

Mr. Prud'homme: I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, but I have a point of order. Your Honour must hear my point of order.

With my usual due kindness to the hon. member for Yukon, I do not know why he has dragged me into the debate. I was only speaking very privately with you, Mr. Speaker, asking for the list of Speakers for today.

Mr. Nielsen: And, by coincidence, the cameraman was there.

Mr. Prud'homme: I was just speaking to Your Honour privately, very silently, if possible, to find out who will be the next speaker, because I will be speaking today. I wanted to know when I will speak. It is a long practice—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member has made the point that he is not involved in any subterfuge whatsoever with the Chair, which the present incumbent is quite prepared to substantiate. The hon. member for Oshawa has the floor.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Broadbent: Mr. Speaker, I regret to say that it certainly reflects the sense of priorities among some people to have an interruption of this kind on this topic.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Broadbent: Worst of all in this development is the spread and development of nuclear weapons in particular. Now more than ten nations are believed to have a nuclear weapons capability and another half dozen are very close to having it. There is in existence enough nuclear capacity for the United States and the Soviet Union to destroy each other's population several times over. It is therefore a moral obligation of the highest priority for politicians to think about the consequences of nuclear war and to act with realism and intelligence to avoid it.

● (1520)

We cannot look for a better guide than to the minority report prepared by members representing all parties of the House of Commons which studied the related questions of security and disarmament. I want to take this opportunity at this point in my comments to compliment all the members on that committee representing the Liberal and Conservative parties. I want to single out in particular, and I am sure it will be understandable, the very significant contribution made by three members of my party, the hon. members for New Westminster-Coquitlam (Miss Jewett), Saskatoon East (Mr. Ogle) and Selkirk-Interlake (Mr. Sargeant). All members are to be commended for their serious moral and practical concerns about this question.

The sparse and precise prose of the minority report presents a grim but accurate portrayal of the consequences of nuclear war. I quote:

Supply

People not immediately burned to death, blown apart or asphyxiated in shelters would find themselves in a nightmare world, populated by the dying, dead, and insane. Food, crops, and land would be contaminated, water undrinkable. The survivors would envy the dead. In an all-out attack, who would survive, as radiation sweeps across the oceans and into the atmosphere, depleting the ozone layer, and releasing lethal ultraviolet rays? The collapse of the ecosystem would leave a global wasteland.

Many people have been deeply moved in recent weeks by a similar description found in the important analysis of nuclear armament and warfare provided by Jonathan Schell in his series of articles in *The New Yorker* magazine. I urge members of all parties in the House to read that series with great care.

The nuclear arms race has become a vicious circle. The accumulation of new arms by one side increases the feelings of insecurity in the other. This in turn leads to a further demand in the name of self-defence for more nuclear weaponry. In the past few years, the momentum of this circular motion has increased, I regret to say. It has reached what can only be described as alarming proportions. Rather than producing tranquility based on security, new arms spending is only increasing feelings of worldwide insecurity. This circle must be broken. Hence the timeliness and practical wisdom of the minority committee's report. What lies behind the report is a profound understanding of the world armament situation and the realization that Canada can and should show leadership in this field.

In this context, it is particularly worth noting that we in this country were the first nation on earth with the capacity to develop nuclear weapons to refuse to do so. That was a noble beginning. It is time we returned to the principles which gave it birth.

It is also worth noting that following World War II, as a middle power, Canada acquired a good reputation among the nations of the world as an activist nation, a nation willing more than once to move beyond the confines of the status quo. It is time that we returned to this tradition also. It is time for the Government of Canada to cease being a follower in the deadly armaments game. It is time to step out and speak up at long last for disarmament.

This can and must be done in practical terms. The nuclear minority report shows us how. What does it recommend? First, it recommends a nuclear freeze. It calls for a global freeze on the testing, production and deployment of nuclear weapons and their delivery vehicles. This is the same as the resolution proposed by Senators Hatfield and Kennedy in the United States and which up to yesterday had the support of almost 200 United States congressmen and senators, and the numbers are growing daily.

Such a mutually binding freeze, accompanied by international inspection and monitoring mechanisms, is realistic. First, it would head off a new round of first-strike and related counter-force weapons development. Second, it is not unilateral disarmament; it would be binding on both of the great power blocs.