

Second, as a result, the requirement for terrain similar to Russia was no longer necessary since Russia was no longer our enemy.

Third, continued testing could contribute to a renewed arms race, not necessarily with Russia or the Soviet Union, but in other parts of the world including China, North Korea and other countries.

I must point out that there are 15 nations on the threshold of developing nuclear weapons. Missiles are the principal delivery system for those weapons. Both are essential to a successful strike.

How can the United States and Canada, if they continue to test these weapons, say seriously to these 15 nations that they should not develop these nuclear weapons? By the way, they are urging the 15 countries to sign the non-proliferation treaty. How can they urge those countries to do that when they are continuing to test new weapon technology themselves that can deliver a nuclear weapon? They cannot do that very well.

Not only will the continuation of cruise missile tests give justification to other countries to develop new dangerous weapons, but once tested and developed, they will become potential products in the international arms trade.

After the Iraq war we discovered that 90 per cent of the weapons used by Iraq against our own troops were sold to Iraq by the five great powers: the Soviet Union; China; France; the United Kingdom and the United States.

It is well known that most of the weapons purchased by poor Third World countries are developed, tested and sold to them by richer First World countries. They do so because in developing those weapons, such as the cruise, they have to develop a surplus of them to make it economically feasible and then they sell them to other countries that might want to buy them.

The United States and NATO now have a considerable military edge over the former east bloc countries and other countries that are their potential enemies. We do not need any new, improved cruise missile to maintain that edge. It will only justify as I said the development and spread of these weapons to other countries.

Some people have argued in this debate that the cancellation of this agreement will offend the United States. President Clinton and the United States government acknowledge themselves that the cold war is over. They have worked with Ukraine and the Soviet Union to reduce the weapons in those countries. As a matter of fact they have just concluded an agreement whereby they will no longer point weapons at each other. They have closed bases in the United States. I have been in various cities in the United States where Mr. Clinton is closing bases and they talk about the peace dividend.

Government Orders

When we co-operate in the furtherance of the arms race, which is what testing of cruise missiles is, we put in jeopardy our Canadian role as an honest broker internationally. We put in jeopardy our credibility as a peaceful nation.

Yesterday we debated peacekeeping and Canada has a long and very enviable role in peacekeeping. We are considered one of the outstanding nations of the world with respect to peacekeeping. We also have an excellent reputation with respect to international development. When we proceed again with cruise missile testing, we put the credibility of those other very good qualities into jeopardy.

I have here the hon. member for Nunatsiak and I have spoken with the other hon. member from the Northwest Territories. It is over their territory that these missiles are tested. They are both very much opposed to these weapons.

● (1920)

Let me say this in conclusion. The Prime Minister said he wanted a free debate. Without a doubt, he is getting it on this side of the House. However, I have not seen very much freedom from the Reform Party which has spoken about a free debate. They have all sang the same party line from beginning to end. As a matter of fact in all the votes in which they have participated so far they voted as a group on every occasion. Today they are all singing the same song. I have a bit of doubt about their sincerity concerning free votes and free expression.

I was very much dismayed by the statements made by some of my Liberal colleagues, particularly those who were here with me in the last Parliament and who approved of the policy we adopted in 1989 to oppose cruise missile testing. I could understand if they put forward new arguments that would allow them to bury the policy that they were in favour of last year. However, I heard no such new arguments.

The continued development and testing of cruise missiles in Canada are no longer necessary. It will contribute to a continuing arms race and to world instability.

I urge the government in assessing this debate not simply to count heads but to assess the arguments that are made by hon. members in this case.

[*Translation*]

Mr. André Caron (Jonquière): I want to thank the hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce for his remarks. I congratulate him on standing by the position he has held since 1983. I was surprised, however, by some of his arguments and I will quickly explain why. But I do nevertheless have a question for him.

The hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce began by listing the reasons why he is opposed to cruise missile testing. He described the cruise missile as a very dangerous, highly accurate weapon that is difficult to detect and that can carry nuclear warheads. I am somewhat surprised by this description because weapons are supposed to be dangerous. I do not think his is a strong argument because what makes a weapon effective is its