

[Translation]

Could the Minister inform the House and women in Canada today which department is analysing the Abella Report and when appropriate legislation will be introduced in this House, covering the areas of affirmative action, contract compliance, training and equality before the law?

Hon. Flora MacDonald (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, my Department, the Department of Employment and Immigration, is primarily responsible for examining the report's recommendations. The recommendations are later examined by the whole Cabinet, while any decisions are made by the entire Cabinet.

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[English]

DISARMAMENT

UNITED NATIONS RESOLUTION—CANADIAN POSITION

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. Last night the Political Affairs Committee at the United Nations took a very important vote on the profoundly important question of nuclear disarmament. A motion submitted by Sweden and Mexico called for a mutual, verifiable, balanced nuclear freeze applicable both to the Soviet Union and to the United States. That motion was carried overwhelmingly by a vote of 111 to 12. I want to ask the Prime Minister why the Government of Canada joined the minority of only 12 nations in the world to vote against that important resolution.

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the abstention was taken by Canada at the United Nations, as it has been on previous occasions by ambassadors representing Canada, because we believe that if the world is to make progress toward a reduction of nuclear arms—as this Government is dedicated to helping the world do—we must seek effective actions which persuade the superpowers. It is our judgment, reflected by Canada's vote at the United Nations, that a declaration on the freeze would not have advanced the cause of reducing nuclear armament.

Mr. Broadbent: Mr. Speaker, the Secretary of State for External Affairs offered some interesting rhetoric, but he did not give us a single reason which led him to reach that conclusion.

● (1425)

VERIFIABLE NUCLEAR FREEZE PROPOSAL

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Since the Prime Minister, who expressed concern about disarmament during the election campaign, has now decided not to deal with the question, I would like to ask the Secretary of State for External Affairs this. Considering that the House of Representatives in the United States, and countries as different as Australia and Greece, all support a mutual, verifiable nuclear

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freeze which has to be accepted both by the United States and the Soviet Union before it becomes operative, why, in Heaven's name, could not a Government, which was elected in Canada in part to produce some change in international affairs, support initiatives already taken by people outside of our country who are working seriously—not simply rhetorically—toward nuclear disarmament?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, this is a matter of the gravest importance. I believe that is understood by all Members on both sides of the House. The Leader of the New Democratic Party asks why we did not support initiatives taken in the past by other countries. The simple reality is, sadly, that those other initiatives have not worked. Adding Canada's voice to the motion would have had the effect of causing tensions within the Alliance. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization is the instrument by which we have the greatest opportunity to bring the most influence to bear upon the United States, and an action of that kind would have been counterproductive, in our view.

Mr. Broadbent: The Government will clearly have a lot of influence with President Reagan if it agrees with everything he does. That is not influence, that is supine acquiescence to what the United States wants to do.

REASONS FOR CANADIAN POSITION

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Would the Secretary of State for External Affairs tell us why it is that Walter Mondale, a candidate for the Presidency of the United States—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Broadbent: I hear some of the Minister's back-benchers, 61 of whom called for a nuclear freeze during the election campaign, that is, 61 of the Members over there. Many Canadians, including many of his own back-benchers; Walter Mondale in the United States; members of NATO, such as Greece; members of the regional equivalent of NATO in Southeast Asia, such as Australia, could all stand up on this profoundly important question of nuclear disarmament and show a little initiative, show a little leadership. Would the Minister tell us why Canada could not?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the New Democratic Party is asking me why other countries voted as they did. That question is better put to them. The question I can answer is why Canada voted as we did. We are seeking every practical means to reduce the danger of nuclear armaments—

Mr. Deans: But what?

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): —and of nuclear conflict in the world. I am asked to name one. One means is to use the strong