

Why is the government not listening to its former ambassador for disarmament who has called for Canada to oppose the modernization of nuclear weapons?

Why is the Canadian government not taking a stand against all forms of modernization, not just the elimination of ground based missiles but air launched and sea launched cruise missiles?

Why does the minister think it is a good idea to keep pointing these weapons at the populations of East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and all the other countries that have become democracies and are struggling to become part of the international community? Why does he think that is still a good idea?

Hon. Bill McKnight (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, I am amazed that my colleague did not pay closer attention to the meeting that was held in Kananaskis.

We, along with the other allies, welcomed the decision that was made by President Bush to no longer modernize the Lance and to no longer modernize nuclear artillery.

The hon. member join with the allies in supporting the initiative that has been taken by the President of the United States, along with his commitment that he would be prepared to enter into negotiations when the CFB talks are concluded and signed.

I am sure the hon. member understands, although he does not seem to from the way his question was phrased, that we will not be able to disinvent nuclear technology. As a mix of deterrents in the defensive alliance, NATO, we have to maintain the mix that has been successful in keeping peace in Europe for 45 years.

• (1500)

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona): Mr. Speaker, I think the minister's answer says it all. Canadian consciousness with respect to this is either welcoming or approving, or some other response, to decisions made elsewhere, in this case in Washington.

When are there going to be Canadian decisions? Why is it not possible for Canada to take a decision to not participate in certain forms of nuclear weapons testing, particularly the short-range nuclear weapons which continue to be pointed at eastern Europe? Why is there this insistence on maintaining a mix of weapons against a

people who are no longer our enemies, if they ever were?

Why does he refuse to consult the Canadian people? When are the Canadian people going to be consulted about this review of defence policy that is going on? Why does he not take the Canadian people into his confidence for once? Maybe they will tell him to show some leadership and not just listen to President Bush.

Hon. Bill McKnight (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, I know there is division within the New Democratic Party as to whether or not it would continue to belong to the NATO alliance. Canada happens to believe, and so do the Canadian people, in the opportunities that are provided to a non-nuclear nation such as Canada, which has not made the decision that we will impose our views upon allies. By belonging to NATO, we have, as have other non-nuclear countries, an opportunity to be involved in the decision making.

I do not suggest that it is deliberate, but the hon. member is misleading in suggesting that Canada has been taking part in nuclear weapons testing.

Mr. Blaikie: What about the cruise missile?

Mr. McKnight: The hon. member obviously does not know what the cruise missile is. It is testing of a guidance system—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. McKnight: No, no. Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is suggesting that Canada has been testing nuclear missiles. Canada has not been and the New Democratic Party should become honest with the Canadian people.

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PRIVILEGE

GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING—SPEAKER'S RULING

Mr. Speaker: Earlier today the hon. member for Dartmouth and the hon. member for Sudbury rose on a question of privilege to complain about a radio advertisement relating to the goods and services tax legislation now before the Senate.

The hon. member for Dartmouth very kindly provided for the Chair the transcript of that radio ad, both in French and in English.