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(HANSARD)

Monday, December 4, 1995

Speaker: The Honourable Gilbert Parent

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, December 4, 1995

The House met at 11 a.m.

Prayers

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*Translation*]

CRIMINAL CODE

Mr. Pierre de Savoye (Portneuf, BQ): moved that Bill C-234, an act to amend the Criminal Code (facsimile advertising), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, Bill C-234, which I am presenting today, is aimed at preventing the transmission by facsimile of unsolicited advertising for the sale of goods or services to an individual or a company.

The concern I will be addressing applies also to electronic facsimile, electronic mail and even to Internet.

With your permission, I would like to make two points. First, as this House knows, but those watching us may not know this, because this bill is not a votable item, debate on this bill will be over in one hour at the most and there will be no legislative follow-up to my remarks.

However, and this is my second point, the concern I am raising is very real and therefore should be given legislative attention in the near future. In this sense, our debate this morning will get people thinking and ultimately, perhaps, as I would hope, lead to the House adopting in due course legislation that meets the need.

What need? As you know, before I became a member of this House, I had another job. I was in business and I had a fax machine. In the morning, I would collect the faxes received during the night. There were those that had come from Europe, because of the time difference, with their day starting earlier than mine. There were, however, others that had been sent locally and had nothing to do with my company's business interests. I was getting what is commonly known as electronic junk mail.

If it were only occasionally, we could ignore it; if there was only a little bit of it, we could forget about it. But it is a regular

happening, and the number of pages printed—at my expense or at the expense of the businesses receiving them, because it is their paper they are printed on—is far from few.

We have to understand the forces at play. The fax machine is an inexpensive way to reach anyone anywhere in the world very quickly. When it is used for telemarketing or advertising, anyone anywhere can flood us with advertising we may or may not need, generally not.

This sort of thing cannot be left strictly to chance. In the area of telephony, as you will recall, overzealous telemarketing has been regulated by the CRTC. Now, companies wishing to call numbers in series must follow the regulations it has established. The situation is not the same with regard to facsimiles.

• (1110)

Faxes have environmental and other disadvantages. A lot of paper is used needlessly, but environmental damage is not the only problem. There are also commercial disadvantages: while your fax machine is receiving unsolicited messages about things in which you are not interested and using up reams of paper in the process, your real clients are unable to communicate with you. You yourself cannot use your own fax machine to communicate with your business interests. There is a conflict between your interests and those of the companies that want to market their products without necessarily asking for your permission beforehand.

Allow me to quote from an Industry Canada document called *Privacy and the Canadian Information Highway*, which deals with the intrusion of the information highway on privacy: "Citizens may also want to be protected from unwanted communications as a result of purchasing goods on the electronic highway". I am not talking only about faxes, but also about electronic mail and transmission through the information highway.

The document goes on to say: "Disturbances or intrusions by telemarketers or targeted advertising mail is a privacy nuisance that concerns many Canadians. There is already junk fax, with solicitations over our fax machines for everything from coffee service to holiday trips". Should controls target marketing schemes that result from separate or related purchases, for instance, junk E-mail that follows a purchase of a Caribbean holiday with offers for a next trip?

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If so, how? What rules should govern the collection and use of information about what people buy or other personal information transactions? How should these rules be balanced with the opportunity to be made aware of goods or services that people might want and need? The problem is not only the amount of time and paper used by your fax machine in receiving messages from outside parties, but also the fact that some businesses may use your or your company's own consumption profile to transmit targeted, unsolicited ads using your own resources, and may even paralyse your own operations in the process.

There is another aspect: fraudulent advertising. A recent investigation by the Montreal Urban Community Police Department on the First Nations Investors Group uncovered an almost \$500,000 rip-off of some 20 residents of the Montreal region. According to police, the suspects recruited their investors mainly through electronic advertising, in particular by sending faxes directly to management consulting firms. Swindlers sent their targets faxes painting an enticing picture of the investment opportunities.

The advertising, in the name of Venture and Financing International Corporation, claimed to offer loans at attractive rates for financing residential or commercial buildings, or 1 per cent less than the rate in effect. Without going into details, this business fraudulently collected \$500,000 by using the fax numbers of a highly targeted clientele.

• (1115)

Other uses however may be more desirable, for example, receiving your daily newspaper by fax. It is now possible for a publisher to send his readers, his subscribers, a daily newspaper either by the information highway—on the Internet—or by straight facsimile.

In fact, we know of a publisher who has 300 subscribers at \$250 each a year. Mind you, this is very clever; there are no printing fees and no distribution fees, since the printing takes place at the receiving end, on the fax, photocopier or printer of the recipient.

[English]

I recall something that happened in Calgary. A computer specialty outlet refers to fax ads that zip through its machines as annoying junk that usually goes into the garbage. In its experience at least 10 sheets a day of irrelevant news has to be sorted. That is a problem. These things have to be sorted. They cannot just be looked on as junk. It must be sorted because in between these junk mail items could be real messages for business purposes.

