

Government Orders

bill goes through and next year they make the sale, what are they going to do then?

An hon. member: It is ten years of work.

Mr. Brewin: Ten years. All right. If some other company comes in next year, in ten years they are going to have the problem, then they will have to sell to somebody else and to somebody else. In terms of jobs and a sound economic base, it is very clear that the defence industrial base has some major flaws. We are dealing with a world military situation now, where the markets in Europe and in the United States, because of the end of the cold war, will be shrinking. So the industry is forced to move to other places. It is time that we had a thorough review of all of these issues and got our act together.

Mr. David Barrett (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my colleague, was it not the former President of the United States, a former leading general in World War II, President Eisenhower, who said, "beware of the military industrial complex," back in the 1950s, almost 40 years ago. This same nibbling away and rationalization has been given for massive arms build-ups. Is it not correct?

Rather than talking about 40 years ago, 40 days ago members of this government were saying publicly that Canada would not participate in building up arms in that particular region after the Iraqi war.

Mr. Fontana: Defensive weapons.

Mr. Barrett: Defensive weapons—Twiddle—de—dee, twiddle—de—dum, commonly known on the streets as BS. I will not go beyond the initials. But tell that to a child who has been shot and killed by an automatic weapon that it was only defensive.

Mr. Fontana: Cars are killing people too.

Mr. Barrett: Oh, cars. Now cars are causing wars. Okay. If that is the Liberal position, let it be the Liberal position. I am anxious to hear the Liberal position.

I want to ask my colleague a question. The Liberal Party is just as hypocritical as the Tories. Was this government not in the forefront of pious statements just 40 days ago saying: "We will lead the world in restricting arms sales"? Was it not the former minister of external affairs who went to the region alone, ahead of the United States Secretary of State and said: "Canada has a different position. We will not contribute to sales in this

region"? Was it not those self same people? I have a short memory. Perhaps you could remind me.

Mr. Brewin: I am glad to assist the hon. member in getting on the record of the House statements made by the former minister of external affairs who said in January: "Unrestricted arms sales in the Middle East are no longer acceptable and constitute a threat to the security of all members of the United Nations".

This is one of the particularly invidious issues, the sale of arms into the Middle East region. When one country has additional weapons, then its neighbours feel obliged to get into the market and add to it. Saudi Arabia, in the last year in which statistics are available, was second only to Iraq in the world for the importation of arms. It spent 22.7 per cent of its Gross National Product on arms sales and arms purchases.

We think it is time this stopped.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Marc Ferland (Portneuf): Mr. Speaker, I am always astonished when I hear the position taken by NDP critics on Canada's defence. This morning, however, I am absolutely flabbergasted. I would like to remind the hon. member that in Canada 300,000 workers earn a living in the defence industry.

This morning the hon. member suggested that to keep Canada looking pure as the driven snow it should no longer produce the weapons it needs for its own security, but he knows perfectly well that both our industry and our purchasing power in this country are too small. What he is suggesting but does not have the courage to say outright is that in future, to keep up its virginal appearances for the NDP's sake, Canada should no longer manufacture its own weapons but purchase them abroad, in other words provide jobs for people in other countries so that we will at least have the means to ensure our own security.

I would like to know whether the hon. member will finally come out and say so in this House.

[*English*]

Mr. Brewin: Mr. Speaker, let me just respond to the member who asked that question by throwing back at him the words of his leader, the Prime Minister of Canada, who said on March 13: "We could be big arms merchants. We have chosen not to be although it is a very lucrative business. We have chosen not to be