

*Government Orders*

I agree with the comment my hon colleague from Essex—Windsor made in the House this past Monday when she said that a country that cannot feed itself is soon not a country and is at the mercy of every other nation.

Taking this one step further, I also believe and history proves that a nation that cannot protect its sovereignty cannot long survive. This brings me to the topic of discussion before the House today.

In 1983 the current Minister of Human Resources Development and Western Economic Diversification, who was then minister of defence, signed the original test evaluation agreement with the U.S.

Recently this minister claims that Canada no longer needs these tests because the cold war is over. The cold war may be over but this world is still if not more unstable than during the cold war period.

Instead of having one major threat, we now have many smaller threats. Although the Iron Curtain has fallen and they have opened their arms to us, this does not mean we live in a Utopian world. The recent gulf conflict in which both the Canadian Armed Forces and the cruise missile took part in made us astutely aware of that fact.

Canadian participation in these tests enables us to fulfil our obligations under the NORAD alliance but also to keep abreast of the latest developments in defence technologies. By participating in these tests our forces gain valuable operational experience that would otherwise not be available.

Also, if Canada is to be a member of such organizations as NORAD and NATO, my constituents and I believe we must be willing to participate in these organizations simply because we currently do not have the capacity without the support of our allies to defend our national sovereignty. I am not only speaking for myself but also for my constituents who are in the flight path of these exercises.

The records which I have researched do not contain one complaint, one petition or one letter opposing these exercises from the constituents of Athabasca. My constituents are also aware that there is no environmental threat to them.

The missiles used in these exercises are not armed. In fact, section 8 of the original Test and Evaluation Agreement states: "In no case shall nuclear, biological, or chemical warfare material be brought into Canada, and that the Cruise Missiles shall be unarmed".

Furthermore, the Department of National Defence has informed me that an extensive initial environmental assessment was conducted in 1983 and reviewed in 1989 and 1992. These

studies showed that the cruise missile testing has no significant or adverse environmental impact.

Furthermore, section 13 of this same agreement states that the flight corridors in Canada which are used for testing cruise missiles shall be selected in consultation with Canadians to ensure minimum disruption to civil aircraft operations and minimum disturbances to people on the ground.

If this government were to rescind this agreement, an agreement that was signed by the Conservative government only last year, Canada as a participant in organizations such as NORAD would lose credibility as a nation that can be depended upon by our allies to co-operate in the preservation of peace and sovereignty in North America and the free world.

As I stated earlier in my speech, I have consulted with my constituents. They are willing to accept their responsibility as a member of NORAD. I believe Canada should do the same.

● (1755)

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South):** Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate the member on his first speech. I know this is a productive House that we are working in.

I want to make the general comment that continued cruise missile testing in Canada will contribute neither to the prevention of nuclear war nor to the further limitation of nuclear arsenals. Those were the reasons why this agreement was renewed in February 1993 by the previous government. In fact, this continued testing will instead serve only to undermine Canada's nuclear non-proliferation efforts.

Under our present policy for nuclear proliferation, the Canadian government supports negative security assurances which means that we have international commitments not to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear states.

On December 16, 1993 this government, of which I am a member, reaffirmed its support for negative security assurances when it voted to support the UN General Assembly resolution 4873.

Would the member care to consider whether or not this agreement, which in fact is a 10-year agreement and requires 12 months notice to cancel, should continue to be supported given the developments over the last few years? Ten years seems to be an inordinate amount of time for this government to have an agreement. Would the member consider amending this agreement or shortening its terms by direction of this House now?

**Mr. Chatters:** Madam Speaker, I believe the debate in the House today is not about nuclear weapons. It is about the testing of a specific weapon known as the cruise missile which is quite capable of carrying non-nuclear weapons as was demonstrated quite effectively during the gulf war, in particular the guidance system of that particular weapon. Therefore, I do not think it in any way affects our commitments of non-proliferation of nu-