

I would therefore invite the Minister to clarify, if he can, the Government's position on this issue because the answer I was given yesterday by my hon. friend, the Associate Minister for National Defence (Mr. Andre), who has just made an appearance in the House, because, as I was saying, his answer created a great deal of confusion among observers when he said that the Government intended to give grants to any person who was involved in the Star Wars program, on the same basis as they are given to entrepreneurs or universities or industries that are engaged in research or development of the usual U.S. programs under the defence production sharing agreement.

I would point out to the Government that the American administration has made a firm decision to create a special group within the Government to show clearly that the star wars program is a special program and that a specific directorate will award all related contracts. It will therefore be very easy for the Government to find out, should a Canadian university or a Canadian company be working on the star wars project, that it is not a program like the one that is covered under other previous agreements. It is a new program of the American Government. I am convinced that Canadians do not want the Government to give grants to companies doing research for the star wars program.

● (1650)

[English]

I acted in very good faith on Saturday when I applauded the decision of the Government to not participate. I hope it is clear that we will not be using the granting functions of the different departments of the Government to help the people who participate in this program. I said that if someone wanted to do something in his basement there was not much policing I could do but because I thought of it in terms of the global strategy of peace in the world I felt that the "no" of the Government was a positive contribution. Now, only 72 hours after that decision, I begin to wonder what happened on Saturday. If it is a "yes" in the guise of a "no" I do not think that the Government will go through that very easily. We spent a lot of time in the spring and summer in committee gathering the views of Canadians. Of course, there were some surveys which said that perhaps the majority of Canadians were in favour, but it was always on one point. It was always on the point that if we were to be involved in SDI, it was in order to create thousands and thousands of jobs. I remember in front of the committee the Hon. Member for Winnipeg-Fort Garry (Mr. Axworthy) asked that question of the witnesses many times very precisely, and I did the same thing as well. We asked how many jobs would be created and the only group which gave us the figures said it was something like 500 jobs.

Therefore, there was a qualification in the minds of the people because of the jobs. We took the view that jobs were irrelevant because there were matters in international policies which involve more than jobs. I remember when I was on the other side of the House the Leader of the Opposition at that time, the Minister of today, was always very quick on his feet

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to ask us, "Are you respecting the non-proliferation treaties? This Government has not signed this treaty so you should not get involved in selling it a Candu reactor", for example. We agreed at that time with the Leader of the Opposition that it was not a matter of jobs because to sell a Candu reactor to India or Pakistan would have involved a lot of jobs. It was unanimous in this House that we should not do this because they did not sign the non-proliferation treaty. I think it was a valid and good consideration and Canadians never reproached the Government of the day for having principles in these matters and standing firm in refusing to sell Candu reactors to countries which did not want to sign this treaty. We lost jobs. We are still losing jobs. When we do not permit de Havilland to sell planes to countries like Libya, we could lose jobs, but there are some standards which must be met.

I just want to tell the Government, as friendly as I can, not to spoil a good announcement which was made on Saturday by trying to be sneaky. I do not think that the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark) will be the one who will do that. I urge him to make sure that the Canadian position in Canada and abroad will be very clear on that point, that we are not part of star wars or SDI development because it is a very important development. When this decision was made by President Reagan, and I want to use this forum today to talk about that, it was a unilateral decision. It was made with no consultation with the NATO countries. Every country was taken by surprise. When the problem came into the House, there was unanimity. The Secretary of State for External Affairs was the then Leader of the Opposition and he rose and spoke on behalf of his Party to say that we should not be part of SDI. It was the same with the New Democratic Party. I know that the Right Hon. Minister does not like to change his mind.

He does not like to be forced to change his mind, so I appeal to him to remain consistent. He was right two years ago and I thought he was right on Saturday—I know he was right. I am afraid that some of his colleagues will try to do—now that the big political decision has been made officially—by the back door what the Minister said on Saturday was not to be done. This is one of the rare occasions when we have a Bill like this before us. I do not want to abuse the rules of the House of Commons—

Ms. Jewett: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I believe the Hon. Member is abusing the House. He does not know anything about the Bill obviously, so he is taking this occasion to talk about an extremely important matter on which I tried to get an emergency debate today. I was not successful but we will have a debate, I was assured by the Speaker, as a result of the first report of the joint committee. I really do think, therefore, that it is not the occasion—

Mr. Axworthy: Oh?

Ms. Jewett: I am sorry, I really do think that the Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security, which is the subject of this debate today, deserves more respect than the