

Are we going to settle for less? Many of the pronouncements of the Prime Minister in Russia I would in charity attribute to a lack of expertise in diplomacy, if I were not so sure that he is too clever to have made what appear at first glance to be blunders of gigantic proportions. I rather think that the right honourable gentleman, faithful to an old practice, may be leading us off on a unilateral course which would appear to have neutralism as its final destination. I hope I am in error, but what else are we to conclude, honourable senators, when following upon our unilateral withdrawal of forces from Europe we now endorse Mr. Brezhnev's call for a reduction of armed forces in central Europe, without insisting that these be "mutual" and "balanced"?

Hon. Mr. Martin: Well, we do.

Hon. Mr. Flynn: That has not been the case up to now.

Hon. Mr. Martin: No, but in the communiqué and the protocol that is stated to be the objective of both countries, mutually balanced forces in Europe.

Hon. Mr. Flynn: That may be so, but Canada has acted otherwise up to now.

Hon. Mr. Martin: So have other countries—Britain, France, the United States.

Hon. Mr. Flynn: No, not the United States. The question has been discussed, but only Canada up to now has decided to reduce its contribution to the NATO forces.

Hon. Mr. Martin: Six years ago the United States made reductions.

Hon. Mr. Flynn: Six years ago, after having discussed the matter with the other countries, but not on a unilateral basis as was done by Canada.

We are in a very poor position to be lecturing our allies on how they should be more open to the Russians, how they should temper their mistrust. As a result of the way we wretched on our commitments to NATO last year, we have lost a great deal of our credibility on the international scene. Why did we agree with the Soviet Union on "inviolability of frontiers" as one of the principles on which European stability should be based? Bonn wanted to extract from the Soviets an agreement as to security safeguards for West Berlin before signing a similar agreement, and NATO heartily supported them in this. Why did we cut the grass from under their feet?

The principles outlined in the communiqué tabled yesterday have a distinctly different flavour from those laid down by the NATO ministerial council in Brussels last December. Those adopted by the council were:

Sovereign equality, political independence, and territorial integrity of each European state, non-interference and non-intervention in the internal affairs of any state, regardless of its political or social system, and the right of each European state to shape their own destinies free of external constraint.

It would appear we settled for a lot less in our recent dealings with the Russians. Why? And I would ask the

Leader of the Government why? What is our position vis-à-vis NATO? I should hope the Government's position will be made clear before this debate is ended. It has certainly not been explained satisfactorily yet. There is indeed more to this protocol than catches the eye. The Prime Minister, it appears, looks upon it as one of the ways we have of asserting Canada's independence with regard to the United States.

One would have thought that if that were his preoccupation, establishing our independence from the U.S., he might more sensibly have sought to sign a protocol with the U.S. in which each would assert the fact that they are independent from the other. But, of course, this is entirely unnecessary. Diplomatic relations between the U.S. and Canada have not been too good since the present Canadian administration took over. They will be worse now. Most of us do not feel that our independence is seriously jeopardized by our having to share a continent with the most powerful nation, economically and politically, of history.

I should hope, honourable senators, that further elucidation on the part of the Government will not be long in coming. Much of what was said by the Prime Minister while on his visit to Russia has left our friends and allies confused. They are beginning to wonder if we can be counted upon.

If this Government does not assert—I do not say reassert, but assert—our unqualified adherence to the principles of NATO, if this Government does not repair the damage it has done to our friendly relationship with our traditional friends and allies, then this Government is even more unrepresentative of the Canadian people than anyone has ever suggested.

I listened with interest to what the Government Leader had to say yesterday, and I should tell you that I was relieved to see that his heart was not really in it. His defence of the Government's position somehow sounded hollow. Absent was the usual fervour, the characteristic bristling defence of his master, right or wrong. Could it be that Charles Lynch, according to the article in the *Montreal Gazette* of this morning, is right? Could it be that Senator Martin feels the Government has gone too far this time?

Hon. Mr. Martin: I fully support what the Government has done, and I think Charles Lynch was in error.

Hon. Mr. Flynn: I am sure he stands corrected.

Hon. Mr. Martin: I told him that this morning, good-naturedly.

Hon. Mr. Flynn: That Senator Martin, who went from being a hard-line anti-communist during the Conservative administration of Mr. Diefenbaker, to something of a devotee of peaceful co-existence from 1963 on, should now be less enthusiastic about these new attempts at rapprochement than is the Prime Minister and leader of his party, would be difficult to understand.

It has been suggested by the Government that this protocol is exactly the same as earlier protocols and