meeting takes place in Paris, that sort of consultation should be considered.

Mr. HOLOWACH: Mr. Chairman, there are one or two remarks I would like to make and one or two suggestions with respect to the very discussion we are having at this time. At the very outset, I would like to say that I enjoyed the statement which the new Secretary of State for External Affairs made with respect to some of our foreign relations and problems and I would like to say to you, sir, that we as a nation have a great stake in the decisions, and/or activities in this particular field. We wish you well in the performance of your responsibilities and opportunities. The first suggestion I would like to make deals with the proposal which was submitted during the external affairs debate by my colleague the hon. member for Fraser Valley, Mr. Patterson. I was rather disappointed to hear the interpretation and the views of the Secretary of State for External Affairs with respect to the desirability of such a consultative committee. I believe the underlying principle in that proposal was to strengthen parliamentary control and influence with respect to foreign policy.

Now that is a parliamentary right and I think it ought to be encouraged.

Mr. SMITH (*Hastings-Frontenac*): So do I.

Mr. JONES: I can appreciate that we have had opportunities off and on to debate external affairs. There is the opportunity of asking questions before orders of the day but these things in no way detract from the desirability of having such a consultative committee.

Now the second suggestion is this: if it is true that our foreign policy reflects the will of our people, then it seems to me desirable that the practice of inserting into the regular program of the house periodically a debate on external affairs ought to be increased. We had a debate recently in which some