From this same source cited by the *Calgary Herald*, some companies go nuts about fax firms, complaining advertisements invade their fax machines, tie up their lines and use their paper.

Furthermore, a spokesman from AGT says the Alberta phone company has no control over what travels across the lines and bears no responsibility for its customers. In this dimension there is a problem in Calgary, but it is not the only place.

In a law firm in Toronto a late night junk fax once consumed 99 pages of a lawyer's fax paper before the machine ran out. There is an added concern here. If the machine does run out of paper, not only is the paper spoiled but the machine is incapable of receiving additional faxes that could be most important for operations. The machine had been paralyzed by an outside party the company had no business with. The law firm complained that there was no way of contacting anybody to complain.

Some advertisements arrive daily just in case they were missed the previous day and become a major headache for any business. To add to the frustration, even if the offenders can be identified there is no way the offenders can be asked to stop.

There may be some hope somehow, somewhere. The CRTC is apparently under way to get authority to restrict junk faxes this fall. We are at the end of this fall and I do not know where it is at this point. A new national telecommunications act will come into effect. The CRTC unfortunately is still in a state of considering ways to exercise that control. It is not a matter of controlling and regulations; it is a matter of having the technological means to do it.

[Translation]

Bell Canada, which has also received floods of complaints, asked the CRTC to be allowed to disconnect those who make an abusive use of junk faxing. Bell defines this kind of junk faxes as "unsolicited material promoting the sale of goods or services where there is no business relation between the person sending the material and the one receiving it and where this has been going on for over six months".

• (1120)

Bell Canada's proposal is to suspend service for five days to anyone sending junk facsimiles to the same telephone number more than twice in the same month. After suspending service for these reasons three times, the company would consider terminating service permanently.

As you can see, there is a problem. And this problem does not affect just one municipality here and there. It is from coast to coast. Telephone companies are aware of the problem, but they do not have the necessary means of coercion to act on it. The CRTC is reviewing the issue, but does not see how it could be resolved through technology alone.

So I hope that my remarks will have alerted the House to the problem, to how extensive it is and to the need to take action, not in three, four or five years, but as soon as possible. That is my wish.

[English]

Mrs. Sue Barnes (London West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak on Bill C-234, an act to amend the Criminal Code, facsimile advertising. The purpose of the bill is to make it a Criminal Code offence to send unrequested advertisements by facsimile transmission.

The hon. member opposite clearly believes that unsolicited advertisements received by fax can be a nuisance for many people, organizations and businesses, particularly when the advertisements are long, numerous or repetitive. They use up expensive thermal paper and clog up the fax machine which is then not able to send the important messages that need to be sent and so on.

I am sure every member of the House can relate to this and would join in agreement with that problem. However, while unsolicited facsimile material can be a real nuisance, sending it is in my opinion not conduct that should be sanctioned by criminal law.

Bill C-234 proposes to make sending these faxes a criminal act. I cannot agree that making the abuse of a fax machine a criminal offence is an appropriate response. The purpose of criminal law is to contribute to the maintenance of a just, peaceful and safe society. It has long been recognized that criminal law plays an important role in protecting our social values, but there are other ways of protecting these values.

The abuse of a fax machine and a facsimile transmission is a problem that would be better dealt with using less intrusive, less coercive means and more positive approaches. Although I agree this kind of abuse is a nuisance I cannot get myself to agree this conduct is to be treated with the heavy hand of criminal law.

The past few years have seen a growing concern in the legal community and in society generally with the overcriminalization of our society and of our laws. It may be useful to go back to established principles that may prove to be relevant to the issue at hand. These principles could guide our nation in making a determination as to what ought to be made criminal and what ought to be regulated using less stringent means.

A 1982 report entitled "The Criminal Law in Canadian Society" outlined the policy of the Government of Canada with respect to the appropriate scope and basic principles of the criminal law. A clear statement is included in the report:

The criminal law ought to be reserved for reacting to conduct that is truly harmful—Criminal law should only be used when the harm caused or threatened is serious, and when the other, less coercive or intrusive means do not work or are inappropriate.

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With that view, with those lenses and regarding those words of advice and direction, does the act of sending unrequested advertisements by facsimile transmission seriously harm people or organizations? We will all agree it is an annoyance, but is it harmful to the point of requiring this be made criminal with all the attendant consequences like criminal records, problems getting into education and problems obtaining employment? Certainly not in my view. It may be a nuisance or an inconvenience, but I doubt there is ever any serious harm done. Does the act of sending unrequested advertisements by fax so seriously contravene our fundamental values as to be harmful to society? Of course not.

