

by-law. I am also particularly pleased to speak on this Bill because it is authored by my colleague, the Hon. Member for The Battlefords-Meadow Lake (Mr. Anguish) from the Province of Saskatchewan. In addition, we share many strong common feelings on the Bill before us and on many other matters. It may be folksy to recollect, but my mother used to toboggan the hill down the coulee into his grandmother's backyard in Saskatchewan, and thus there is a personal connection, though not a direct one, that makes me happy to share this moment with him and to share his feelings and support for this proposition.

On previous occasions when Bills of a similar nature, whether presented by my colleague or by other Members of my Party, the NDP, numerous Members from other Parties have expressed particular misgivings about certain sections, most often because they stated that it would impinge on certain civilian uses of nuclear energy or medical uses of nuclear energy. I want to assure my colleagues that, having read this Bill, all pains have been taken to ensure that those kinds of misgivings may not legitimately be expressed with any degree of legitimacy upon the Bill before us. When Members of the Conservative Party or the Liberal Party rise to speak, for a change they will have to address the substance and the principle rather than finding nitpicking excuses, which I would not suggest is what they would do, but some people in this country from time to time are wont to do.

The Bill before us is short enough, and I intend to read it into the record, if the Speaker will consent. I will not read the penalty provisions because I do not think they are particularly germane to the matter under debate. Let me now read the Bill into the record.

1. This Act may be cited as the Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Act.
2. The sovereign nation of Canada, including the territorial coastal waters, inland bodies of water and airspace over which Canada has jurisdiction, is hereby declared to be a nuclear weapons free zone.
3. (1) No person, corporation, government agency or association of any nature whatsoever shall develop, test, manufacture, import, transport or store any nuclear weapon, nuclear weapons system, nuclear weapons support system, or any components therefor, within Canada, its territorial coastal waters, its inland bodies of water or its airspace over which Canada has jurisdiction for any reason whatsoever, including the defence of Canada or any ally thereof.

The rest of the Bill gets into the penalty provisions and I will not read them at this time.

I think the intent of the Bill is crystal clear. The wording is crystal clear. There is no room for fudging and there is no room for misunderstanding. I hope the debate will have the same degree of clarity as does the Bill.

One of the impacts which such legislation, if it were to become law, would have, would be the cessation not only of the testing of the cruise missile within Canada but also preventing the manufacture of the guidance system or portions of it within Canada as well. In thinking about that subject, I cannot help but digress a little to think of the many times that Members of the Government, including the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau), the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. MacEachen), the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Blais) and the former Minister of National Defence have, in

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this House and elsewhere across this land, consistently gone on and on to say that we are testing the cruise missile in Canada because it is a commitment to NATO. They have said that on innumerable occasions and in innumerable ways. That is false. They know that assertion to be false because one or two of them have said on public occasions, I am not sure whether or not in this House, when cross-examined by reporters from the media, that the impression given by those statements was false. I think one can reach no other conclusion other than they have known what they have said. They have since said it repeatedly both in this Chamber and across the land, on television, on radio, at public meetings, and at seminars. It is regrettable that they have never admitted the facts. They know it to be true.

The basic reason we are testing the Cruise missile in Canada, other than for some kind of loyalty oath in a broad sense to the incumbent President of the United States, whatever that happens to be worth, and we all have our own feelings on that, is because this country wants a larger share of defence production in Canada. We are in it for the money. Tommy Douglas used to say—and it is one of the truest things the hon. gentleman ever said—that “Whenever they say it's not the money, it's the principle of the thing, you can always be sure it's the money”. That is what cruise testing in Canada is about. Liberal Members know it, Conservative Members know it, and we know it. It is incumbent upon us if we want to disagree to have the intestinal fortitude to tell the public what the debate is about. If we think risking our credibility as a peace-seeking nation with fairly clean credentials is worth a few jobs and a few bucks that will accrue, particularly to Litton Industries, but perhaps to other companies as well, in defence sharing agreements with the United States and perhaps with some of our European allies, then that is a debate we can properly have. Let us debate the issue for what it is. Let us get the issue clear.

I found it galling, to come to more recent events, to watch the Minister of National Defence at a meeting of NATO ministers in Europe just a week ago, particularly considering some of the debate and circumstances which have come to light in this House in the last few days about Canada's willingness or ability to honour its own commitments whether or not we agree with them. He had the unmitigated gall to attend a NATO Ministers' meeting in Europe and blame one of our NATO allies, the Netherlands, for “betraying the NATO Alliance”, because it has not yet agreed and it is still undecided,—it has not yet agreed to station U.S. Pershing and U.S. Cruise missiles on its soil. Talk about the pot calling the kettle black!

● (1620)

As I said, we may or may not agree on certain commitments that we have, but I think any Canadian who is a person of honour would say that if we have made a firm commitment, at least we ought to do our best to keep it. It ill behooves anyone who pretends or wants to be called honourable to pursue the kind of shameful course which the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Blais) pursued in Europe just last week.