

*Supply*

Let me deal with one narrow aspect of the question. I was concerned by the assumption of the last speaker for the New Democratic Party that the air-launched Cruise missile is in fact a dedicated nuclear weapons system. That is absolute nonsense. The air-launched Cruise missile is put together with rivets. It is a simple vehicle that has only one dedicated function.

I want to tell my hon. colleagues something that obviously very few of them are aware of. In the first three days of a conventional war in Europe, the task of the allies will be to interdict airports from which enemy aircraft are launched in a pre-emptive and conventional strike, to interdict important transportation corridors, to interdict radar and other electronic radio communications systems and to interdict a dozen other very important targets. Those targets are fixed. They are not mobile targets. We know precisely and exactly where they are. There is no need to use an atomic warhead to blow up an airport or a building that houses a communications centre. Perhaps it is time that the secrecy that surrounds these things was lifted a little bit and that we come to understand the potential of conventional explosives.

In the first three days of interdicting key elements in a pre-emptive advance against our allies, we will lose 75 per cent of all airplanes that are sent down the middle of a runway in order to render them inoperable to a potential enemy. We will lose 75 per cent of the aircraft we send because those very airports are heavily defended. As we know, those airplanes range from a single man fighter bomber all the way to a three man fighter bomber. They cost anywhere from \$30 million to \$75 million or \$80 million each. They are operated by one, two or three living persons, human souls on board, and we will lose 75 per cent of these men and planes. Given the choice, Mr. Speaker, of sending a manned fighter bomber at a cost of \$30 million, \$40 million or \$50 million each with one, two or three souls on board, or an unmanned Cruise missile that is air-launched and that, in terms of production if we can ever get rid of inflation in the country, would in fact cost \$900,000 or \$1 million, what choice would you make? The lack of knowledge that we as Canadians have with respect to what is in fact going on in the world scares and horrifies me.

This afternoon, Mr. Speaker, I essentially want to deal with host countries because I think it is important that we understand what our allies are trying to do. Later I will discuss the recipient or host country of the ground-launched Cruise missile which is a dedicated nuclear vehicle.

If I have a complaint against my friends in the New Democratic Party, it is the opportunism that they display by turning the air-launched Cruise missile testing in Canada into a nuclear debate. Let us have both. Let us debate all of this. Let us try to understand, but let us not confuse and let us not ever again convey to the Canadian people that when we talk about the technology of an air-launched Cruise missile system that is conventionally dedicated to a specific conventional role and would be finished within the first three or four days of a war, that we are talking about a massive, first strike, nuclear dedicated weapons system. I have invited Members of the New

Democratic Party to tell me what their source of reference is that indicates to them that it is a massive first strike dedicated nuclear weapons system. It is no such thing and was never intended to be that. As a matter of fact, it is a drone that flew over the skies of Alberta 25 years ago that has been upgraded slightly. We are trying to test and to perfect the guidance system. It is a conventional vehicle.

Leaving that aside, the New Democratic Party has afforded us an opportunity to discuss nuclear weapons systems. Well, let there be no mistake. There is absolutely no relationship whatsoever except in appearance between a sea-launched Cruise missile, a ground-launched Cruise missile and an air-launched Cruise missile. I doubt very much that my friends even know what the central system is. From what I have heard today, I have some doubts as to whether Members of the New Democratic Party, aside from their Leader, know the difference between a strategic philosophy and a theatre philosophy. I honestly do not think that they know what is going on in Europe.

I have had the privilege, Mr. Speaker, of sitting on the Special Nuclear Weapons in Europe Committee for some three and a half years now and I think that perhaps I have a responsibility to address myself to what is going on in West Germany, in the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Italy and Belgium. We all know what happened in West Germany. On the strength of continued support for the deployment of ground-launched Cruise missiles in Europe, dedicated weapons systems have the capacity to be converted back to conventional whereas the air-launched Cruise missile does not have the capacity to be converted to a nuclear system in under three or four years because of the entirely different technology. You can certainly drop a nuclear capable air-launched Cruise missile, there is no question about that, but what we are building is not dedicated to that. To those who express surprise and say we are testing a Stealth vehicle, I say, of course we are. What do they think the name of the game is? If they trust Moscow, they can go and live there. I do not.

• (1610)

Under the terms of the twin-track decision of December, 1979, it was envisioned that in the event of failure to achieve INF agreement, 108 Pershing II and 96 ground-launched Cruise missiles would be deployed in Germany. Public and Government attitude toward this deployment, scheduled to begin in December, 1983, has attracted considerable attention within Germany, from other members of the alliance and certainly from the Soviet Union. Much of this attention is focused on the March 6 Bundestag election which was viewed by the outside world largely as a missile referendum. The crucial votes determining the election were in fact actually economic and social. The current 10 per cent rate of unemployment, the question of higher pensions and schemes for economic recovery appear to have been more important than nuclear missiles in spite of the extensive publicity and media coverage given to the nuclear issue.