• (1125)

Therefore it seems clear this conduct does not fall within the proper scope of criminal law. If the criminal justice system is to remain an effective mechanism for the protection of social values it is important that it not be overburdened. We all understand that our court system is overburdened today. Caution is therefore appropriate in creating new criminal offences. That caution makes me conclude that it would be inappropriate for the House to use such a blunt instrument as criminal law.

I raise another concern with the bill. It proposes to make the sending of unrequested advertisements by fax a punishable offence. Any person found guilty of committing this offence would be liable to a fine not exceeding \$200. At first glance this small fine does not seem to constitute excessive interference with individual liberty and freedom.

However, we must remember, especially in the House and especially today with what we know to be true in the country, that subsection 787(2) of the Criminal Code provides that if one fails to pay a fine the court may order the defendant to be imprisoned for a period of up to six months. In effect, this offence is potentially punishable by up to six months imprisonment. This would be unjustifiable state interference with individual liberty. I seriously doubt that making it a criminal offence to send these faxes is truly necessary to achieve justice and to protect Canadian society.

I must also express my concern with respect to the current wording of the bill. It does not clearly define the limits of the offence. For example, the bill would prohibit the sending of unrequested facsimile communication advertising for sale any goods or service. Unrequested by whom? Do the words "advertising for sale" make it a crime to try to sell something? Is it all right to try to rent something or whatever else? These words remain entirely open to interpretation. It is also unclear who exactly is responsible, the employer, the employee or both.

I repeat my concern. The fundamental principles of individual rights and freedoms demand that criminal offences be very clearly defined. The bill is open to a range of interpretations and yet proposes to create a new criminal offence. Criminal law cannot operate in such an arbitrary manner. The bill as it stands

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is not clearly drafted and would make punishable many actions and situations not criminal in nature.

I express my sympathy again with the sentiments of the bill. Most of us have experienced firsthand that receiving unsolicited commercial facsimile transmissions can be a nuisance. However, as I have explained today, the bill raises several fundamental concerns. I am convinced it is inappropriate to create a new Criminal Code offence prohibiting the sending of unrequested advertisements by facsimile transmission to individuals or companies.

Criminal law is not the appropriate instrument to deal with this nuisance. Criminal law must only be used when it is clearly necessary to achieve justice and to protect the full interests of society. It may be possible to identify more appropriate and less intrusive means of dealing with this problem, which I might be able to support, but I cannot support the creation of a Criminal Code offence for the purpose stated in this private member's bill.

Mr. Jack Ramsay (Crowfoot, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member. She touched on some very important concerns raised by the bill. I agree that the inconvenience caused by this kind of advertising is significant and will become more significant. However, I question whether the Criminal Code is the appropriate instrument to deal with this nuisance. Basically that is what it is, a costly nuisance. Ought we as legislators to be creating a criminal offence out of what basically is a nuisance? I do not think we should be.

• (1130)

If this matter is going to be dealt with, it ought to be dealt with under the Communications Act. That is the proper area where we should be looking at restricting this kind of advertising, if that is the wish of Canadians.

For the information of those who are watching this debate I would like to read exactly what the bill states. It is very clearly covered in clause 1:

Every one who sends to a person or organization through a telephone network an unrequested facsimile communication advertising for sale any goods or service is guilty of an offence punishable on summary conviction and is liable to a fine not exceeding two hundred dollars.

We saw what happened when the government attempted to curtail the advertising of cigarettes and tobacco products. From my understanding that was turned back because it violated freedom of speech and so on. Would this fall into that category as well? It may or may not, but it is certainly a question that would have to be addressed.

How would this affect advertising? Would this apply to the Internet as well where there is no costly intervention? As the hon. member who is sponsoring the bill pointed out, reams and

reams of paper are consumed by those who are not interested in this kind of advertising. What about the Internet? It seems that it may in many ways be replacing the fax machine. Would this apply to the Internet? According to my understanding of what I just read in the bill it would.

We have to ask whether businesses are willing and prepared to create a negative attitude toward their product by antagonizing those very people they are contacting by advertising their goods and services. Are they willing to do that? In other words, are the pressures of the free market system not adequate to keep this thing from getting too far out of hand, the whole idea of seeing reams and reams of advertising they want nothing to do with on the fax machine in the morning?

Eventually there is going to be a backlash to this if it gets beyond a certain point. The advertisers will see that it is harming their product and the image and the profile of their company. Ought we not leave this kind of matter in the hands of the consumers who, when they are fed up with this kind of thing, will surely let the sponsors of the advertising know where they stand on it?

What about the benefit? Surely there has to be some benefit derived from this kind of advertising, otherwise they would not be doing it. Should we deny the people who are receiving some benefit from this advertising by introducing this legislation?

I do not have much more to say about the bill. The hon. member from the government side covered it very adequately. I can dispense with my concern about it falling into the area of the Criminal Code. The bill should come under the Communications Act.

