

Government Orders

who may not be aware a northern firm recently built a village in Siberia.

Northerners do not believe continued cruise missile testing in the Northwest Territories will further the goals of enhanced peace and security. Cessation of these tests however could be a bold step toward a new circumpolar security regime.

Cruise missile testing is only one component of the umbrella test and evaluation agreement we have with the United States. It is possible to terminate this specific project arrangement without terminating the other parts of this agreement.

Northerners are not suggesting the termination of the entire umbrella agreement. They are only asking for the termination of the specific cruise missile testing component. Let us take a bold step. Let us cancel the cruise missile testing.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): I would like to remind the House that questions should be on the previous speaker's debate.

Mr. Pat O'Brien (London—Middlesex): Madam Speaker, like many members in this House I have mixed feelings on this question. I certainly appreciate the comments of my colleague. I am sure we all share the anguish he must feel representing the people most directly affected by this important decision. It certainly would not bother me to see Canadian foreign policy by this new government show a little bit of independence at this time from the United States.

I would like to ask the member if he could comment on what I am hearing as one of the strongest arguments in favour of the testing, at least in my opinion, and it is simply this. As a partner in NORAD with the United States are we not bound to some extent, if not very bound, to carry out this test as part of that NORAD partnership?

I wonder if the hon. member could address that concern. I listened closely to his comments. They were excellent comments, but I did not hear that particular argument mentioned. I sincerely would be interested in how he might respond to that argument because I think it is also a strong point.

Mr. Anawak: Madam Speaker, we do have agreements with other countries, whether they are of a military nature or any nature. We do have agreements with other countries, treaties, pacts. We have to remember we are still an independent country. I have very strong feelings about the fact that Canada is a free country. We are a nation of people who are peace loving.

● (2040)

I do not think we have an agreement with the United States that can be, as I pointed out at the end of my speech, terminated year by year. I do not think we are getting into any trouble. Frankly, I would not care if we got into trouble with the United

States. I do not think we are getting into any trouble if we decide to cancel cruise missile testing in the far north.

As I said earlier in a point to one of the members, the area of possible conflict has changed in the last two or three years. The terrain is not the same. If the Americans had to attack anybody it would not be the Soviet Union.

Despite some concerns about the mad guy from Russia—I cannot remember his name, the fool anyway—I do not think he is a threat. Therefore Russia is not a threat. There is no Soviet Union. The threat is more from other countries that may be developing nuclear weapons.

Why do we not ask the United States to test their cruise missiles over terrain of similar nature. If the terrain is similar to the terrain between here and Montreal or Toronto and Vancouver why not test it through there?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bernard Deshaies (Abitibi): I would like to ask the hon. member a brief question. I also have mixed feelings regarding this issue, and since I also represent a riding which is bordered by the far North, I want to ask the member this question: Since our country and his region have never experienced war, if we had to go to war some day and had not learned how to defend ourselves, either alone or with the help of allies, would the hon. member still think that he made the right decision today?

[*English*]

Mr. Anawak: Madam Speaker, when the member for Saint John was speaking she pointed out quite clearly that the cruise missiles that they were using carrying conventional weapons were very accurate.

It is not as though we were suffering from lack of knowledge on how to make a cruise missile that can hit a target within a few feet. It is not as if we are going to lose out by not continuing to test the cruise missile.

We already have weapons that can hit within a few feet from hundreds of miles away. I do not think we will get into trouble if we do not test the cruise missile. I do not think the world will be any worse off if the cruise missile is not tested. If it is used as it is, it still destroys.

Mr. Ian McClelland (Edmonton Southwest): Madam Speaker, it is an honour for me to rise today and speak as the representative for Edmonton Southwest and to represent the citizens of that fine part of the world.

Let me begin as others have before me in congratulating you and all members of the House on winning the election and thereby being entrusted with this high honour, this great responsibility and opportunity.