

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Guilbault): Order, please. With all due respect, the Hon. Member who has just spoken, by referring to the appointment mechanism, was referring to a specific clause. I would like Members to try and stay within the general principle of the Bill, as called for in our rules.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Deniger (La Prairie): Mr. Speaker, the debate in the House today, on Bill C-32, is about a subject that is so important that it cannot be stressed enough. The House is being asked to vote on establishing an agency whose first task will be to promote peace. Does any Member of this House not hope for a future from which the threat of a nuclear holocaust has completely disappeared? We have now reached a turning point in our history where the possibility of a nuclear disaster is omnipresent and now, more than ever before, the leaders of our planet must act with great wisdom. I do not want to sound melodramatic, but we must realize that the survival of the human race is at stake.

Mr. Speaker, that is why countries the world over must try to work together and achieve peace between East and West, so that decisions are not made out of ignorance or because we misinterpreted the intentions of others, and ensure the fatal button is never pressed. Responsibility for the future of the world does not lie in the hands of nuclear experts or technicians but in those of our politicians. Thus, by sponsoring the establishment of the Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security, the Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. MacEachen) has officially sanctioned Canada's commitment to the cause of peace. Only by increasing our knowledge of issues relating to peace, security, defence and arms control will we be able to take on our responsibilities and show the necessary leadership, a leadership both political and diplomatic, to urge the Super Powers to engage in a dialogue for a lasting peace. It seems hardly appropriate to challenge the intrinsic value of this proposal, to establish the Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security. Similar institutes have shown that they have been able to expand and enhance support for the cause of peace. Mr. Speaker, I am thinking, for instance of the very respected Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, whose credibility has received unanimous recognition throughout the world.

Since the Second World War, Canada has played a major role in peace-keeping, and its efforts have been successful on many occasions, so much so that our country has acquired an international reputation in this field.

Today, we must have the necessary instruments if we are to continue to be effective in our role as a mediator who is recognized and respected by other nations.

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Mr. Speaker, that is a role the Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security would play.

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Canada needs a research centre to develop its own expertise, without duplicating work already done elsewhere. Canadians must be able to define the parameters of a context in which a world movement towards peace must take place. What we want here is an exclusively Canadian perspective.

These problems are a matter of great anxiety and many Canadians are concerned. The advantage of the Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security will be that anyone who wishes to do so may participate, since the Institute will be collecting ideas and opinions from all sources. Mr. Speaker, Bill C-32 proposes the establishment of a structured and independent agency whose main task will be to make a Canadian analysis of the world situation, on the basis of information collected from many sources.

Mr. Speaker, the Institute proposed by the Deputy Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs will be an independent body and act as a meeting place for discussion and consultation, where parties will be able to set aside political and day-to-day considerations, thus making for far more objective and less emotionally-charged debate.

The Institute will undoubtedly become an invaluable source of information and be in a position to advise governments at all levels.

Mr. Speaker, we are in fact being asked to vote on maximizing the value of peace. Following in the footsteps of the Prime Minister, who raised the consciousness of international leaders during his crusade for détente, I endorse without reservations the Bill to establish the Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security, because it is an altogether praiseworthy initiative.

Mr. Speaker, thirty-five million people have been killed in wars since 1945. The steady spiral of the arms race to procure both nuclear and conventional weapons is maintaining a climate of tremendous anxiety on the international scene. In the Throne Speech, the present Government announced that it intends to devote its full resources to exploration of every possible means to restore confidence and trust among nations, particularly among the nations of East and West, and it has made a commitment to advance proposals to create conditions for greater international security.

This commitment has now been met in Bill C-32, which proposes to establish a centre whose purpose will be to seek peace.

Mr. Speaker, there have been some signs of improvement recently. There are signs of a common ground for discussion that may bring the leaders of East and West closer together. However, we must continue our efforts to prevent a catastrophe we would not even live to regret.

In the now famous novel "1984", by George Orwell, the Party's slogan is: "War is peace". Life, our life, is not a novel, and in this life, war might well mean, unless we decide otherwise, the end of the human race.