We should let the market forces deal with this kind of issue. If we as legislators are to look at this kind of practice, it should not be criminalized. Simply sending advertising over the telephone lines should not be a criminal offence. If it is to be prohibited at all, it ought to be done under the Communications Act.

• (1135)

Mr. John Bryden (Hamilton—Wentworth, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I did not expect to rise to speak to the motion but I think the member for Portneuf is to be congratulated in the sense that he has certainly isolated a problem of the modern age.

I have encountered that problem in a way everyone in the House of Commons has experienced it which is directly related to the business we do. In my constituency office there have been occasions where my fax machine has been jammed for an hour or so receiving about 30 pages of talking points on some piece of government legislation. The irony is I would have already heard that information from caucus debates but occasionally, staff members in the ministries get a little carried away and send us more fax material than what we really want. I see some members

are very sympathetic to this point and I am sure members of the opposition have the same problem.

I quite agree with the earlier speakers that this is not something which is best addressed by amendments to the Criminal Code. When we do get into the business of in any way limiting freedom of expression, freedom of publication and freedom of speech by the use of the force of law, we run all kinds of dangers with respect to a fundamental liberty.

In the case of the use of facsimile machines for sending junk mail, as the member for Portneuf said, who defines whether it is junk mail or something else? He did not attempt to cover the question of facsimile transmissions received that contain pornographic material or deliberate untruths. If we attempt to regulate this it is very like pornographic material. There is a blurred line that we can never be sure of where we invade into the area of genuine freedom of expression.

Similarly I reject the suggestion of the member for Portneuf that the CRTC should get into this field and come up with some kind of regulation that could be imposed on the distributors of this type of junk mail by facsimile machine. The reason is similar to that of putting it in law as a Criminal Code offence. We run great perils as a society when we give arm's length bodies control over how we express ourselves.

The CRTC after all is an unelected body. It is a body that is at arm's length from government. It is a body that is at arm's length from the people. It is very dangerous to give it any more power than it has already. I have to say I am not a great fan of the CRTC. I feel in many respects it is out of touch with the communication needs of the country. It indeed needs to be reviewed.

For myself, the solution to the problem is to come from the marketplace. The solution is essentially technological. We will see some bright inventor or perhaps some industrial giant develop a code system. An individual's fax machine will have a secret code which, when it is contacted by an external fax machine, will not permit reception unless the code is given by the sending fax machine. I am fairly confident this is on the horizon.

I have some interest in the whole question of communications intelligence. I can say with some authority that a great deal of research has been done in Canada, the United States and Britain in the communications security establishments which exist in those countries on the whole question of the security of facsimile transmissions and all kinds of electronic transmissions. The possibility of having a password or code on a receiving machine is very much within the realm of an immediate possibility.

• (1140)

The idea is very similar to call display on a telephone which is a relatively recent innovation of the telephone companies. Call display can be bought from Bell Canada, as can the option of not having call display. With that option, a person's identity is kept

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secret and nothing appears on the call display when phoning another person. That same technique could be used on a facsimile machine. A secret numerical code could prevent a facsimile machine from receiving a transmission.

This will all come from market forces which, as the member for Crowfoot suggested, are to be key in this. It was mentioned that we are now in the era where copies of newspapers will be delivered electronically to fax machines. It will be perfectly useless if a newspaper is going to be in competition with every other newspaper for a fax machine. The only way the delivery of newspapers by fax will work is if the newspaper can respond to a secret password on a fax machine.

In the end it will be market forces. It will be technology that will solve this problem. I congratulate the member for Portneuf for bringing the matter forward because this is the place where the issues of the day must be debated. We must show that we are au courant with the issues of the day and bring solutions to some of the problems which confront us from time to time.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Since no other member wishes to speak on the issue and since the motion is not a votable item, the time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired and the item is dropped from the Order Paper, pursuant to Standing Order 96.

[*English*]

Mr. Milliken: Mr. Speaker, I think you might find a disposition to suspend the sitting until noon, when Government Orders would proceed.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Is it the wish of the House to suspend the sitting until 12 p.m.?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

(The sitting of the House was suspended at 11.44 a.m.)

SITTING RESUMED

The House resumed at 11.58 a.m.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

THE BALKANS

Hon. David M. Collenette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.) moved:

That this House take note and welcome the recent Dayton peace agreement and the international community's continued efforts to bring enduring peace and security to the Balkans, and Canadian support of these efforts by participation in a multinational military implementation force (IFOR) under NATO command.

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He said: Mr. Speaker, the announcement on November 21 that the leaders of Bosnia, Hercegovina, Serbia and Croatia had reached a formal agreement on peace has provided a glimmer of hope not seen in the Balkans for a long time.

After four years of bitter fighting, internecine strife and degradation, we have seen the parties come together to try to effect a peace settlement. It is now time for all of them to step out of the shadow of war. They are not there yet. A lot of work has to be done. Although we have an agreement on paper, the challenge is to ensure that the agreement is properly enforced.

