

Government Orders

the argument here has been concentrated on nuclear. It carries a conventional weapon and as such it is another excellent weapon in our total arsenal. We cannot predict which weapon in our arsenal we are going to reach for.

We could look at Vietnam. We saw the Americans bringing back C-47 aircraft and mounting Gatling guns in the open doorways. That tells us, if we look at that situation and at the gulf war, that we need a complete set of weapons in our arsenal. We do not know which one we will have to pick.

Thus it is incumbent on us to allow the Americans to continue the testing of this specific weapon in case it is needed. We have the technological lead in the west. How long will we continue to have that lead? We do not know. There are all sorts of other countries or groups working to exceed what we have. If we have a lead, hang on to it.

Finally I ask this question: Has Canada contributed its share to democracy or the defence of the west over the last number of years? If I look at my time before and after being in NATO, I think the answer is no. We have been cheapskating. We have always been down around Luxembourg. This gives us a chance as a country to pay off some of our debts.

I will leave it at that except to reiterate the point made by the hon. member for Saint John concerning proliferation. This refinement of the missile is a means to prevent proliferation if that happens to us.

• (2110)

Mrs. Karen Kraft Sloan (York—Simcoe): Madam Speaker, I would like to ask the hon. member on the other side some questions regarding the statement about increased instability in the world and the need to use cruise missile tests as a way of reducing some of this instability.

As I said earlier, prevention is the only treatment for war. The Canadian people through their government have a remarkable opportunity to take a stand against the proliferation of the tools of war by refusing to continue cruise missile testing on Canadian soil.

Contrary to an earlier statement by a member on the opposite side of the House, we do not prepare for peace by preparing for war. In fact the mid-eastern war of 1991 showed that in preparing for war we prepare and encourage more war. Most of the weaponry used by Iraq was manufactured by G-7 countries. In fact, even though we are in a post cold war period, the military industrial complex of western world countries flourishes as the result of sales to Third World countries increasing global instability and jeopardizing the world peace the member on the other side of the floor has recently spoken to.

If we are suffering from so much tension and problems in the world, won't supplying more armaments and guns just be like adding fuel to the fire?

Mr. Ringma: Madam Speaker, I understand the thrust of the argument of my friend across the way. We do not get rid of tensions by hiding weapons. If the world could find a way of disarming so that everyone disarmed, I would be totally in favour of it. I said earlier that all people who have borne arms would feel the same way. They would be the first to put them on the pile.

We have not arrived at that point yet, it is sad to say. As soon as we can see it coming we should do something about it. If we could start to reduce the arms in the world I would be the first to join the club, but we have not arrived at that stage yet.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre de Savoye (Portneuf): I heard the member for Nanaimo—Cowichan say that we had won the cold war with arms but without using them.

The fact is, if we had not dared—perhaps with an incredible lack of judgment—if we had not tempted fate with nuclear weapons, if we had not chanced it to the point of madness, to the point of the “mutual mad” as they called it, if we had not implemented deterrents, maybe none of us would be here tonight to talk about peace.

Even though this weapons race may be foolish, at least it ensures the precarious parity that now exists and we must take that risk until our planet is completely free of violence. Unfortunately, that is not the case yet; we live in a violent world and if I let my guard down, if we as a country let our guard down, someone somewhere will seize the opportunity. Alas, this is not Disney World yet.

[English]

Mr. Derek Lee (Scarborough—Rouge River): Mr. Speaker, it is a real treat to participate on behalf of the constituents of Scarborough—Rouge River in a debate of this nature. Early in this Parliament our Prime Minister said to the House: “Please take this issue, debate it and tell me what Canadians think”. I can see individuals in my caucus over here and in their caucuses over there with views on both sides of the issue. It is unlikely I will be able to address any issue which has not already been covered. I want to compliment all of my colleagues, especially those who have made their first interventions and speeches in the House.

• (2115)

What is the cruise missile? It is simply a delivery system. This was not the case 10 years ago. Ten years ago the cruise missile was seen as a delivery system but more importantly a delivery system for strategic nuclear capability. That did not make a lot of us in this country very comfortable.

I know the Liberal Party grappled with the issue for many years inside the party, not necessarily in the House, and in caucus. I can see that its position has changed from time to time over the last one or two decades.