

NATO Summit

Prime Minister is seeking, because this has been a little fuzzy in the mind of the Prime Minister. Perhaps following his last trip to Europe the Prime Minister can be a little more precise. If I have the opportunity of asking him a question in a few minutes, I would ask him—and he might think about this—to clarify a little further, following his last visit, what he means by a contractual link.

The last thing I want to say concerns détente. I think the movement toward détente is something that we all support in principle. One thing that has disappointed me is that there does not seem to have been much success among the NATO countries, among the countries of western Europe, in getting any clearcut understanding from countries east of the Iron Curtain, the U.S.S.R. in particular, regarding the free movement of peoples, theirs and ours.

I have long felt that this is a matter of vital importance. I know the attitude of Russia, for example, toward other countries interfering in the internal affairs of their country or other countries, but I suggest it would be unfortunate if in fact something called détente is negotiated involving some limitation of troops as well as some approval of the status quo, if in fact by that implicit approval of the status quo we from the west are indeed saying we are prepared to go along with the very restricted movement of peoples which is now permitted in the U.S.S.R. and the countries associated with the U.S.S.R. In a moment, if I may, I should like to ask the Prime Minister a simple question on that point.

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Mr. Speaker, like the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) I, too, until about 2.15 anticipated that the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) was not going to make a statement on his trip to Europe but would simply table some comments in the House. Having listened to his statement and having read it just prior to his getting to his feet, I can understand why there was some hesitation about using up the time of the House on the question of NATO and the role Canada is to play in NATO, we get absolutely nothing from the Prime Minister. It seems to me that if the government is committed to maintaining our country's membership in NATO, he had an obligation to produce some answers to our allies in Europe to the questions that they have been asking about the nature of our role, as well as to provide the House with the answers we should have given to our allies at a NATO meeting. The Prime Minister did none of these things.

The specific question is: Are we going to continue our somewhat mixed contribution by performing a role on the ground as well as in the air? If so, are we going to re-equip our troops on the ground? If not, what is to be Canada's contribution to the NATO defence of western Europe? None of these questions was dealt with in the slightest either in the communiqué that was attached to the Prime Minister's statement, which of course is issued by all members of NATO, or in his statement in the House. In view of what has been said here about the opposition taking up a lot of time in the House with gratuitous remarks, I think the same comment could be applied to the statement that the Prime Minister has made regarding the government's position on NATO.

At this time I should like to make it clear that the New Democratic Party believes that, if it was once appropriate for Canada to be playing a role in NATO, that time has

[Mr. Stanfield.]

since passed. I wish the Prime Minister would remove the government from its ambivalent position. On the one hand, it seems to me inclined to the view taken by our party—that it is no longer appropriate at this stage in history for us to take part in NATO—which might account for the lack of clearcut policy in terms of our military contribution. On the other hand, the Prime Minister makes the statement that the government does not take that position but that it is firmly committed.

We think we should be out of NATO. We think it is much more appropriate now to have a highly trained, professional military force for our country and that this force should be made ready for strengthening United Nations' peacekeeping forces when we think such course of action is appropriate, so the force is available for use in emergency relief operations.

I am not going to take the time of the House to elaborate on my reason for saying that; I simply conclude by telling the House that we expected much more from the Prime Minister in terms of clarifying the government's own view of NATO. We are going to continue, says the government, in our commitment, yet apparently the government has not made up its mind how it is going to continue in its commitment.

With reference to the meeting concerning the European Economic Community, I, like the Leader of the Opposition, welcome the announcement of the opening of an office. However, I would simply urge the government to come forward soon, primarily through the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Gillespie) but also through the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner), with some imaginative programs to develop our secondary industry in particular.

● (1630)

Trade relationships are, of course, important in the western world. But by improving secondary industry in Canada in terms of efficiency we will be able to gain access to those markets as well as to many others. The real objective of a trade policy should not be one of looking for special concessions from the European Economic Community but one of developing a first-rate secondary industry in Canada. We need the kind of leadership from the government we have not yet received that would set out in clear terms how we are to go about achieving that, and if we achieve that I would argue we would not have to be preoccupied with looking for special concessions from the European Economic Community.

[Translation]

Mr. Gérard Laprise (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to see the Prime Minister is back in good shape from his trip in Europe.

The Prime Minister told us how satisfied he is following the conference of the leaders of NATO countries. I believe such conferences complete others held by foreign affairs ministers who meet once or twice a year to discuss problems facing the NATO countries and the ways to solve them.

Since the inception of NATO, that is 25 or 26 years ago, we realize that Russia has been stopped for a while at least in its ambition to dominate Europe and perhaps several