• (1200)

A NATO led peace implementation force authorized by the United Nations will be the key to the next stage of the peace process. Its most important job will be to ensure compliance among the warring parties on the ground with the military aspects of the agreement. Without this force, the agreement runs a serious risk of collapsing.

Our task today is not to debate a possible Canadian involvement in the Balkan peace implementation force. Our task today is to debate the nature and the form of that commitment. Canada is by no means legally bound to send any troops to assist NATO in a given mission. Nothing in the NATO treaty legally binds us to such a contribution. However, we have a moral obligation to participate in this newly expanded NATO operation and this new operation will demonstrate the relevance of NATO in the post cold war era.

In the white paper published last spring following the consultations of the joint parliamentary committee on national defence and the foreign affairs committee, we made a commitment to continue our involvement in NATO. We believe that we have an obligation when all of our allies in NATO are agreeing to participate in this force to be there with them, shoulder to shoulder. The question is to what degree. Those are the views we would like to have from members today.

This is another example of how the government, led by the Prime Minister, has reverted to an earlier tradition of allowing Parliament to participate in the whole decision making process on how troops are deployed and how our foreign policy obligations are engaged.

We have had a number of debates in the last little while and I believe today's debate will be most significant.

[*Translation*]

Over the last four years, Canada has played a significant role in the international community's efforts to deal with the war in the former Yugoslavia. These efforts have been carried out primarily through the United Nations and NATO.

Canadian military personnel have helped prevent the conflict from spreading to other parts of the region and from becoming even more brutal. They have also helped save countless lives by assisting in the delivery of humanitarian relief supplies and by preventing more massive assaults on civilian populations.

As always, our personnel have served with courage, dedication and professionalism.

[*English*]

Canada has a dedicated, professional and devoted armed forces. All Canadians know that and respect and appreciate them.

With the peace process now moving into a new phase, we believe that Canada should be there. The Canadian forces, contrary to the remarks of some of our critics, are ready to serve in that implementation force.

I need hardly remind members of the expertise and the experience of Canada worldwide in peacekeeping missions since 1947. We have an impressive record by anyone's standards.

Today I have two particular functions in the debate. The first is to briefly remind members of the great contribution Canada has made to peace operations in Yugoslavia in the last few years. That is what leads us to continue the march toward peace by becoming involved in the implementation force.

Second, I believe I am obliged to provide members with some information on the proposed implementation force.

[*Translation*]

Canada has taken a leading role in efforts to bring about a peaceful end to the conflict in the former Yugoslavia and to provide relief to its victims.

In September 1991, Canada led the call for the UN Security Council to deal with these issues.

Canada also responded favourably to UN requests for Canadian Forces personnel to be deployed as part of a peace operation in the region.

Our military contribution was a mix of many elements of our land, sea and air combat capability.

• (1205)

On land, our contribution came to include a battalion group in Croatia, a battalion group in Bosnia-Herzegovina, a logistics battalion on the Dalmatian Coast in Croatia, as well as military observers and personnel for various headquarters positions.

[*English*]

Canada has contributed to NATO operations in the air, on the ground and on the sea in the no-fly area over Bosnia-Herzegovina. Our ships have been off the Adriatic coast. Canadians have

been in the various headquarters of the United Nations and have been involved with some NATO forces that have been deployed.

The mandate has evolved over the last four years. I will leave it to some of my colleagues to fill in the details of the great contribution that Canada has made in trying to stabilize the situation in Bosnia.

Canadian troops opened up the Sarajevo airport in 1992. Canadian troops were among the first to participate in the protection of humanitarian convoys in the fall of 1992. Canadians were the first to deploy in the former Yugoslavian republic of Macedonia in what has been the only example of a successful preventive deployment by the UN. Canadians were there when they were asked to become involved.

Who could forget what Canadians did in the spring of 1993? Troops were sent to the tiny enclave of Srebrenica which was besieged by Bosnian Serb artillery and troops. They held out for months and months. They were followed by our Dutch friends in NATO before that terrible event occurred this summer which precipitated the outcry of people in the world and the international community that forced a change of tactics, a change of strategy, to become more robust in dealing with the flagrant disregard for international order. It spawned a very important initiative by the British Prime Minister in July in London and subsequently led to the American organized peace effort which has resulted in the peace implementation of today.

The United States has to be congratulated for the role it has taken in bringing the parties together, in overcoming so many differences and in getting us to the point where we can at last see a long term peace which is not too far ahead of us, provided we do the right things.

Canada has been in a number of operations. I will continue to refresh the memory of members. The Canadian Hercules aircraft was the lifeline into Sarajevo, Operation Air Bridge. I was in the cockpit of one of those planes when suddenly enemy radar fixed on us. As a civilian I was really scared that day, but the Canadian pilots in that plane said: "Don't worry, they are just testing our mettle. They won't dare shoot us down".

