

International Peace and Security

Hon. Member is giving to it by absolutely ignoring it. Therefore, he is totally out of order.

Mr. Chrétien: I have finished, anyway, but I would like to say—

[*Translation*]

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I want to say—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): Order, please. The Hon. Member for Saint-Jacques (Mr. Guilbault) on a point of order.

Mr. Guilbault (Saint-Jacques): Mr. Speaker, I would make the same point of order as the one just raised by the Hon. Member for New Westminster-Coquitlam (Ms. Jewett). I would remind Your Honour that on page 2 of the Bill one can read, under the heading "Role", namely the role to be played by the Institute, and I quote:

The role of the Institute is to increase the knowledge and understanding of questions related to international peace and security from a Canadian standpoint, particularly with respect to arms limitation, disarmament, defence and resolution of conflicts, and:

If that is not precisely what my colleague is doing—giving his viewpoint on disarmament issues to enlighten the public—I am wondering what it is!

I would therefore ask Your Honour to put an end to those interruptions and let my colleague complete his remarks.

Mr. Chrétien: If Mr. Speaker does not intend to intervene, I will continue my remarks.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): The Hon. Member for Saint-Maurice (Mr. Chrétien).

Mr. Chrétien: It is therefore my view that the point of order was not well taken, and I think I said at the outset, Mr. Speaker, and I repeat it, that I have no intention . . . I believe this is a good piece of legislation. We established that institute, and when it was set up we tried to find a formula that would have its operations as far removed from partisanship as possible. There were amendments suggested from various quarters, and this is a completely non-partisan institute that is playing a positive role.

My party's task force on the problems I am discussing was given an opportunity to hear Mr. Pearson, the Executive Director of the institute, who submitted a very good brief. In my view, this is a very worthwhile institute.

However, I took the opportunity to caution the Minister, and I appreciated that opportunity. But now some doubts are arising, 72 hours later. I do not appreciate being tricked. There is an attempt at having Canadians believe we are not getting involved in the star wars, but then they are going to use taxpayers' money to finance programs that will do exactly what the Government said they would not do. We are fundamentally opposed to the star wars program. This is a unilateral program without consultation, a destabilizing program that

could result in a global catastrophe. I therefore felt, Mr. Speaker, that this was a good opportunity to warn the Minister, and I tell him that if they are trying to do through the back door what the Canadian people will not have them do through the front door, sparks are going to fly.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): Debate. The Hon. Member for Saint-Denis (Mr. Prud'homme).

• (1700)

Mr. Marcel Prud'homme (Saint-Denis): Mr. Speaker, I am somewhat unprepared also because I had no idea we were going to deal with this small Bill. But especially for the benefit of our new colleagues in the House, I think we should try to evoke the circumstances under which that Institute was set up in 1984.

You will recall . . . because, as I said, we have been caught unprepared, I am still looking for a quote by the Right Hon. Pierre Elliott Trudeau, the former Prime Minister of Canada, who dealt with this issue the day Parliament adjourned on June 29, 1984. I am glad changes have been made so that the English title is again consistent with the French title.

The Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence which I chaired had made a very long and exhaustive study of this issue which resulted in the creation of this very important Institute. We had decided at the time that its name would be as it is today. A number of things must have happened in the meantime, for Parliament adjourned, as you know, and the correction could not be made.

I am glad to report that witnesses from across Canada appeared before the Committee on which sat my honourable friend the NDP critic from British Columbia who was one of the most active women on the Committee.

I must add that it was also a painful experience which prompted our then Prime Minister, the Right Hon. Pierre Trudeau, to exclaim: "At long last, we have the Institute!". We have had to navigate a lot to obtain this Institute before the end of the session. In spite of that, I must say, and a number of my honourable friends will remember that we were pressed for time, because a few Members . . . I like to recall these historical events. This way, at least, young Canadians who are coming of age will know about the workings of politics.

Although they were in favour of the Institute, a number of Members made every effort to delay its study, knowing that if the Institute was not set up by the end of June, it would never become reality. That is why I want the new chairman of the Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence to know that these things can happen and that sometimes, although a bill introduced in the House may be quite good, there are people who will try indirectly . . . I must say that those who tried to kill the Institute sat on the side of