

The Address—Mr. Evans

1900s. We have increasingly not only depoliticized the whole military and industrial structure but we have depoliticized the notion, the concept, of war, and that has to be undone.

When Lester B. Pearson received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1957, he stated that in a nuclear age, nations must choose between peace and extinction. Never in the course of human history has the choice been as stark as it is today. It is only when we recognize that nuclear weapons are not like other weapons in any way, shape or form, that we can begin to act upon the choice which has to be made. Nuclear weapons cannot be used to achieve strategic political goals; their only role is to provide a secure and effective deterrent, and that can only be done as we reduce their use and their availability to zero, combined with an enhanced role for conventional forces. I believe the United States and the Soviet Union will have to realize that there is no alternative to peaceful coexistence on this planet.

In closing I would like to quote again from the United Nations First Special Session on Disarmament in 1978. The passage reads:

Removing the threat of a world war—a nuclear war—is the most acute and urgent task of the present day. Mankind is confronted with a choice: we must halt the arms race and proceed to disarmament or face annihilation.

Mr. Skelly: Mr. Speaker, that was a very important speech made by the Hon. Member for Ottawa Centre (Mr. Evans). In my comments I would like to endorse the efforts of the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) in any effort that can bring this globe closer to peace. However, I have some problems. Would the Hon. Member address the following three areas? It is very difficult for anyone to accept as serious and sincere a peace initiative when there is a hint of hypocrisy in it, when the Prime Minister of Canada, the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party in the House, approve testing of the Cruise missile in Canada in light of the fact that the Prime Minister at a special conference on disarmament advocated a suffocation mechanism that would prohibit the testing of such a weapon by any nation. It is difficult to comprehend that hypocrisy.

● (1630)

Second, the Liberals and Conservatives joined together to stop a vote on a motion to make Canada a nuclear free zone. The import of that motion would have been that we as a country would have stopped building components for nuclear weapons systems, which would in fact have given us greater credibility in an international context.

There has been an appeal by middle nations to have the Prime Minister and this country become involved in the Central American conflict in such a way that we could provide greater aid to those nations which need assistance, such as Nicaragua, and that we could use our influence in a stronger and more effective way to bring the combatants to the bargaining table in El Salvador. Yet the Prime Minister and the Government of Canada appear to want to provide material which can be used by the armed forces of nations that are creating or escalating the conflict in Central America.

Why are we testing the Cruise missile when we know that hypocrisy erodes our credibility in the world? Why are we continuing to make components for nuclear weapons? Why are Canadians not far more extensively involved in Central America to create some peace and stability there through negotiations and effective aid to nations which require it?

Mr. Evans: Mr. Speaker, let me try to address myself to those three questions. First, with regard to Cruise missile testing, I think all of us would much prefer that there be no more development of nuclear weapons of any kind or nuclear weapons delivery systems, which is what this particular case is. However, I think we have to look at it from the perspective that if there is to be an ability for us and the Prime Minister to play a role in the negotiations and to have credibility with our NATO allies, as well as establishing credibility with those in the Eastern Bloc, we have to be considered as, and seen to be, a stable partner in the NATO alliance. It is in that context that the Cruise decision has to be seen. Without a decision of that nature, it would be very difficult for the Prime Minister to have made the gains he has made with our western allies, or if we were seen as less than a full partner in the Western Alliance.

At the same time the Prime Minister has made overtures toward the East, supported by people in the House, which make him a credible spokesman on that side of the Iron Curtain as well. It is a fine balancing act. I truly believe that the Cruise missile testing position was a critical element in maintaining or establishing that fine balance. It placed the Prime Minister in the position to undertake the kinds of initiatives he has undertaken up to this point and which, hopefully, he will undertake in the future with great success. That has more to say about the Cruise missile decision than anything else that has been said in the House in the past.

With regard to a nuclear free zone, that motion was a Private Member's motion. Indeed, we wanted to have that motion debated in the House of Commons. In fact, we had to give unanimous consent to allow it to be debated, and we gave it. However, at the time we gave unanimous consent there was no debate. No one stood up to debate the issues. It would seem to me that it would be rather foolish for Hon. Members of the House, with a piece of paper in front of them, to vote in favour of something when the mover of the motion did not rise to explain what the motion was all about or what he wanted to do. The mover of the motion sat on his hands in the corner and did not rise. It was an immediate vote without any debate or discussion. It was not unreasonable, when the mover would not even debate his own motion, simply to vote against it.

I might add that there is another motion—and I think it is in the form of a Bill—which says almost precisely the same thing, on the *Order Paper*. When that motion comes before us in Private Members' Hour, I hope we will have a chance to debate the issues and we will not have a situation where individual Members do not rise to debate it. Turning to Central America—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please.