Every day for months Canadian air crews participated in bringing in needed supplies. It was the only flight into Sarajevo. It was ships of the Royal Canadian Navy that enforced the embargo, enforced the sanctions off the Adriatic coast. I had the opportunity to be on HMCS *Iroquois*, one of our destroyers in that area, to see the kind of work they did in successfully capping the flow of arms and other strategic goods into that country.

Finally, Canada also has been involved in reconnaissance work with Aurora patrol aircraft. Canadian crews have been on

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the NATO AWACS providing information and Canadians have been involved in Operation Deny Flight.

Canadians have been there. They know the terrain. They know the circumstances. They know the people. They know the culture. That is why it is logical for Canadians to be part of the international effort led by NATO to try to bring some order to this very difficult situation, to enforce a peace, to make sure the peace plan is implemented properly.

That agreement is very impressive. It has three elements to it which cover constitutional, territorial and military issues.

[*Translation*]

Constitutionally, Bosnia will remain a single state, whose boundaries will be those already recognized by the international community. It will be made up of two entities: the Muslim-Croat federation and the Bosnian Serb republic.

• (1210)

It will be a loosely structured union, whose presidency will alternate. The central government will be responsible for foreign policy, trade, customs, monetary policy and so on. The agreement is generally in keeping with the land division agreed to by the parties, that is to say 51/49 per cent in favour of the federation.

As far as Sarajevo is concerned, Bosnian Serbs are to transfer to the Bosnian government control over the suburban areas north and west of the city, thereby joining the city to the area controlled by the federation. A corridor 8 to 15 kilometres wide will link the safe area of Gorazde and Sarajevo.

[*English*]

On the military side, all foreign forces except UN troops are to withdraw within 30 days of the formal signing of the agreement, which will be in Paris later this month. This is a provision requested by the Bosnian government and it does include Croatian government forces. The agreement also calls for the withdrawal of all heavy weapons to barracks behind a four-kilometre zone of separation within 120 days.

Although the Bosnian-Serb leadership was not involved directly in the Serb negotiations, it was reported that the terms of agreement had been accepted. We see some nuances to that acceptance now playing out, but a deal is a deal and this deal will be enforced by the NATO led troops that will be sent.

This is an historic agreement, but future conflict cannot be ruled out. Let us not fool Canadians. This is a dangerous place. There are ambiguities in the peace accord and old antagonisms will not disappear overnight.

We believe that the NATO led peace implementation force is critical to the peace process. I would like to share with my colleagues a few details about the force.

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NATO has already agreed and started to deploy the advance parties to its force, with the agreement of all parties concerned. By deploying these troops now, NATO will be in a position to start deploying its main forces very soon after the UN security council passes a resolution authorizing NATO to proceed with the implementation of the military aspects of the peace plan. I should state, to clear up any ambiguity which may arise in press reports, that there are 11 Canadians among the advance troops. These Canadians are among the hundreds which are seconded to NATO and, therefore, are obliged to be part of NATO operations.

There will be some Canadians on the ground, if not at this moment then very shortly, but within the context of the NATO commitment which is ongoing and to which we are a signatory under the NATO treaty. I emphasize that it is not the implementation force contribution that we are debating today.

The plans for the force have been debated. They have been provisionally approved by the North Atlantic Council and they will be given final approval after the security council resolution has been passed. This plan calls for 60,000 people to be part of the forces. It will be divided into three main divisions: the British, French and American command areas.

It is very crucial that we understand the objectives of the force. They are to ensure compliance with the military aspects of the peace agreement. In particular, the withdrawal of forces to the respective territories is set out in the agreement and the establishment of agreed lines of separation of those forces.

[Translation]

Second, UN forces currently deployed must be withdrawn. Third, other non-military tasks arising from the peace accord must be carried out. The UN, the European Union and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe will join in carrying out civilians tasks.

[English]

This is an operation that will conduct its duties under chapter VII of the UN charter, which allows for the use of all necessary means to fulfil the mission, in other words, robust rules of engagement. I assure the House that the Canadian government will have the final say on all rules of engagement being used by Canadian forces.

Canada has contributed a lot in the last seven days to the development of these rules of engagement. In particular, I pay tribute to our military staff, led by the Chief of Defence Staff John de Chastelain, who last week with his NATO colleagues in Brussels hammered out the rules of conduct and the rules of engagement which reflect Canada's concerns.

• (1215)

I do not have to paint a graphic picture here. We have had considerable experience in difficult situations in the last few years. We have learned about the application of force, when it should be used, to whom and in what circumstances. I am pleased to say that those experiences were taken into account in the development of the rules of engagement for this protective force.

About 40,000 of the 60,000 troops will be provided by the United States, Great Britain and France. The Russians are also making a significant contribution. It is not just all the major powers. Middle powers like Canada will also be playing a role. Every one of our allies, except Iceland, which has no armed forces, will be participating.

