

Honourable senators, the motion that is before us is not to censure or to condemn the film board. It is a motion asking that a committee look into this public question. I see no reason not to support and adopt this motion. Indeed, Senator Molson provided many reasons why we should. Perhaps I will add one additional reason which is corollary to what I have said.

The National Film Board is an agency that has deservedly won many awards. I, personally, am a great admirer of that entity. I have known and worked, in various capacities, with at least three government film commissioners. Canadians should be proud of the National Film Board—proud of its award winning work and proud of the work that has attracted no awards. I believe that a further justification for Senator Molson's motion is to provide to the National Film Board the opportunity that I assume it would welcome to explain why this film seems to be so justifiably subject to the serious criticism directed against it by Senator Molson.

I can only add that I have not consulted my colleagues on this matter; I am speaking for myself. It may be that some other honourable senator wishes to speak to it. At any rate, for the reasons I have given, I intend to support the motion.

Hon. Philippe Deane Gigantès: Honourable senators, I move the adjournment of the debate.

Hon. Louis-J. Robichaud: Honourable senators, I understand that Senator Marshall is ready to speak to this motion this afternoon. Perhaps I will be, too. I wonder if we might allow Senator Marshall to have the floor?

Hon. Jack Marshall: Honourable senators, I would not want to preclude Senator Gigantès. He has moved the adjournment of the debate. I can quite happily speak after he does, although I thank Senator Robichaud for his consideration.

On motion of Senator Gigantès, debate adjourned.

STRATEGIC DEFENSE INITIATIVE

GOVERNMENT ATTITUDE—DEBATE ADJOURNED

Hon. Philippe Deane Gigantès rose, pursuant to notice of Tuesday, September 17, 1985, that he will call the attention of the Senate to the Strategic Defense Initiative.

He said: Before I speak to Inquiry No. 3, honourable senators, I notice that some of my colleagues—one, in particular; I recognize his laugh—find it amusing that one should stand the previous inquiry. I wish to spare some of those colleagues who did laugh some of the memories that I cherish—perhaps they do not—about our great former Prime Minister.

That, however, is not the subject of Inquiry No. 3. I should like to speak about Star Wars and the attitude of the government.

We have been told by the Prime Minister that Canada will not be officially—

Hon. C. William Doody (Deputy Leader of the Government): Excuse me, senator, are we dealing with Inquiry No. 2 or Inquiry No. 3? Has Inquiry No. 2 been stood?

[Senator Frith.]

Senator Gigantès: It has been stood, yes.

Senator Doody: Thank you.

Senator Gigantès: We have been told by the Prime Minister that the government of Canada would not be involved in Star Wars research, but that he thought it prudent for the Americans to be involved in it and that he would place no obstacles in the way of Canadian companies that might wish to engage in that research. In this regard, there are various points to consider—I am sure that the Prime Minister considered them and did his best to address himself to them. One such point is the security of mankind and, therefore, of Canada. Another is the financial advantage to be gained by participating in that research.

On the security issue, I claim that the dangers of the Strategic Defense Initiative are so great that they nullify any possible financial advantages. I would ask for the patience of honourable senators while I tell them why.

If the United States were first to establish an umbrella that would stop missiles, we would have to ask whether this umbrella would be fully effective. Most of the specialists say that it would not be 100 per cent effective but would be, perhaps, 95 per cent effective. I am prepared to grant 99 per cent effectiveness. That leaves 1 per cent of total Soviet warheads to come through. If we count only the Soviet warheads on land-based Soviet missiles, we are faced with 6,000 warheads as of last November. One per cent of 6,000 is 60. The probability of distribution is such that we cannot assume that each of those 60 would fall upon a separate U.S. city, but it is probable that they would fall on the major American cities. If they fell upon the 20 largest of them, we are talking about losing something in the order of 100 million lives. Therefore, the effectiveness of the Star Wars umbrella is non-existent in the event of the United States sustaining a first strike from the Soviet Union.

But there is also the possibility of the United States attempting a first strike. If the U.S. attempted a first strike and it had an umbrella, the first strike would disrupt Soviet command structures, would probably destroy a great many of the Soviet weapons, and then it would be less likely that 60 warheads would get through. It might be less. But even if fewer land-based warheads got through, the probabilities are—and I have asked some computer friends to do these calculations—that the first five major cities in the United States would be hit, and I am not counting at all the Soviet missiles that would be launched from submarines.

● (1520)

If one looks at this brief summary of the possible consequences of a first strike by the U.S., or a first strike by the Soviet Union, what one sees is that this umbrella against missiles will not be effective, will not limit damage to what is acceptable—because losing the first five major U.S. cities, and losing 30 million people, is not an acceptable loss for any sane U.S. government—and I assume that U.S. governments will continue to be sane. I also assume that Soviet governments will continue to be sane, because if we assume anything else, then