

the Opposition at the time and are now with the majority. The Institute was created nonetheless.

I want to take this opportunity to say that, when we were looking for someone to lead the Institute, the Hon. Member of the New Democratic Party and myself suggested a few names. The name I had suggested from the beginning and which was rejected by everyone before being finally chosen was that of the son of the Right Hon. Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson, under whose leadership I was first elected. I am talking about Geoffrey Pearson, a great Canadian and former ambassador to the Soviet Union, who has now been chosen to head the Institute.

I hope that the Institute, which will now be called in French *Institut canadien pour la paix et la sécurité internationales*, as it should have been from the start, will have no hesitation in using the independence which Parliament wished it to have. I know that, in this regard, I have the support of those who want the Institute to keep its independence and to carry out its research without regard to the political effects of its findings in Canada. That is the first aim of the Institute, and Parliament and all three political parties clearly wished that it would have the independence required when it was created. I know that there are difficult problems to be examined in various parts of the world. Since the creation of the Institute, we have had this issue of the SDI. I understand that there are negotiations going on to my left, but I do not want to lose the thread of my comments. Mr. Speaker, I would appreciate it if you would ask them to hold their conference outside. Mr. Minister, if you please—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): If I may call you back to order . . .

Mr. Prud'homme: Even if I was not advised of this debate, I have to follow some logical reasoning.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): Yes . . . the Hon. Member for Saint-Maurice (Mr. Chrétien) and the Hon. Member for Saint-Jacques (Mr. Guilbault).

Mr. Prud'homme: As I was saying, first of all, we are glad that the Institute has now an appropriate name and we are going to support the proposal of the Right Hon. Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark). Second, we want to emphasize that this Institute was created as an autonomous body by Parliament and I hope that. Third, we wish Geoffrey Pearson, who will have to see to it that these studies are carried out properly, all the courage he will need to examine the real current issues. Among these, there is of course the issue of the so called Star Wars Project. I also hope that he will not hesitate to make the first step occasionally, as studies can be initiated either at the request of the Government or on the Institute's own initiative.

Well, I hope that the institute will enjoy that independence; I can never be too insistent that we should go forward even with respect to the most controversial issues, especially those

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involving world peace or international peace with which Canada is not necessarily concerned as opposed to other parts of the world, whether in the Middle East, in Asia or in Latin America. We are looking forward to the results of some of the first studies. We will read them carefully and support them. I will support them because I know that if a group is given the necessary independence to carry on beyond political considerations, it can only publish excellent reports that will enlighten Canadians.

Mr. Speaker, I will not proceed any further but I would like to thank you for having recognized me even if I had just learned that we were going to consider the matter. Nevertheless, I was anxious to take part in this debate, because when I was chairman of the Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence, and that was up to the very last day and practically the very last second of the previous Parliament, we had to struggle against what everyone thought were practically insurmountable odds.

I wish to thank the Members who were sitting on the committee at that time. I would like to mention the official critic for external affairs of the New Democratic Party (Ms. Jewett) who played her role as she always does. It was thanks to her co-operation and that of several Members of the new majority. I could refer to them specifically . . . On some future occasion I would like to elaborate on the work done by those Members who gave us their genuine support and who believed in what we wanted to do at the time. To be perfectly honest, no single party can take the credit and claim that it was thanks to the New Democrat or thanks to the Liberals that things got done.

There were Progressive Conservatives who had the wisdom and the intelligence to understand what this Institute would be able to do, and there were also those who were not very enthusiastic and who tried to delay consideration so the Institute would never become a reality.

That is what I wanted to say, first of all for the record, and second, when we have further occasions to consider international affairs, and I hope there will be many, I would like to have a chance to pay tribute to those Members of the new majority who were in the Opposition at the time and who also made an outstanding contribution to the creation of this Institute, which today has become a reality and will undertake studies, as I said earlier, on behalf of Canada, keep us better informed on major international problems and help us act responsibly when we are apprised of the conclusions of these studies. In any case, we will all act according to our own lights and act responsibly, even if the conclusions arrived at by some Members may be highly unpopular.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): Questions or comments. Debate. The Hon. Member for Winnipeg-Fort Garry (Mr. Axworthy).