

NATO

the North Koreans shot down an American EC-121 with 31 service personnel aboard. Washington sat silently while Moscow imposed its discipline on Czechoslovakia. Washington has looked the other way on many occasions and has aimed at negotiation instead of confrontation. Restraint is necessary if détente or arrangement with the Soviet Union is ever to be achieved. This same attitude of restraint is shown by all NATO members. They want us to continue in NATO, but it would be strictly counterproductive for them to denounce Canadian policy.

Our reasons for a planned and phased withdrawal are difficult to understand. The Prime Minister said on April 3:

We want to play a role, which in the first instance will be essentially defensive of our sovereignty of North America.

I can think of no better way of defending our sovereignty than staying in NATO.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Stafford: It is the purpose of NATO to prevent war in an area where there is the greatest concentration of power in the world today. That area is in Europe, where any conflict which will affect our sovereignty is most likely to occur. One thing is certain, that if any threat from the Soviet Union is involved we would certainly protect our sovereignty by very close collaboration with the United States and other western countries.

We have been actively discussing disarmament for many years. We cannot consider any unilateral disarmament. We have learned from past experience that most of the talk on disarmament with the Warsaw pact nations goes on an on for propaganda purposes. Even the Warsaw pact nations are obviously not going to break off negotiations on disarmament, as this would put them at a propaganda disadvantage.

I trust our policies on NATO have not been made to create a new independence, a new isolation or a new identity. This country was not built on isolationism. Canada's best friends are in NATO. In that group are those nations whose investment capital and technological capacity helped this country achieve the second highest standard of living in the world. Our partners in NATO have shown their concern. They know the political advantage of NATO as a great collective force against those forces in the world with which we do not agree. They want us to stay in, not with a mobile force which we can fly to Europe in an emergency but to be present in

[Mr. Stafford.]

Europe as part of that great collective effort of NATO nations, the importance of which is out of all proportion to the cost as a deterrent to aggression.

We are often so critical of others in this search for peace and the preservation of freedom. If we have anything to offer, it can best be done as a contribution to the collective effort of NATO nations who, as history shows, have a strong desire for peace. If we want an effective voice in Washington and Europe, we will have to share the military burden. In this way we can put our efforts to work in an attempt to influence the attitudes of the NATO nations along the best road to peace.

President Nixon said at the 20th anniversary of NATO in Washington:

• (9:40 p.m.)

The United States fully intends to undertake deep and genuine consultation with its allies both before and during any negotiations directly affecting their interests. That is a pledge I shall honour.

I do not think anyone in this chamber would deny that the Warsaw pact nations are far more liable to negotiate through strength than through weakness. The Leader of the New Democratic party who spoke yesterday said he feels that an outstretched hand will do more for the cause of peace than a clenched fist. It will, if the other side genuinely wants peace, but I am not aware of any positive indication in this direction.

Perhaps the hon. member might stretch his hand through the barbed wire entanglements of the Berlin wall and test the response to his theory. If it works we will be forever grateful. If it fails and he returns to this house minus his right arm, we will give him our sympathy.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Baldwin: No wonder you were separated from Steve Otto.

Mr. R. E. McKinley (Huron): Would the hon. member permit a question? I wonder if the hon. member would be prepared at this time to say he believes that the Prime Minister of Canada (Mr. Trudeau) wants to get out of NATO as quickly as he can, and would the hon. member agree with the rest of us that we should stay in it?

Mr. Stafford: I have already said there have been so many statements made that I, for one, have been unable to put the jigsaw puzzle together to find out what it is all about. What I am concerned about, however,