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realistic way in which to put it. Part of that reality is the simple but important notion that arms control agreements can only be based upon a mutual security allowing each signatory to feel secure in the commitment it makes.

Most of our major allies cannot accept the type of freeze envisaged in this resolution which, among other things, would crystallize the current imbalance in the European theatre. The very real problem of refining and improving nuclear weapons verification techniques must be addressed. An efficient verification system is indispensable to any effort to stabilize East-West relations.

I should like to remind not only the NDP but also the Government that the practicality, consistency and morality of this realistic approach have contributed to the fact that world tensions have been considerably reduced from this time a year ago. At that time Mr. Trudeau urged the superpowers to stop shouting at one another and enter into a dialogue.

All Canadians deeply desire a reversal of the nuclear arms race. Canadians want the Government and Parliament to take every sensible step possible to end the threat of a nuclear holocaust. Therefore we should not support a resolution which can, however unintentionally, weaken Canada's heretofore very credible role in the search for peace. We have achieved the highest international respect and have maintained world influence disproportionate to our population precisely because Liberal Governments have properly reflected and propounded the Canadian sense of thoughtfulness, decency, practicality and common sense.

● (1140)

I know that millions of thoughtful Canadians might well want to support the resolution before the House. At the same time, millions of Canadians will feel that this resolution, while laudable in its attempt, is not constructive at this time in the sense that it does not recognize that the solution has to be negotiated. The issue is not one of commitment to peace. The issue is how best to maintain peace and eventually bring an end to the nuclear arms race.

Recognizing what the goals are for the country, recognizing what the goals are for peace, understanding that those goals in terms of a freeze and a reduction must be pursued within the context of a negotiated settlement, recognizing that the resolution before the House notes a situation in the United Nations which is already outdated because the superpowers have signified a willingness to come together at the beginning of the New Year, we feel that the amendment which we will propose to this resolution suggesting an agenda for the superpowers, recognizing that that agenda provides the basis for negotiation, achieving what we believe Canadians seek and desire in their hearts, is the best way to honour the fears and fulfil the hopes of Canadians from one end of this country to the other. Therefore I propose, seconded by my colleague from Saint-Maurice (Mr. Chrétien):

That the motion be amended by deleting all of the words following the words "on a nuclear arms freeze" in the second to last paragraph of the motion and substituting the following:

"This House further takes note that the resumption of arms talks by the Soviet Union and the United States in Geneva in early 1985 announced by the superpowers on November 22, subsequent to the presentation of the above resolution at the United Nations, significantly alters the political situation on which the resolution is based and constitutes an effective first-step in the achievement of the two objectives to be attained in the declaration of a nuclear freeze;

and calls upon the Government to urge on behalf of Canadians that the meeting of the two nuclear superpowers have on its agenda the negotiation of limits on their nuclear arsenals, a mutually verifiable freeze and significant reductions; a strengthening of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty; a renewed emphasis on the mutual and balanced force reduction talks in Vienna; the encouragement of political emphasis on the Stockholm conference; a moving up of the date of the United Nations Special Session on Disarmament now scheduled for 1986; an international agreement to ban the testing and deployment of high-altitude anti-satellite weapons; and the refining and improvement of nuclear weapons verification techniques".

Mr. Speaker: I am sure the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Turner) will understand, given the length of the amendment, that I might have to wait a few minutes to make a decision as to its admissibility. Pending that decision, we can continue with the debate, if that is agreeable.

Questions and comments? No question and comments? Further debate. Is the House ready for the question? Is the House ready for the question? Further debate, the Hon. Member for New Westminster-Coquitlam. Excuse me, the Minister for External Relations (Mrs. Vézina).

Ms. Copps: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I do not want to detract from the seriousness of the debate, but I understood the Speaker to recognize another Member before recognizing the Minister. I just wonder whether this is a departure—

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member also knows, I am sure, from her experience in parliamentary assemblies that it is normal whenever possible to alternate between Parties. I saw the Hon. Member for New Westminster-Coquitlam. Before I finally recognized her, I realized that another Member was rising in her seat at the time. I thought it was more reasonable to recognize the alternate party system as best we could.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Monique Vézina (Minister for External Relations): Mr. Speaker, the Government is very pleased to have this opportunity to explain Canada's position on the nuclear arms freeze.

We would like to make it clear why Canada voted the way it did in the United Nations on November 20 of this year, when, faced with a number of unrealistic and incomplete proposals on a nuclear arms freeze, it voted against these proposals. It is heartening to see that today, Members of all parties will be able to express their views on the serious issue of international security and arms control. As we commence the debate, I hope first of all, that no one in this House will question the fact that Canadians and the various governments that have represented them since the beginning of Confederation have had the same desire for peace that is part of our tradition. It is one of our