

do a lot better and we guarantee that we will improve. That is for sure.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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SPACE WEAPONRY

UNITED STATES STRATEGIC DEFENCE INITIATIVE

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Saint-Maurice): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. In view of the fact that a consultative group on disarmament and an arms adviser to the Prime Minister's Government disagreed with his policy on star wars, and in view of the fact that in the universities of this land and in many places all across the country there is more and more opposition to star wars will the Prime Minister answer the following question? The Ambassador of Disarmament to the United Nations, an appointee of the Government, told 2,500 members of the Physicians for Social Responsibility in Toronto on Saturday that they should go out into the streets of Canada to show their opposition to the star wars madness. Will the Prime Minister tell us whether this is the new policy of the Government?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, that was a rather liberal interpretation of what was said by the relevant Ambassador.

An Hon. Member: Is he still employed?

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): The proposal that was made by the Ambassador on Disarmament was that Canadians should, as they had in the past, take advantage of those values which we are defending here, the values of freedom, to express their views, even when they disagree with the Government. That is a position and a value which this Government actively supports.

With regard to the consultative group, it is true that there was a report by the consultative group. It is true that that report does take issue with some of the positions of the Government. It is also true that when the hon. gentleman was Secretary of State for External Affairs he would not appoint a consultative group on arms control and disarmament because he was not interested in the opinions of anyone outside his Government.

[Translation]

UNITED STATES INVITATION—CONSULTATION WITH CANADIAN PEOPLE—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Saint-Maurice): Mr. Speaker, since the Prime Minister does not want to answer that question, I will direct a supplementary to the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

We set up the Institute for International Peace, and we tabled a Bill in Parliament to which the Right Hon. Secretary of State for External Affairs objected, and today he is trying

Oral Questions

to use it and it is now one of this Government's initiatives. In any case, considering this Government's commitment to consulting Canadians and the fact that opposition to Star Wars is growing daily in this country, is this Government going to live up to its commitment to consulting Canadians and let the arbitrary 60-day deadline imposed by President Reagan on Star Wars pass, and ask Canadians for their opinion before involving this country in a policy that will be disastrous to world peace?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): First of all, Mr. Speaker, as far as the Institute is concerned, I can inform the Hon. Member that the Institute was supported and, in fact, improved by Members of this Party, and today, the independence of the Institute is being actively supported by the present Government of Canada.

Regarding the invitation extended by the United States, I would like to point out that it is being considered. As far as consulting the Canadian public is concerned, the Canadian people were consulted on September 4 of last year.

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[English]

LABOUR CONDITIONS

UNEMPLOYMENT—REQUEST FOR REDUCTION TARGET

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister, of course, has an abiding concern with the truth, and he will know the reality is that the rate of job creation for the last six months is lower than for the previous six months, and that unemployment has increased in three of the last four months when figures were produced.

Since the Parliament of Canada in the past has set targets for reducing the rate of inflation that ultimately became effective, will the Government commit itself to the same kind of target principle when it comes to unemployment, and will the Prime Minister commit his Government to bring down unemployment, say by a minimum of 2.5 per cent, during the next 12 months?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I suppose if the Hon. Member had a formula, or the Leader of the Opposition, or anyone else, that he could give me, whereby we can bring down unemployment by 2.5 per cent in the next month or two, I would grab it and say thank you, and I know the country would too.

In point of fact what we are trying to do, and I think with some success, is to lower interest rates, to get government spending under control, and to create a climate favourable for investment for job creation. There have been indications of lower interest rates, greater foreign investment, and national investment. There have been instruments of growth and economic prosperity in place in western Canada, for example, which in job creation will be of remarkable proportions, and in