

International Peace and Security

Mr. McKenzie: Mr. Speaker, would my colleague suggest that the NATO countries unilaterally disarm in light of the fact that the Russians recently celebrated the shooting down of the Korean aircraft with approximately 265 people on board who were murdered? I fail to see how we can trust a country that celebrates the shooting down of innocent people in a jet aircraft.

Mr. Roche: Mr. Speaker, I can answer that question very briefly. I have not advocated in any of my remarks unilateral disarmament. I believe the position of all responsible citizens today is to advocate mutual, balanced and verifiable disarmament by the Warsaw Pact and NATO countries in ways that enhance their combined securities.

We must recognize the common ground on which we stand in the world today. As that common ground of survival is threatened by the never-ending nuclear escalation, I believe it is imperative to find ways to achieve collective security. I suggested earlier that the Palme Commission has provided us with a basic approach to find those ways to achieve collective security. This must be done but it is certainly not the intention to have NATO unilaterally disarm. That would be a policy of disaster. I do not know of any knowledgeable person in a position of responsibility who would advocate such a position. However, we must ensure that our systems are not out of control.

The lesson to be learned from the tragic shooting down of the Korean airplane is how fragile our systems of control are today. We see many examples of how these characteristics of fragility in our international system must be strengthened. It is in our interest to make significant contributions toward strengthening them.

Mr. McRae: Mr. Speaker, I have a great deal of sympathy for all of the remarks made by the Hon. Member for Edmonton South (Mr. Roche). I agree with him very strongly that a key requirement for this peace institute must be that it is totally independent.

During his remarks, I do not believe he was as passionate in saying that there should be a strong bias toward disarmament and getting the superpowers together through this peace institute as he was about other matters pertaining to this subject. Would he comment on the fact that that kind of commitment is an important criterion in the rationale for choosing people who will perform the necessary functions in that organization?

Mr. Roche: I believe that a strong rationale for choosing people is their possession of powers of analysis. They must be competent in their assimilation of the highly complex subject about which there are many different levels of information. They must have a sense of discrimination if they are to be charged with producing the policies of the peace institute. I suggest that the power of analysis is very important as well as a sense of commitment to the system of collective security. It is not necessarily a commitment to one approach to a particular problem because this is a multidimensional subject. I would

not want to see this as a board with a set of interests that are too narrow.

For example, there is a common characteristic of specialty in the field of development on the IDRC board which has an international representation. Specialized discussions are able to take place there as a result of the knowledge that people in the IDRC bring to those board meetings. I would expect the peace institute to operate in the same way, with a combination of analysis and commitment to the larger subject of obtaining a system of collective security through the strengthening of international institutions in our world. We do that in common interest.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Guilbault): Resuming debate.

Mr. Dave Nickerson (Western Arctic): Mr. Speaker, it is said that the subject matter of the Bill before us today, that of peace and disarmament, is far too important that it be left to the experts. My speaking this afternoon will certainly demonstrate that fact. I hope that my colleagues in the House, such as the Hon. Member for Edmonton South (Mr. Roche), the Hon. Member for Thunder Bay-Atikokan (Mr. McRae) and the Hon. Member for New Westminster-Coquitlam (Ms. Jewett), will be merciful on me when I finish my remarks and not ask any difficult questions, because I do not pretend to be an expert in this field.

However, it would be my submission that the House of Commons and the country as a whole is united on its desire for peace. I have not heard anybody argue the contrary view. Certainly there is a difference of approach. It is the position of one of the experts I mentioned just a minute ago, the Hon. Member for New Westminster-Coquitlam, if I understand that hon. lady's position, that Canada and other nations of the western world should lay down their arms tomorrow. They should not engage in any form of national defence. We should disband our Armed Forces, lay ourselves wide open and turn the other cheek, so to speak. The majority of people, including myself, would not accept that approach to life.

There are those at the other extreme who would argue that we must always bargain from a position of strength and that we should always be stronger than our enemies. Again if I understand correctly, this is the position that has taken hold in the two superpowers, both the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. I believe we must work toward a centre from those two extremes if we are to be successful.

I also wonder sometimes about what real effect Canada can have on world events. When we talk of successful disarmament, it would seem to me that the people who really must take the initiative and work hard at it are the two superpowers, especially if we are talking about the question of the nuclear threat and the use of atomic weaponry.

However, I have listened carefully to the views of the Hon. Member for Edmonton South and others. I think that Canada can play some small role in international affairs. At least we can have an open debate in Canada. The various views can be brought to bear and hopefully some distillation will take place, and perhaps by way of advice to superpowers or by setting an