

*Government Orders*

[English]

The hon. member said we need a multilevel approach in our defence policy.

[Translation]

Which brings me to a concern I have that I would like the hon. member to address.

We know that these cruise missiles will be guided by a computerized system that will recognize terrain and shapes thanks to artificial intelligence technologies. This extremely sophisticated software is under research and development in the United States. The tests to be conducted over our territory will allow Americans to check the quality of their programs. In return, contracts will be awarded to suppliers of the U.S. armed forces.

Talking about a multi-level approach in our defence policy—I am coming to my question—I think we should focus not only on the military but also on the economic aspects of all this. Jobs are tied to these technologies. Will the Liberal government ensure that some of these jobs are created here in Quebec and in Canada?

[English]

**Mr. Proud:** I thank the hon. member for his comments and question and the point he has raised.

We talk about sharing our territory for testing. Two years ago Canada sent troops down to California to train for the Somalia peacekeeping mission. As the hon. member says, they have developed this sophisticated equipment and the money goes to the American contractors to build it.

In the new global community that has developed over the last decade I believe it would be possible for us to get involved in this or other types of operations to get Canadian companies some of the contracts to build the sophisticated high-tech instrumentations. That is where our future lies. We talked about this on another matter, an economic matter. Canada's economic future is in things like these high-tech, innovative telecommunication systems. Yes, I believe that Canada should have a part of that on a multilevel. Other countries are going to want it too. I believe it is as much ours as it is anybody else's.

• (1840)

**Mr. Jim Gouk (Kootenay West—Revelstoke):** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for his clear comments on this. It seems that many of the speakers tend to get confused on the issues or some of the rationale they are using.

The previous speaker whom we heard from that side of the House seemed to want to make this into a nuclear issue. I hasten to point out to the hon. member that we have many delivery systems in our own military capable of delivering nuclear weapons, if it was the choice to do so. It does not have to be just the cruise missile.

The cruise missile is not a nuclear weapon. It is simply a deliverance system. We saw it being used in the gulf war for conventional weapons in such a way as to be deadly accurate so that innocent people did not get injured.

Earlier we heard the hon. member for Mississauga West speak emotionally. I understand and I accept that she spoke from the heart and not necessarily to the facts of the matter.

What particularly interests me and is kind of curious is that yesterday we heard the hon. member for Burnaby—Kingsway speak with regard to the Bosnian issue where it was suggested that we should have air strikes in defence of our humanitarian aid in order to ensure that it gets through. Yet today the same member spoke against cruise missile testing and it is the very system that can make accurate delivery of the kind of strikes he was calling for.

I would like to thank the hon. member who just spoke for being clear and concise and for not trying to cloud the issue.

**Mr. Proud:** Madam Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for Kootenay West—Revelstoke for his remarks. I believe, as I said earlier when I opened my remarks, that there are some very different opinions here. I have my opinions and am very pleased to be able to bring them forward.

The argument can be made that the cruise missile does or does not carry nuclear weapons. My point is that we have an agreement. We need our allies and we need to make exchanges with them. Until this House, this country and this government decide down the line how our defence policy is going to go forward, I do not think we need to get into any arguments with our neighbours.

[Translation]

**Mr. Louis Plamondon (Richelieu):** Madam Speaker, allow me to join my colleagues in congratulating you on your new position and wishing you all the best. You can count on the co-operation of the entire Bloc Québécois.

Before getting to the core issue, I would like to say a few words about the relevance of this debate. I have been constantly surprised since the beginning. First surprise, the minister's speech. During the first five minutes, we were led to believe that he supported the tests and then, for the next five minutes, that he had doubts and later, that he did see the tests as useful after all. In the end, he said he would abide by the wishes of the House.

But behind all this wondering on the part of the minister, one could detect a desire to gain time. So I wonder.

• (1845)

On one hand, I had only praise for the government yesterday with respect to yesterday's debate because of the need to re-evaluate our peace commitments by April. But in this case, it seems to me that we could have had a more global debate on our military role, our international commitments and especially our agreements with the U.S. I cannot help but wonder, because the government does not seem to have a definite policy in that