

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

reiterated recently by the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Hellyer) as the basis for his whole unification solution.

Nevertheless the whole military and political picture has changed in Europe. The roles now carried out by the Canadian forces are obviously obsolete. The British white paper reveals that in a few short months, indeed by the end of June, allied discussion on the revision of NATO strategy will have produced broad agreement on the size, composition and military roles of various nations. The British white paper clearly discussed the rationality of any threat of aggression in Europe and opted for a reduction in the forces of NATO to promote the detente in Europe.

We in this house and the Canadian public are entitled to know if the Canadian government has made any suggestions for a change or a reduction of its military role in NATO. What is the revised NATO strategy? Is it our policy to stick indefinitely to a policy and strategy which are now outworn? Does the government propose or does it not propose any changes? I seek a clear and definitive statement on the crucial issues that have apparently now been discussed by our allies, and I presume, by ourselves. Unless we are playing a role of passive acquiescence in decisions in which we have played no part, our whole discussion in the house on the issue of unification is quite meaningless if we are to be kept in the dark as to the crucial background to the whole problem of our defence, and our role in defence.

Mr. D. S. Macdonald (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, may I point out, in response to the hon. member, that he has in effect answered his own question. He asked for a clear statement as to our future role and at the same time acknowledged that the NATO allies are in the middle of a discussion of that very question.

As he has pointed out, the passage in the U.K. white paper which he quoted indicates that the NATO countries are in the midst of a major review of the evolving nature of any threat to their security, the appropriate strategy in changing international conditions, and the appropriate force levels to carry out the strategy. The Canadian government has been participating actively in this review. When the review has been completed we shall be in a better position to consider whether changes in our contribution are warranted. A statement on this should at least await the conclusion of the review.

23033—866½

● (10:20 p.m.)

The nature of the future Canadian military commitment to NATO defence will also have to take into account the relevance of that commitment to collective defence and to the major political objectives of a peaceful settlement in Europe. Along with our allies we are watching carefully to see whether there are any prospects for achieving mutual reductions of forces of NATO and Warsaw pact countries. This is an approach which the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Martin) advocated before the NATO council last December.

[Translation]

HARBOURS—MONTREAL—STEPS TO DEAL WITH ALLEGED VANDALISM AND THEFT

Mr. Maurice Allard (Sherbrooke): Mr. Speaker, this afternoon, in the absence of the Minister of Transport (Mr. Pickersgill), I asked the Member of the Administration (Mr. Turner) the following question: "In view of the thefts and pilfering regularly occurring in the port of Montreal lately, is the minister in a position to check such depredations and damages, so as to ensure the success of Expo and avoid harming the international repute of Canada.

Mr. Speaker, my question is based more particularly on a report published in *La Presse*, of Montreal, on February 28 and entitled:

An importer has had enough of piracy and will no longer use the harbour of Montreal.

And the article began with these words:

At least one importing company has had enough of the piracy occurring in the port of Montreal and has made known his decision to henceforth use Canadian ports other than that of the metropolis.

And the article continues:

The manager, Mr. Georges Dupuis, wants to alert public opinion as concerns the plague affecting the port of Montreal.

He advised the mayor of Montreal, Mr. Jean Drapeau, in writing of the disastrous situation in which the shipping trade finds itself in Montreal. He also stated his grievances to the harbour-master, Mr. Guy Beaudet, and he finally sent letters to the press.

The article goes on to say:

—goods, in this case, electric tools, are stolen from this firm every time shipments are sent by boat. Since those losses drain the profits, the firm now must have its shipments delivered through other Canadian ports and has instructed its suppliers in 80 different countries to forward the goods in the future via Toronto or Halifax, if not by air.