Among the non-NATO nations, as I have indicated, Russia will be there. A Russian brigade will operate in the American sector under a Russian commander, who will report directly to the supreme allied commander of Europe, General Joulwan, an American, rather than through the NATO chain of command. Russia has also offered an engineering and mine clearing brigade, which will operate outside the NATO led implementation force.

Who could have imagined about six or seven years ago, certainly not ten years ago, that we would have Russian troops deployed in Europe serving in the cause of peace under an American commander? The world is certainly moving in the right direction. Our friends in Russia should be congratulated for putting aside any concerns they have and being committed to peace and involved in such a way in this effort.

[Translation]

I would add that the implementation force will serve to test NATO's ability to carry out new types of missions requiring co-operation between its own forces and other forces, such as Russian and eastern and central European forces. This co-operation will be an invaluable first step in establishing an effective European security system for the post cold war era.

Like all peacekeeping operations, this one contains an element of risk, which will depend on the parties' desire to comply with the peace accord. The rigours of winter and the poor condition of the roads in the region represent other dangers.

[English]

I know the critics will ask what this will cost. It will not be cheap. It will cost \$10 billion Canadian for this entire operation to be put in place. Funding arrangements have yet to be settled, but it seems likely that participants will cover their own deployment and maintenance costs. Common funding will be reserved for common facilities such as the force headquarters, which will amount to about \$200 million American.

Canada will be required to cover its share of the common funding cost even where it is not to participate in the force. At a

minimum, this will come to about \$20 million. The cost of participation will depend on the nature and size of the forces. That is why we are anxious to hear about the feelings of members of Parliament who are in touch with their constituents and know the degree to which they want Canada involved in this operation.

We are currently considering options that would cost in the range of \$20 million to \$50 million. However, do not believe anyone who says this is a done deal. The fact is that we want to get the feeling from Parliament before cabinet decides on Wednesday as to the actual number of people we will deploy in this particular force.

At the moment the plan calls for the replacement of the NATO implementation force with non-NATO forces after 12 months.

[Translation]

A senior officer will be appointed to co-ordinate the civilian aspects of the peace plan, which will include economic recovery, humanitarian assistance, refugees, elections, human rights, arms control and disarmament.

Upon request, force commanders may assist the United Nations and humanitarian organizations in such activities as maintaining public order, clearing mines and transporting rations. However, their prime responsibility will be the military aspects of the accord.

[English]

In the very limited time available, I have tried to provide the House some information on the force as it is presently being constituted. We obviously look forward to the views of individual members of the House before we make the decision.

• (1220)

From a philosophical point of view, the government thinks Canadians understand that our interests and values as a nation depend on world stability, on a stable international order. That is why we have made such a firm commitment over the years to promote international peace and security. The foreign policy and defence reviews conducted in 1994 confirm this commitment. This commitment is shared by all parties in the House. Indeed all parties were generally in agreement with the direction of Canadian foreign and defence policies in those two reviews in 1994.

[Translation]

We cannot shut our eyes to parts of the world where instability and conflict have taken root. Even if we are not directly affected by events taking place far from us, we will, over the longer term, feel less safe if we ignore them. This is a lesson history has shown us a number of times this century.

Hence Canada's passionate defence of multilateral institutions, such as the UN, and its active participation in peacekeep-

ing operations. We know the importance of working with our allies and with like-minded countries to promote international peace and stability, whether in Europe or in other areas of the world.

[English]

We have a well deserved reputation for being there when it counts. Just look at our peacekeeping record. If Canada is to continue to play an effective role on the world stage, it is critical that we maintain that reputation, which means contributing to international efforts aimed at enhancing global security.

I believe the conflict in the Balkans represents the gravest threat to international security in that area since the second world war. We have spoken of the dangers of this conflict being allowed to engulf Europe. Without the United Nations presence in Bosnia and Croatia and in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, it is not inconceivable that hundreds of thousands of more people would have died, that atrocities would have been committed in a greater number than those already committed, that Europe would have been inflamed from the Aegean to the Alps. That would be a precursor to a large European war, a war that would inevitably have dragged in other nations around the world for their own interests.

As we are at the dawning of the 21st century, no civilized nation can allow that kind of conflict to continue in one of the most civilized parts of the world. It is bitter irony that 50 years after the conclusion of the second world war the Canadian Parliament is having yet another debate, as it did 60 some years ago, about participating in a major European operation.

We have been there while the war in effect has raged all around us. Now we have a peace accord, which has its weaknesses, but it is the only peace accord we have. We have to make it work.

It is fine for us as Canadians to pound our chests and yell from the hilltops about world peace, world stability and world security, but unless we are prepared to do something about it as Canadians and put our money where our mouth is, to commit our own resources and commit our own people, then I think our cries ring somewhat hollow. As a founding member of NATO and a major contributor to the alliance over the years, Canada is expected to participate in this historic mission.

