

NATO

I do not see how Canada could isolate itself in neutrality. That seems to me unthinkable, and the more so since the other countries in the world will never consider Canada as a neutral or non-aligned country, first of all and in particular because we are next door to the United States.

However, as I said before, we should change our role within the NATO forces and even foresee a long-term phasing out of our establishment, when tension eases in Europe, and thereby perhaps reminding our allies to be prepared to act more positively, and even sooner than expected, so as to accelerate the process.

As concerns our contribution to SACLANT, I have been puzzled about it ever since 1965. I wonder why, indeed, our Navy keeps chasing submarines in the Atlantic, especially if one considers how much it is costing us, particularly when it is time to renew our equipment.

Mr. Speaker, Canada owes it to itself to be identified, as it was in the past, with an international force known the world over, and I do not see why, especially since we discussed the Defence estimates this week, we could not find a way to reduce considerably our armed forces' salaries by establishing in Canada some kind of service—be it called compulsory or voluntary—in which young Canadians would be enlisted. We could then ask them to join a Canadian peace force. They would not necessarily be required to become experts or to make a military career of it, but simply to hold on to an ideal, as Canadians, in order to serve in Cyprus, in the Congo or anywhere else where their services could be needed.

Mr. Speaker, the Canadian forces are made up of specialists. We have noticed from the estimates that they include more chiefs than Indians, since the number of private soldiers represents only 20 per cent of a total of 90,000 men.

I think however that by changing our defence policy to make our forces more homogeneous, we could have a place for volunteers willing to specialize in defence and, by the same token, a special branch for young people in order to attract more of them into our armed forces. We could ask them if necessary to sacrifice one year of their life for their country and for the promotion of peace.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): Order, order!

[English]

Mr. R. Gordon L. Fairweather (Fundy-Royal): Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to reflect on

the number of speakers in a debate of this sort when the time limit for speeches is set at 15 minutes. It means that there can be participation from the back as well as the front benchers. We in Canada are fortunate that there are no political implications in the results of our National Hockey League games. In the city of Prague, where I was last week, the downtown buildings are marked with the results of two games of political and other importance to the people of Czechoslovakia. The scores are marked 4:3, 2:0, and the admonition is to remember, remember. Unfortunately, these admonitions are in chalk. At the institute of philosophy at Charles University the billboards, still of a transient nature, carried the projected weather reports advising of storms and thunder ahead, and inside the storm clouds the students had drawn Russian tanks. The slogans, of course, were gestures of defiance. Perhaps it can be said that because of this defiance, and that of the journalists as well as the trade unionists, the Soviet Union had no alternative but to cause the resignation of Dubcek. Just as in 1938 the poet, Edna Millay wrote: "There is no balm in Gilead", so in 1968 and 1969 there is no balm in the western world to salve the agony of Czechoslovakia.

● (8:20 p.m.)

But that does not mean that we should not do all in our power to maintain all possible contact with eastern Europe, diplomatic, trade, cultural, and even parliamentary. Détente, after all, and I think all speakers have agreed with this, is a legitimate policy objective of modest powers like Canada as well as of the so-called super powers. Perhaps these few sentences are a bit of a diversion, but diversion is not an unknown characteristic of parliamentary debates. It is interesting that under the Soviet system power blocs must be kept in line by means of invasion; witness Hungary in 1956 and last summer's episode in Czechoslovakia.

Of course, the alliance that we are debating today needs no such military intervention. Here, we are debating the alliance, and apparently it is stable enough even to survive yesterday and today. On April 10, in a lead editorial, the *New York Times* reminded us that the alliance has been reported in disarray almost annually since its inception. But there has always been more to unite it than divide it. The editorial goes on to say that the achievement of a European settlement remains the chief unfinished business of a troubled world.