

NATO

Are we to assume that the new foreign policy will flow from the new defence policy which he is working out before he has worked out his new foreign policy? How are we to judge the worth of this new defence policy? The burden of proof is certainly on the government. Surely they have to demonstrate, or at least present some semblance of an argument, that we can make a better contribution to Canadian security and world peace by reducing our role in Europe at this time, on the one hand, and increasing our role in North America, which is the other side of the coin presented by the Prime Minister. After all, this is really what he was saying in his statement of April 3 and in his speech of April 12. There is no indication at all that the purpose of the change is to reduce the defence budget or to reduce our defence forces. Indeed, may I remind the house again that the Prime Minister specifically denied that this was the purpose of what he was announcing, although my good friend, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, tried to say the opposite when he was in Washington, pretending that the reason for the NATO reduction was that we needed the money for national development.

I have to say regretfully that this is another instance of the sort of double-talk that is going on which creates confusion among ourselves and distrust among people we have always regarded as our friends.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Stanfield: What we are talking about then is the redeployment of defence forces, a shift in our defence commitments. It has nothing to do with Canada's economic problems, with foreign aid or with national development, and I would like someone on the other side of the house to tell me how the announcement made by the Prime Minister will contribute in any way to the establishment of the five necessary conditions to peace. In what way will this country be any better off in making a contribution toward these five points by simply shifting troops from a broader based alliance to our own territory within the framework of North American security?

What can be said for a redeployment of our defence forces a shift in our defence commitments? First of all, it does not flow from any new foreign policy. Second, it has not been demonstrated that it will make a better contribution to the peace of the world or the security of Canada to reduce our participation in Europe and increase our participation in

[Mr. Stanfield.]

North America. The Prime Minister also announced:

—to the extent that it is feasible we shall endeavour to have those activities within Canada which are essential to North American defence performed by Canadian forces.

If this is going to have any meaningful significance, including the provision of what the Prime Minister has called "an effective multi-purpose maritime coastal shield", the cost will be many million dollars more than our present expenditures on NATO.

The Prime Minister has not disclosed any new considerations of foreign policy that would justify this change. I ask every member of this house very seriously: How can Canada make a better contribution by drawing farther away from a more broadly based alliance including European countries and closer to defence integration with the United States? The Prime Minister spoke in Washington of what it is like to sleep with an elephant. It is clear he would not enjoy sleeping with an elephant.

An hon. Member: Would you?

Mr. Stanfield: I cannot imagine why he would want to marry the elephant.

What is Canada trying to prove by this unilateral decision? What contribution does this decision make to the alliance of which we have been a part and to the peace of the world in general? This year is the 20th anniversary of NATO, and the countries of NATO are discussing among themselves the over-all structure and strategy and the objectives of NATO. From this kind of discussion might well flow logically a discussion of how each member can best make a contribution in the future to NATO's agreed objectives. Certainly there is room for improvement in NATO, a full realization of its broad purposes in addition to its military role, the achievement of social and economic purposes. Certainly we on this side of the house are just as interested in a détente as my hon. friends opposite, but we do not think that we improve our chances of achieving a détente by weakening our position. I suggest that Canada will not have a very meaningful role to play in the kind of discussions now going on in NATO because the government of Canada has already decided to reduce its contribution and to demote NATO on its list of priorities.

There has been some discussion of a détente between the east and the west, some hope of a mutual de-escalation of forces on the part of the Warsaw Pact countries and the