

Oral Questions

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Miss Jewett: —if we tested the Cruise. How does that square with his earlier remark that we would not be. He is saying one thing one day—and he has me confused and he has everyone in the country confused about this. If the Prime Minister refers to a commitment to Europe, Madam Speaker, if that is the commitment he says we would be breaching if we decline to test the Cruise, will he explain to me why it is possible for Norway not to test or deploy nuclear weapons and still remain a member of the alliance, and for Belgium possibly to refuse to deploy nuclear weapons? Would the Prime Minister explain to me why Canada has no independent initiatives in the alliance?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, I can assure the Hon. Member that I did not say there was a commitment to Europe to test the Cruise. There was no commitment to the United States and there is none to Europe.

What I said last night it seems to me is reasonably clear, if the hon. lady looks at the transcript. I was saying that there was a two-track decision made by NATO in December, 1979, to which all the members of NATO, including Canada, subscribed. One of those two tracks was an undertaking to deploy in Europe, in certain countries—not necessarily every one of them, Norway or Belgium, but in certain countries—to deploy Euro-missiles. That was a commitment which Canada made with the others.

My argument last night was that those who oppose the Cruise testing in Canada are really asking us to renege on a NATO commitment made by the Europeans to their North American partners. That is the logic I was putting forth last night. It does not mean that there has been an agreement made. I told the House before that we want to make sure that both tracks are being pursued, in other words, that the negotiations with the Soviet Union are being pursued at the same time as we are preparing for the deployment of the Euro-missiles, and that our judgment of how the other track was proceeding would influence us in deciding whether we would go with the Cruise or not. Indeed, that other track is what we discussed very extensively with Vice-President Bush yesterday.

Miss Jewett: Madam Speaker, the Prime Minister has said we are doing this because Europe has asked us to do so. That is a direct quote from last night. Now he is saying that Europe has nothing to do with it, it is not their request. Indeed, it is a request from the United States for the air launch Cruise missile testing, from the B-52 bombers. That that is what the request is all about. I wish he would make that clear.

UNITED STATES POSITION

Miss Pauline Jewett (New Westminster-Coquitlam): My final supplementary relates to the speech of President Reagan last night. Following on all the discussions about arms reductions with Vice-President Bush yesterday, we hear President

Reagan announce what can only be described as a frightening escalation of the nuclear arms race, an escalation which could well violate the rather fragile arms agreements we already have. I would like to ask the Prime Minister, particularly in light of the fact that the U.S. Congress has reduced the President's defence request from a 10 per cent increase to a 4 per cent increase, is there any inclination on his part, and the part of the Government, to stop doing exactly what President Reagan wants, and to take its lead from the U.S. Congress instead, or is the Canadian Government more susceptible to pressure from the White House than is the U.S. Congress itself?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, until now I respected the hon. lady's concern about this matter. I wonder if I will continue maintaining that respect after her interpretation of my speech last night. She misquoted and misstated what I had said in the first part of her question just now, and then she seems to have omitted completely anything else I might have said in that speech where I urged the Americans very strongly to try to return to a more flexible attitude in seeking progress in the INF talks.

I urged them to try to recoup the spirit which had existed for ten years, between 1962 and 1972 after the Cuban missile crisis, when there had been an immense amount of progress on anti-ballistic missile treaties, on hotline treaties, on non-proliferation treaties, on partial test-ban treaties, and on various confidence building measures. I said that that was a very productive period and we were worried that since, perhaps, ten years there has been nothing positive coming out, and particularly the fact that the United States has not ratified the second SALT II talks. These are things which worry us. Therefore, the whole thrust of my statement last night, it seemed to me, was to urge the United States on in the direction in which I thought the Hon. Member herself was interested. Now she seems to be more interested in trying to misinterpret my speech than in seeking progress in this matter.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

NATO DECISION IN 1979

Hon. Flora MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the Prime Minister. It applies to his previous response where he was discussing the 1979 two-track decision taken at the NATO ministerial meeting. He seemed to imply—and this is what I would like clarification about—that the decision as to whether or not there would be testing of the Cruise guidance missile system in Canada was also taken at that time. I would like him to tell the House that it is his understanding that the decision which was taken in 1979 applied to the arms control talks and to the deployment of the Cruise and Pershing missiles in Europe only, and had nothing to do whatsoever with the testing of any guidance missile system here in Canada.