

Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Act

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):—I do not know about the other Members here. I would like to know whether his speech is relevant, but I cannot do that. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretary of State for External Affairs has the floor.

Mr. Weiner: Mr. Speaker, we would still remain vulnerable to the effects and results of a nuclear holocaust, but in the process, would reduce our influence and our capacity to help avert the very disaster which it is our most fervent desire to prevent. Not only this, but Canada would be forced to shoulder its defence burden alone, with infinitely greater expenditure, and Canada would have reduced security in the bargain.

The proposed Bill would also prohibit the testing of the Cruise missile in Canada. NATO does not oblige Canada to test the Cruise missile. The decision by the previous Government to allow the United States to test unarmed air-launched Cruise missiles in Canada was seen as consistent with that Government's support for NATO's two-track policy which led to the deployment of ground-launched Cruise missiles in several NATO European countries. This Government decided to allow the United States to continue with its testing program because it believes that the Cruise missile is an essential element in the global balance of deterrence and is part of the Western response to the modernization by the Soviet Union of its offensive and defensive nuclear systems during the 1970s. This Soviet modernization continues into the 1980s.

The policy of allowing the United States to test air-launched Cruise missiles in Canada will be reviewed from time to time in the context of evolving progress in arms limitation and reduction negotiations.

Bill C-218 would also prohibit the manufacture of any components of nuclear weapons in Canada. Regarding Canadian co-operation in the production of U.S. Cruise missiles, Litton Systems Canada Limited was awarded the sub-contract by the U.S. Department of Defense through its parent company in the United States, Litton Industries, to produce a portion of the inertial guidance system for the Cruise missile. Litton's participation in a small part of the Cruise missile vehicle program would not be taken as a change in Canadian policies instituted at the end of the 1960s to divest our Armed Forces of a nuclear weapons capability. It is, however, consistent with joint defence efforts with our NATO allies who rely in part on the maintenance of a credible nuclear deterrent in the face of the growing military threat from hostile forces.

Bill C-218 also proposes another unrealistic measure. It directs that the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark) shall, at the earliest opportunity following the coming into force of this Act, propose a motion to the General Assembly of the United Nations calling for a world referendum on nuclear disarmament.

The Canadian Government does not support the idea of a global referendum on disarmament. The proposal fails to acknowledge that the current situation in the disarmament and arms control field is largely the result of the lack of adequate

international security arrangements and confidence among states which would ensure their security and national integrity at lower levels of arms. In the absence of such conditions, movement on disarmament will only come about after long and difficult negotiations among the parties involved.

Measures, such as the call for a world referendum on disarmament, will not solve these basic underlying problems which are preventing progress in this field. Real disarmament requires long and careful negotiations aimed at establishing mutual confidence and constructing adequate international security mechanisms to guarantee the safety of each state. We believe that the outcome of a world referendum is predictable: the vast majority of people who have even a basic understanding of the question would express support for disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, even though there would undoubtedly be vast differences of view on how to go about achieving it. Therefore, a world referendum, if held, would represent an expression of public opinion in favour of disarmament, but could not be a substitute for actual negotiation of verifiable international agreements.

There are other, more effective and less costly ways of bringing to bear on the militarily significant powers the world public's views on the need for arms control and disarmament which is, essentially, the objective of the world referendum. The Canadian Government's current effort through such mechanisms as the Disarmament Fund, is to seek to make Canadians more aware of the existence of the various issues and the background to them and to encourage a balanced discussion of them. The objective is to provide Canadians with the basis for making reasoned judgments on these issues and to enable them to make their views known more effectively.

In summary, Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada does not support a declaration of nuclear weapons free status for Canada because, while in some respects we may be regarded as a *de facto* nuclear weapons free zone following the withdrawal of the last nuclear capable aircraft from service with the Canadian Forces, we continue to participate fully in a defence alliance, NATO, which deploys a nuclear deterrent. The declaration of a nuclear weapons free zone in Canada would be inconsistent with membership in the Alliance as well as being inconsistent with the defence production sharing arrangements which we have with our allies.

You might want to ask a person out of work whether he would rather stay in the breadline instead of working in an arms factory. We had a defence procurement team which went across Canada helping Canadians find jobs and helping keep Canadians at work. They will be buying arms, whether or not we in Ontario want to sell them. There is some \$320 billion worth of available business for Canadians to access into the United States. We now have about a \$1 billion part of that business. As far as Canadians are concerned, it is a method of putting Canadians back to work. It is quite clear in our minds that we already have an ability to put people back to work. It is quite clear in our minds that we already have an ability to put people back to work. This Government was elected to