

## NATO

May I remind the house that my leader and this party do not for a minute suggest that a European settlement is the only unfinished business in the world. Speakers from this side and in other parties have reminded us, and accurately so of course, of that third world, crowded, hungry and sick, which demands our attention and our compassion. It demands the attention and compassion of the NATO alliance.

The amendment proposed by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) was specifically designed to draw attention to the need for a widening and not a narrowing of our world wide obligations.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Fairweather:** It was drawn up in recognition of the validity of the words of a distinguished Canadian diplomat, Escott Reid, who said that the two most important world issues of the next 20 years are how to speed up the dangerously slow rate of economic growth of the two thirds of the world that is poor and how to narrow the dangerously wide gap between China and the rest of the world.

I suggest that our Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Sharp) and our Minister of National Defence (Mr. Cadieux) have an obligation to exercise the leadership in the 1960s and 1970s that their predecessors did 20 years ago.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Fairweather:** This country must be in the vanguard of those seeking, through NATO, a multilateral east-west forum which can serve as a practical alternative to the sort of propaganda device suggested by the Soviet Union and billed as a conference on European security.

We need, in concert but not alone, mutual force reductions. We need, in concert but not alone, arms control. We need, in concert, a plan for access to all of Berlin. We need, in concert, freer west-east travel, trade and cultural exchanges.

I seriously suggest that the purpose of this debate is to question whether Canada can maintain a believable role in these and other objectives if we turn our backs on the collective principle of the alliance. The *Economist* of April 12 suggests:

However small the amounts involved, the collective principle is endangered by any unilateral reduction.

[Mr. Fairweather.]

There is the issue. Canada has embarked on a unilateral reduction. The Secretary of State for External Affairs said this afternoon that Canada's decision is not negotiable, which I think his colleague, the Minister of Labour (Mr. Mackasey) would admit is a rather odd way in which to begin the government's heralded consultative process with our allies. If consultation still means to the government what it does to the editors of the Oxford Dictionary, namely to take counsel, to seek information and advice, one wonders how valid the process will be if, before taking counsel or seeking information and advice, the government has already closed the door by saying "not negotiable".

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Fairweather:** When the Committee on External Affairs and Defence was hearing evidence, one of the distinguished witnesses was General Charles Foulkes who suggested a different military role for Canada within the alliance. If, out of the obscurity of the government's announcement, comes the creation of a highly mobile force, many would not quarrel with this military decision. But all the advice I listened to in Europe stressed the importance of the Canadian presence on that continent. There are reasons for this within the armed forces themselves, and I was naïve enough to ask this question in Brussels—an innocent abroad, perhaps. I asked whether, leaving aside every other aspect but the military aspect, it is not valid to think that it is useful to have troops in a different milieu than that of the North American continent. Of course the advice was, yes.

I do not look upon NATO and our participation in it as an extension of Canada's somewhat shopworn posture of tagging along behind the United States and the United Kingdom. In fact, NATO provides us with a role in Europe which continues no matter what other international aspirations and commitments we may have.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Fairweather:** As the *Economist* said, it is a crucial aspect of our foreign policy. We are dealing, I hope, with facts of life. The former minister of transport used to call them "hard facts". One of them is that the United States, the United Kingdom and Germany, the three essential members of the alliance, no matter what we may do, mean to carry on the alliance.