

member for combining these two serious problems; that of playing our part in meeting the food needs and the agricultural development needs of the world, and also playing our part in seeking effective disarmament. The statistics the hon. member gave this afternoon as to the amount we spend on research into how to kill each other as compared with what we spend on how to provide good health and a good life for all are shocking indeed.

● (1642)

I have listened with interest to the remarks of the hon. member for Comox-Alberni (Mr. Anderson). Like him, I am impressed with what Canada is doing in the field, but I am also impressed with the great need to do a lot more; and I am sure that my friend, the hon. member for Edmonton-Strathcona (Mr. Roche), if he gets the floor, will have something to say about how much more we should be doing. I also realize, especially since the hon. member comes from a constituency near Vancouver where strange things happen over radio stations, that he feels the need to emphasize the self-interest aspect of aid programs, and I suppose there are some who can be sold the program only on that basis. But I hope that our motive in trying to do something about the needs of the world and the rights of people around the world is more altruistic.

I support the appeal in this motion because it is right and I hope we shall proceed further with it. As I have already said, I think the hon. member combines in this motion two very important subjects which face our generation. If I may quote again the hon. member for Comox-Alberni, it could be one minute to midnight. If we are going to survive as a race, as a society, as a world, we have to solve the problem that faces us, with two-thirds of the world's people going to bed hungry every night while the healthy and developed nations spend their resources on ways and means to blow the world to bits.

So I think this is a good motion and we are having a good discussion this afternoon. I hope that the government will pay attention to the views that are being expressed during this debate on both sides of the House.

Mr. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, as usual, the hon. member for Egmont (Mr. MacDonald) brought to the House a big concept and an important idea and has demonstrated that, as a politician and a public figure, he is consistent with the very fine traditions of Canadians who are concerned with what is happening to the less strong and sometimes less prepared members of the family of man on the planet on which we live. He has painted a rather vivid picture of what is happening throughout the world.

In terms of the madness in the arms race—

Mr. MacDonald (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, I wish to rise on a point of order, with the permission of the hon. member. Since the hon. member for Davenport (Mr. Caccia) and the hon. member for Edmonton-Strathcona (Mr. Roche) were both seeking Mr. Speaker's eye a moment ago, and since only 15 minutes are left, I wonder whether it would be fair to suggest to the hon. member for Davenport that the remaining time

Food Aid

should be split so that both hon. members would have the opportunity to take part in the debate. I offer this by way of a suggestion because I know that they both have something useful to contribute to the debate.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): It is up to the hon. member for Davenport to decide if he wants to share his time.

Mr. Caccia: Mr. Speaker, I do not know how the sharing of the time would affect the proceedings at five o'clock, and therefore I will put forward whatever thoughts I have without committing myself on the question of the sharing of the time, which evidently has a built in feature over which I would have no control on this side of the House. However, I appreciate the desire of the hon. member opposite to participate in this debate and I wish there were an easy answer to his request.

The motion before us today is an important one. It is good that the time of this parliament is taken up by the thought provoking opening statement of the hon. member for Egmont, and that we should devote time to this question, perhaps more frequently than we have so far. As I understand the motion, it raises two questions: First, how does the government provide food aid; and second, how does the government provide international agricultural development assistance? These are the two main components of the motion before us this afternoon.

The hon. member for Egmont in his motion provides a link between food help and the proteins consumed by Canadians. It is a rather intriguing connection and I have not come across such a concept before. I wonder whether such a link would provide the stimulus to increase food help which is being sought. Suppose that the consumption of protein by Canadians were to drop in years to come. We would achieve then, as a result of this guideline if it were to be adopted, an opposite effect.

Similarly, under part (b) of the motion, a link is established between international agricultural development assistance and the gross revenue accruing to Canada from the world's arms trade. If, as we all hope, the world's arms trade were to decline in the years to come, and therefore the gross revenue to Canada were to fall, then evidently such a guideline, if it were to be adopted, would result in less rather than more international agricultural development assistance, which I suspect is not the aim of this parliament nor of the government.

Therefore, I have some doubt whether these are the most effective guidelines that the government should adopt. In approaching this question of food aid and agricultural assistance, the following picture is painted, namely, that by the year 1985 a shortfall in world cereal production has been forecast to be as large as about 80 million to 100 million tons a year. In addition, this shortfall would seriously affect the developing countries which are short of foreign exchange and which would therefore find it difficult to acquire cereals on the world markets.

With a shortfall of this magnitude, food aid from surplus countries can only help the most seriously affected, and therefore it could be concluded that the solution lies in increasing indigenous production; that is, production within each nation.