

I have seen suggestions that we had by implication given support to the so-called Brezhnev Declaration and that thereby we had given some support to an action, or to a proposal or to an affirmation of intention, that was different from positions taken by NATO. There is no basis for that whatsoever. The fact is that both in the official talks and in the negotiations on the communiqué the Prime Minister and the Canadian officials made the Canadian position very clear on a number of subjects of international interest, including the importance of Berlin and the considerations in favour of mutual, balanced force reductions.

Some people have argued that we have urged a program of mutual disengagement in Europe contrary to the spirit and the intention of our obligations as a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. That is an invalid argument. The Canadian Government for at least five and a half years has been urging a program of mutual disengagement—in principle the same kind of disengagement that is envisaged in the mutual, balanced force reductions urged in Moscow by the Prime Minister.

Surely there is not anything more positive or valuable than that kind of proposal. There is no unilateral action in this. This is something that has been discussed in NATO. This is something that represents NATO objectives and NATO policy and is part of its broad sweep towards a détente in Europe.

So far as concerns any alleged inadequacy in the communiqué in respect of principles governing relations between states, it must be emphasized that it was at Canada's initiative that these principles were mentioned in the communiqué. While the wording in the Soviet-Canadian communiqué is not identical to the wording of the NATO principles, and this is alleged in the other place and outside, let me state quite emphatically that all the main elements contained in the NATO principles are covered directly or indirectly, including the principle of non-interference in the affairs of other states.

In this regard, the statement of principles in the Soviet Union communiqué is very close to the formula used in the communiqué agreed to by the Soviet Union with other visitors from NATO members such as Belgium, France, the Scandinavian countries, as well as ourselves. Having in mind the different approaches of the Warsaw Pact countries and NATO toward force reductions in central Europe, I think it is significant that the Soviet Union agreed to a document mentioning mutual and balanced force reductions, and I think it is not inappropriate for me to observe that this was included at the initiative of Canada.

In the first full paragraph on page 6 of the communiqué there appears a matter on which I think some comment should be made in view of the reactions in some places in our own country. It reads as follows:

Canada and the U.S.S.R. believe that détente and stability in Europe would be promoted by the convening of a properly prepared conference on Euro-

pean security and co-operation with the participation of all European states, Canada and the United States. They consider it useful to continue consultations with each other on this question.

Now, the words I wish to emphasize there are "properly prepared" because that phrase is interpreted by Canada to include all those aspects, including Berlin, which must be brought to a certain state of preparation to enable us to get into such a conference with reasonable prospects of success.

Canada is not opposed to a European security conference. The Secretary of State for External Affairs made it clear after the last NATO meeting that we support this, but we want to make sure it is a properly prepared conference, and that this is included in the communiqué I think represents a clarification of the greatest importance. I might add that this is the first communiqué with a western country which explicitly recognizes the right of Canada and the United States to participate on an equal footing with European countries in such a conference. Both the United States and Canada have taken the position whenever there has been discussion in NATO or outside NATO of a European conference on security that because of the contributions of the United States and Canada toward stabilization in Europe, because of our contributions in World War II and because of our contributions to NATO, both countries should be part of any European security arrangement. This is acknowledged by the Soviet Union.

Finally, honourable senators, I think we should recognize that an important step has been taken. One would not want to exaggerate its importance nor should one underestimate its significance. The protocol should not be seen as a change of direction in Canadian policy because it is not a change of direction; it is rather a logical development of Canadian policy. It does not involve any new commitment but may well, I think, yield useful results both for ourselves and for our allies since it offers a forum for the exchange of views on topical subjects.

As for our improved relations with the Soviet Union generally, the protocol is not intended to upset or replace our existing associations or alliances. Its importance will be determined by the effort put into the consultation by both sides rather than by the fact of its existence.

I think our Prime Minister is serving our country well. I think that of all the visits he has undertaken, this is one in which he established the Canadian identity, and it is one in which he has clearly examined our treaty obligations and our alliance relationships. At the same time he has done what I think the people of our country and the people of the world ask of the heads of governments today; that is, without betraying their own convictions, their own principles and policies, to do everything they can to further relations with other countries regardless of ideological bent, and regardless of the frustrations of the past two decades, because only in that way will it be possible for any government, for any nation or for any man to make a contribution to the building of peace in our time.