

*Adjournment Debate*

before the Conference of defence associations, the figure of 78,000 was given as the latest, revised version of armed forces strength. These constant revisions to what is supposed to be our long-term policy are alarming the troops and alarming the defence critic of my party.

Finally, may I say a few words about a point put forward by Professor Laurence Martin who is Professor of War Studies at King's College, London. He wrote in an article headed "Theatre Nuclear Weapons and Europe," printed in the December, 1974 issue of "Survival", the publication of "The International Institute for Strategic Studies," that:

The rise in Soviet long-range nuclear striking power has accelerated appreciation of the futility and immorality of a nuclear strategy effectively confined to massive retaliation against cities. . . . United States Secretary of Defense, James Schlesinger, has set about his search for limited strategic options. It is only natural that tactical nuclear weapons, which also offer a limited option, should come under renewed scrutiny.

I see my time is up, Madam Speaker. I simply recommend this reading to the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Richardson) at the earliest opportunity.

**Hon. James Richardson (Minister of National Defence):** Madam Speaker, I welcome the opportunity provided by this adjournment debate to reply to the hon. member for Victoria (Mr. McKinnon), particularly to reply concerning the place of nuclear weapons in NATO strategy. I think that was the substance of his question to me in December and, in fact, on other occasions. The hon. member has raised other matters tonight. If I had time I would go into them. However, in the very few moments available to me I will answer what I believe is his main concern.

I would like to confirm that there has been no change in that policy, and that the position taken by the Canadian delegation to the ministerial meeting of the NATO defence planning committee last December was a reaffirmation of the policy we have followed consistently since 1969. NATO's deterrent strategy of flexible response rests upon three principal components of NATO's defensive forces. These are, first, the conventional forces; second, the tactical or theatre nuclear forces, and third, the strategic nuclear forces.

At the recent meeting to which I have referred all of the NATO defence ministers agreed that these three components continue to be essential to the collective security of the NATO allies. They reaffirmed their previous position that unilateral reductions in any of these components would be detrimental to the delicate negotiations now going on between the United States and the Soviet Union on strategic arms limitations, and between NATO and the Warsaw Pact on mutual balanced force reductions in Central Europe.

At the December meeting there was a very complete discussion concerning the relative weight which should be given to each of the three components of NATO's deterrent forces. It was agreed that while all three components all remained essential, NATO should not become fully dependent on nuclear weapons and that all possible efforts should be made to improve the deterrent capability of NATO's conventional forces.

[Mr. McKinnon.]

The hon. member for Victoria in his earlier question, and again tonight, appears to be asking if the Canadian nuclear policy or the NATO policy concerning nuclear weapons has changed. I want to confirm to him, as I did earlier in this answer, that Canada's policy and the NATO policy have not changed.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin):** Order, please. I am sorry to interrupt the hon. minister, but the time allotted to him has expired.

● (2210)

[Translation]

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE—SUGGESTED RESTORATION OF CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

**Mr. Léonel Beaudoin (Richmond):** Madam Speaker, on January 22, 1975, I once again raised in the House a matter that grows ever more important each day, that is the restoration of capital punishment.

There has been an intolerable number of murders since the beginning of the year 1975, 33 in only 21 days. In view of those unacceptable facts, I moved under the provisions of Standing Order 43 a motion asking that the House of Commons be given an opportunity to discuss the possibility of restoring capital punishment in cases of capital murder to put a stop to this inadmissible situation. The House did not accept the motion. However, the great majority of members present told me they regard my proposal as important and interesting.

Today I asked once more that hon. members take their responsibilities and fulfil their duties as protectors of honest citizens in restoring capital punishment.

Let us put the question in historical perspective. It may be said that the act was amended three times since 1961. Before that, all murders were capital ones, and carried a death penalty.

In September 1961, two different categories of murder were introduced in the law. First there was capital murder, possibly carrying death penalty. Those were murders planned and deliberate, or causing the death of a police officer, prison warden or judicial authority, and finally murders committed in the accomplishment of another criminal act. The second group, non-capital murder, included all other kinds of murders, with a possible life imprisonment penalty.

In September 1967, the law was amended for a five-year period, and the capital murder concept was restricted to those causing the death of representatives of the law.

It will however be noted that after the law was watered down, Quebec was the scene of 52 murders in 1967, 91 in 1968, and a total of 129 in 1969.

In 1972, despite a significant increase in the number of crimes and numerous appeals for reinstatement of capital murder, the House of Commons freely decided that the only kind of capital murder, carrying death penalty, was that of a police officer.

Further, the act as it now stands provides that an individual sentenced to death for the murder of a police officer can apply for clemency to the governor-in-council, that is the Prime Minister, and may have the sentence commuted to life imprisonment. All such sentences have