

agreed with the Americans that we were going to strike first at the Russians, and I do not think that that is our intention.

I do not see much point in attacking the Russian submarines after they have launched their missiles, because we would be frying at the other end of their missiles' trajectories. It seems to me that a reasonable navy for Canada to have is one that can intercept smugglers, that can question foreign ships that enter our waters, but not one that is capable of fighting Soviet submarines or the Soviet fleet. If there is a NATO strategy to fight a naval war, or to escort convoys across the Atlantic, as in the good old days of World War II, it is a nostalgic strategy, I submit, which does not think in terms of the next war but of the last war; it is a strategy repeating what the French did with the Maginot Line. Therefore, with the greatest of respect, and humbly, because I am very new in this chamber, I find that the conclusions in the report have looked at the trees presented in each case by very able and dedicated military officers whom we pay to worry about a particular tree, but who have not looked at the total forest, which is a forest in which we will not fight. Our whole aim is to avoid a third world war. So far, I have not heard of a reasonable policy for avoiding a third world war other than convincing the Russians that if they fire first they will sustain our retaliatory fire. In other words, the U.S. retaliatory fire will destroy them. Senator Macdonald and the members of the committee propose that we go the British and French route and develop our own nuclear deterrent forces consisting of four or five submarines capable of destroying Russian cities. That is fine if we are fired upon first, but since we are not going that route, I do not see any point in following the suggestions of the committee.

**Hon. Duff Roblin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, I had not thought of entering into this discussion until I heard Senator Gigantès make his observations regarding the report. I must admit that he raises points which I think deserve careful consideration and I really think that they may have received some consideration by the committee when it was preparing its report.

One of the assumptions that underline the work the committee did was that we were not planning to deal with nuclear war. If one makes the assumption that the Russians are going to fire nuclear weapons from submarines, and our navy might stop that, we are assuming that the situation will be one of nuclear conflict. If that is the case we can relax because there is not much anyone is going to be able to do about it anyway. As far as we can tell, the consequences of a nuclear interchange are so disastrous that there is left nothing to talk about.

● (1510)

The committee in its consideration of this matter concluded that it would not be useful to make any recommendations which contemplated military action in the event of a nuclear war. The chairman of the committee is sitting here and heard a lot more of the evidence than I did, and I would not be at all upset if he corrected me on any of these points. The committee stated that we are not dealing with a nuclear situation but what is now called, charmingly, a conventional war. Of course,

[Senator Gigantès.]

it raises the whole question of just how tolerable a conventional war might be.

The first point I want to make is that if you are thinking of nuclear war, then there is no point in talking about a navy. Before the navy gets out of the harbour, that war will be over with the impact of nuclear weapons. I do not think the committee had that in mind. Senator Gigantès' criticism of that point is well taken if we were contemplating nuclear war, but I do not think we were. What we were contemplating was a conventional war. One can say that it is not going to be at all like World War II, and I think that is quite right. You cannot really expect history to repeat itself—certainly not military history. I agree with him that there is a great temptation to fight the last war in all our military plannings, and it may be that the committee has slipped into that danger in some of its thinking, but I hope not.

What are we talking about then? I think we are talking about the whole question of deterrence. When you talk about whether or not you should do anything about the navy, you are talking about a deterrent to a conventional war. If you are manifestly not contemplating being prepared to fight a conventional war, then any way in which you might hope to discourage the other side from indulging in that kind of warfare will, of course, be fruitless. You will see that you are like Britain in 1939, unable, because they had done nothing about rearmament, to weigh into the balance of decision the intentions of Hitler at that time.

Canada, to my mind, should take its place in the NATO structure, however imperfect that may be—and, heaven knows, it is not entirely satisfactory—contemplating a conventional type of conflict, and be able to pull its weight. It is a matter of judgment as to whether or not that is a futile operation. You may say that conventional warfare is a ridiculous idea. How soon after the conventional war starts does the nuclear holocaust begin? That is certainly a credible scenario, and if it turns out to be the right one then there is no hope.

I merely wanted to say that when the committee was considering this matter it was considering the desirability or otherwise of having a deterrent capability in the face of conventional warfare. I think there was another consideration, namely, our place in the scheme of the NATO alliance. One of the things that has always distressed me is that when Canadian statesmen have toured the world in favour of peace, and Canadian statesmen have endeavoured to mobilize the NATO alliance for that purpose, as the Prime Minister has tried to do, they find themselves at somewhat of a disadvantage because people say, "It is all very well for you to talk about peace, but you are not pulling your weight in our efforts to put ourselves in a position of effectiveness in the event of a military situation." In order to have an effective voice in the councils of those who decide these matters, I think you have to be regarded as pulling your weight.

One of the concerns of the committee was that in the naval field the Government of Canada was not pulling its weight in NATO. You have to make up your mind whether that is a good or a bad thing. It seems to me that if it is a bad thing,