

Mr. Crouse: The hon. member would not now be making his speech if it were not for the protection given to Canada by NATO. If the hon. member believes what he is saying, I feel sorry for him.

Mr. Nystrom: I believe it, otherwise I would not be saying it. More and more people are saying what I am saying, with the exception of a few reactionary Tories who, like dinosaurs, are living far in the past. There is so much trouble in the world because some people believe what the hon. member believes. Nothing is ever totally black or white in this world. There are not only the free enterprise, capitalist countries on the one hand and communist countries on the other: there is a third alternative that countries such as Canada should be pursuing. I could make other remarks about NATO, but time will not permit. I have given a few reasons to support my contention that we should withdraw from that organization.

As I said before, I think Canada should develop an independent foreign policy. In doing that, we should concentrate much more on international development and on peacekeeping. In that way we could make a real contribution to world peace. I think, also, that we should try to strengthen the United Nations and make the world a more harmonious place for all of us to live in, regardless of where we live or the colour of our skin. We must try to communicate more with one another. If we do not communicate there will not be any central agency for the exchange of ideas. As a result, we cannot expect anything but trouble. That is why I welcome any move that will open up a world community and make this one world. After all, in many ways international boundaries do not exist any more. They do not exist in many ways for finance or for modern communications. We must realize that the world community is rapidly becoming a global community and we should be formulating our policies with that in mind.

As I said, I think the motion before us puts emphasis on the wrong priorities and points in the wrong direction. It suggests policies that are the opposite of those that Canada should be pursuing today. Instead of pursuing those policies, we should be trying to get out of NORAD and NATO. We should concentrate on strengthening the United Nations, on peacekeeping and on international development. The policies suggested by the motion will not do us much good because, if adopted, we shall be contributing to the polarization in the world. When that happens you may have, suddenly, a nuclear war. That is what will happen if on these questions we support the narrow-minded, anachronistic views that have prevailed in the past.

Mr. Jack Marshall (Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe): Mr. Speaker, before giving my few thoughts may I comment on the remarks of the hon. member for Yorkton-Melville (Mr. Nystrom). Although I respect his thoughts and his youth, I feel that if he would read history and learn what happened particularly after the First World War and in the 25 years after the end of that war and the beginning of the Second World War, he would probably make a new assessment of what the protection of our country means.

National Security Measures

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Nystrom: I have read history.

Mr. Marshall: Previous speakers have covered very well some important factors with regard to the direction that our defence policy might be taking, and it is only left to me to make some general comments about my thoughts regarding defence policy over the years. Canada's defence policy, to my mind, has been a series of short-term stabs in the dark, depending on the whims and fancies of whoever was Minister of National Defence at the appropriate time. There is only one exception to this rule. The only time we had a clearcut defence policy was when the hon. member for Calgary Centre (Mr. Harkness) was Minister of National Defence.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Marshall: At the present time we are waiting with some anxiety to see what the minister will produce in the way of a directive on the course we are to take in the future. This will be the second white paper that I will have seen in the three years that I have been in politics here.

Let us consider the present state of our forces. The worst blunder that can be made is reducing our forces to 82,000, as we are doing. It will be interesting to hear, in my humble opinion, what some of our retired generals and other senior officers who left the forces in recent years in disgust over our integration and unification policies—whichever came first at the time—have to say about this reduction in strength to 82,000. It would also be interesting if we could be behind closed doors with the chiefs of staff and senior officers at other levels of command and learn their opinions on the question of how we can fulfil our commitments, even according to our last set of priorities, with 82,000 officers and men.

• (4:00 p.m.)

If we were to break down the strength of our Canadian forces, which include 42,000 administrative and support personnel, I am sure we would find that with the 40,000 fighting troops left our strength could not be committed to any exercise larger than the one we unfortunately faced last October in Quebec. Without trying to sound too alarming, I ask: How would our forces have been able to react if a similar incident had sprung up in another part of our country? Thank God, Mr. Speaker, that we were not faced with that situation, because it would have been very embarrassing.

When the minister says that we do not respect the capability and efficiency of our forces, surely he is being very childish. I say, Mr. Speaker, that the reduction of our forces to 82,000 will reduce them to a state of ineffectiveness. I am not looking for any massive force just for the sake of competing with other nations. I realize that most of our efforts as peace-loving Canadians should be directed toward peaceful missions. I also realize that our funds are not limitless. Canada is not a warlike nation. We have no history of military aggression, and our proud military achievements have been directed toward helping