

Statements by Ministers

ment to have seen that measure as the key to the Gorbachev proposals. Although I am one who basically tends to think that proposals and negotiations should take place at the negotiating table as opposed to in the public forum, I thought there was very good reason for putting the idea forward publicly for the very reasons I have given. The idea that we might see an end to nuclear escalation by the end of the century certainly gives one hope.

The Secretary of State for External Affairs referred to the six points spelled out by the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) last October. I would like to mention two of them, since I feel they deal with an area in which the Government is not taking the type of concrete steps it could take and which would be more than simply symbolic. If taken they would show how strongly Canada feels in this respect. I would like to deal with the fourth point first, which is that Canada supports a comprehensive test ban treaty. The previous Government also supported such a test ban. I think what the Minister and all of us were assured of last August was the fact that the Soviet Union placed a five-month moratorium on nuclear testing. One of the Gorbachev proposals of the other day was to extend that moratorium for another three months. This is a unilateral moratorium.

The evidence I was able to secure from the Americans showed that they had finished some rounds of testing but that there was no increase in testing during the first half of 1985. If Canada truly believe in supporting a comprehensive test ban treaty, then I just cannot understand why the Minister did not say today that the unilateral proposal of the Soviets with respect to the three-month extension is admirable. It is something that we are happy to see. It is something we would like to see the United States and other nations, in particular, France, undertake. Will we not say publicly that this is a valuable step which Moscow has taken and one which should be emulated by the United States and France? Only in that way can we reach a comprehensive test ban sooner. I am disappointed that this Government, as did the previous Government, says that Canadians support this move and then does not mention the initiatives which have been taken. I am disappointed that the Government will not say whether or not it supports them and publicly and privately urge the United States to follow the same example. Of course, France should also be encouraged in this respect, until it ceases testing.

With regard to the fifth recommendation, we wish to prevent an arms race in outer space. I do not yet feel reassured that the Government is dedicated to preventing the weaponization of space and an arms race in space. The Minister said that our stance to SDI research is rooted in the need to conform strictly with the conditions of the ABM Treaty. I do not feel that there is an enormous amount of evidence right now which shows that the Americans, and to a lesser extent the Soviets, are distinguishing between research, testing and development. To this end we sometimes hear President Reagan include everything short of deployment as part of research. The other day in Washington there was an announcement from the Pentagon that the Americans are now calling the testing of the

airborne optical adjunct a demonstration. It is a funny world in which we live when a test becomes a demonstration. The reason the Americans call it an adjunct is that they do not want to use the word "component". It is a component of the SDI.

We need a clear statement from the Government with respect to how it interprets the question of research and the tremendous intermingling of research, testing and development. Perhaps this is not the time for the Minister to undertake to do that, but we certainly need something to that end. Similarly, we need a real commitment, which I had hoped we would have received from the Government today, with respect to the ABM clause being reinserted into the NORAD Agreement. I was disappointed that the Minister did not mention anything in that regard.

Anti-satellite weapons give me as much concern as does star wars. The reason they do is that they take away your eyes and your ears. When we strike down satellites we lose our eyes and our ears. The Minister mentioned the Peace Satellite or PAXSAT project which will examine the technical feasibility of a satellite based system for monitoring potential arms control agreements covering outer space or conventional forces in Europe. What on earth is the point of our going ahead and developing a peace satellite if we do not also take a very strong position opposing the development of ASAT weapons, opposing it today and saying publicly that we do? So I would hope that the Minister on the next occasion he has in the House will delineate more fully Canada's position on the real meaning of star wars research, Canada's position on reinserting the ABM Treaty clause, and Canada's position on ASAT weapons. If he also says, at last, that we will stop Cruise missile testing, I will be the first to applaud.

• (1550)

[Translation]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): I wish to inform the House that, as a result of the ministerial statement, today's sitting will be extended by 35 minutes.

Therefore, the hour allotted for Private Members' Business will begin at 5.35 p.m.

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[English]

PETITIONS

SUPPORT FOR BILL C-258

Mr. Bill Vankoughnet (Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to present to this House two petitions from the citizens in my riding of Hastings-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington requesting this House to support Bill C-258, an Act respecting International Peace and Goodwill Day. This Bill will change the name of Boxing Day, December 26, to International Peace and Goodwill Day and will demonstrate to the rest of the world Canada's continued commitment to world peace. The first petition is from