

Adjournment Debate

If it were revealed that some other world leader—a Russian or British prime minister or an American or French president—had given approval for the use of the bomb, we wonder what would have been said. But when Golda Meir and Moshe Dayan decided it was time to press the button, well, that's Israel, and it seems impolite to say anything.

The world has been warned and warned again that the Middle East is the most threatening situation in the world. The Arabs have demonstrated that they can inflict economic disaster by withholding oil exports or sharply increasing the price. Israel is politically unstable, economically dependent, and divided about what to do about the West Bank. She is a threatened colonial island in a hostile sea and has demonstrated what we suspected—her ageing leaders would commit national suicide in fact of defeat.

Church leaders and others who have some responsibility for communicating information and creating public opinion should not ignore the *Time* revelation and what it means. If we can't agree on everything, we should at least agree that the postponed Geneva Conference should be held, and the Palestinians should be there. And soon. For the Middle East is moving inexorably towards Armageddon.

Mr. Speaker, to a Bible-reading Presbyterian, that word Armageddon is chilling and penetrating.

Miss Monique Bégin (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I would like first to say to the hon. member that I hope he was not criticizing the absence of the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. MacEachen) and of his parliamentary secretary on June 16. The minister was attending the CIEC Conference of the group of industrialized nations in Paris and I was opening a photographic exposition called

“Between Friends”—“Entre Amis”—in the second biggest city of the United States, beautiful and hospitable Chicago, for the American bicentennial.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Miss Bégin: I am sure all members of the House share this expression of friendship for our neighbour to the south.

When I returned to the House I read the question which had been asked by the hon. member for Hillsborough (Mr. Macquarrie) and which had not received an answer. I thought that might have had something to do with the way in which his question had been formulated.

Without acknowledging the accuracy of these speculative reports to which the hon. member refers, I can assure the House that Canada has been active in all appropriate fora in warning the international community of the dangers of nuclear proliferation and has taken concrete initiatives to strengthen the international non-proliferation system.

With specific reference to Israel, it is not my practice to comment on media reports, especially those concerning important international issues. We are, of course, anxious to avoid the addition of any destabilizing or “incendiary” elements into the Middle East conflict. This Canadian view is frequently brought to the attention of the international community and is well known to all of the parties to the conflict, including Israel.

Motion agreed to and the House adjourned at 10.27 p.m.