

*Supply—National Defence*

I now want to return to the category I mentioned when I began speaking, the category of our contributions under our commitments to the United Nations. These, I think, are extremely important. I have had the opportunity of observing some of the forces we have deployed throughout the world in this work and have been impressed, as I am sure most members of parliament who have had that opportunity must have been impressed, by the manner in which the Canadian armed forces are carrying out their extremely difficult task. Nor would I suggest for a moment, sir, that we should consider reducing our role in this field. Rather I would suggest that these contributions should be made much more effective than they are at the present time. It distressed me when I was on the Gaza strip last year, or the year before last, to see that after eight years we were in precisely the same position we had been in at the beginning. There had been no advance. We had been acting as policemen to keep two possible combatants apart.

We have the same situation in Cyprus. I hear from reports which have come from Cyprus that the Canadian forces have played an outstanding role in keeping the potential combatants apart. However, in neither instance have any steps been taken to try to solve the political problem which has lain at the back of the military problem we have been trying to cope with.

I feel that this is the era in which Canada can play an important and decisive role in the world of today. I think it is a role that the men in our armed forces would welcome. We have heard a lot of talk about the low morale of the men in the Canadian armed forces. I do not know whether it is low, but I know this: I know that those with whom I have talked are very concerned as to what their role is going to be in the years to come, not merely from the point of view of whether they are going to have a job, or whether their careers are going to come to a satisfactory conclusion, but as to whether the work they will be engaged in is going to be of value.

I have taken the occasion whenever I have been overseas and have come in contact with men in our armed forces to try, if I can, to get some fairly high ranking air force officers to one side. I have succeeded in doing that on a number of occasions, and I have always put one question in which I have asked: "What do you think is the future for the Canadian armed forces?" Always, Mr. Chairman, I have had the same reaction. Always there is

[Mr. Cameron (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands).]

first of all a rather perfunctory genuflection toward our military commitments in NATO and NORAD, but always they have eventually come out of the bushes and said something like this: "We should be doing something that we do superbly well, and better than anybody else in the world. We should be concentrating entirely on supplying transportation, communications, and delivery of goods and materials to the forces of the United Nations throughout the world." Our armed forces are doing that today, and are extremely proud of the role they are playing.

Not long ago I was speaking to a number of students of the University of Victoria. I must say I was somewhat dumbfounded when I got to where I was to speak to have the young man who had asked me there tell me, in a rather embarrassed way, that 50 sailors from HMCS *Naden*, the Royal Canadian Naval Base outside Victoria, had come to hear my talk on Canada's foreign policy. They marched in shortly afterwards, took their seats, and I proceeded to outline what I thought should be Canada's role in the world of today. During the course of my speech I outlined particularly the role that the men in our armed forces should play in that regard, and I said to them that there was a very great part that they should play, if they were equipped to do so. I pointed out to them that one of the most important aspects of our foreign policy, and one which must be given more and more importance as the years go on, is the provision of technical and material assistance to the areas of the world that are now beginning to emerge into the twentieth century, and I could see no reason why the men in our armed forces should not be getting the extra technical and administrative training that would permit them to play an important role in the development of skills, financed and aided by our external aid program.

• (4:50 p.m.)

It seemed at that time that the sailors accepted this as something worth while. It was a relief to know that there might be some positive, worth-while role in the world, not merely a role of standing by out of fear that a catastrophe might overcome us, in which they might be the first victims. This would strike me, Mr. Chairman, as being a much more realistic defence program than one which is based on the outmoded idea that war is today a feasible or practical means by which to promote national policy. I think this is one of the things we must get through our