I note our friends in the Reform Party are saying we should not go. They are somewhat reticent about this involvement. This party supported our continuation in the NATO alliance. When we make a deal with people, when we have a friendly alliance, we do not walk out on them when times get tough. We do not renege on our commitments. I do not believe Canadians want the government to renege on our commitments, to turn our back on 50 years of co-operation, 50 years of success in building an organization that contributed over that period to peace and stability in Europe.

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• (1225)

Any contribution Canada will make will be modest. I have talked about a price tag of maybe \$20 million, \$50 million or \$60 million, depending on how we decide on the actual figures for deployment. We believe Canadians are prepared to pay that price. We will be involved in the British sector with Pakistan. I believe Holland is in there. The Czech republic will be there. In fact the British government has asked Canada to provide the headquarters.

What better compliment for Canadian involvement than that one of our major allies, who will be providing the overwhelming number of troops in that sector, has such respect for the Canadian men and women in our armed forces that they want Canadians to head up the brigade headquarters. That is a great compliment and it is something the government will certainly consider. I would like to hear the views of the members in the House about that involvement.

We have options of supplying an infantry battalion. We have options for a signal squadron. We have options for artillery. All those kinds of deployments can be made. We want to hear the views of the members of the House to see if we are in accord, as we think we are, with the views of Canadians and we are willing to make this commitment.

At a time when the public, the media and others are closely examining the Canadian military, we must recall that it is an indispensable national institution. It is a reflection of this country.

[*Translation*]

It is a reflection of our Canadian culture and its tradition of two official languages.

[*English*]

The military is also an instrument through which the country can achieve its objectives both at home and abroad. We saw that this weekend when we saw the crew of HMCS *Calgary* come to the aid of a distressed ship off our Atlantic coast and the heroics of a member of the helicopter crew. I hate to inform my friends in the House that it was a Sea King helicopter. They actually do work. That master corporal went back time and time again on the end of a rope in storming seas to a listing ship with desperate people. He pulled them up one by one and took them to a waiting ship. Those are the heroics of the men and women who serve in Canada's armed forces.

We heard about that this weekend because it is a significant contribution, but every day men and women of the armed forces serve proudly both in Canada and outside Canada. What do we hear? We hear the negative complaints. We hear the petty criticism of administrative lapses, which occur in any large organization. We hear talk about terrible morale. I would say the

morale of all Canadians has been affected in the last few years, because we are having to deal with a difficult financial situation, a difficult global competitive situation, getting our own house in order, and we are also having to deal with a national unity issue that once again is preoccupying us.

Canadians are somewhat introspective. They are perhaps not having morale problems but are somewhat concerned. That also goes in the armed forces. Any organization that has had a salary freeze for the last couple of years, whose catch-up to the normal public service increment was also caught in that freeze and is something we are trying to deal with, obviously will be affected.

Perhaps more than anything else that contributes to any morale problems we have in the armed forces is the incessant criticism day in and day out by armchair critics, many of them in the House of Commons and most of them in the Reform Party, who are attacking the men and women in the armed forces and the job they do. That is unconscionable.

We have one of the best armed forces in the world. We have men and women who put their lives on the line. They will put their lives on the line for anybody. They do not care whether those people hold separatist beliefs or whether those people hold Neanderthal philosophical beliefs like those of the Reform Party. They will put their lives on the line for a free and democratic society. That is what we have in the Canadian Armed Forces. Those men and women, I assure the House, will be ready, willing and able to serve in this force.

• (1230)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean-Marc Jacob (Charlesbourg, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the defence minister's final flight of oratory hardly befits this morning's debate in my opinion. This is the third debate held in this House on the participation of Canadian troops in Bosnia under the aegis of the UN.

As you know, in February 1994, the defence minister said that he had a duty to provide as much information as possible to MPs and to Canadians on Canada's participation in peacekeeping missions, and to truly inform people of all relevant implications.

As in the two previous debates, the Bloc can only recognize and support Canada's participation in peacekeeping missions. As the defence minister emphatically pointed out, Quebecers and Canadians who are members of the Canadian armed forces have frequently been honoured for their role in peacekeeping missions. I think everyone agrees here that they do their job to the best of their knowledge, and that they do their utmost to ensure the success of these missions.

They also have expectations of their own. The defence minister said earlier that it is important, in this debate, to hear what the public and the military have to say through members of this House. It seems clear to me that, during such a debate,

certain rules should be clarified. Throughout my presentation, I will refer to comments made by the minister.

On November 23, the Prime Minister said, after meeting with Mr. Boutros-Ghali, that Canada had a duty to participate in the peacekeeping effort, following the Dayton agreement, adding that such participation, including the number of troops to be sent, would have to be determined. This morning, I expected the defence minister to provide more details on what the government and his department have planned.

I was briefed by National Defence officials, whom I want to thank, and was told that there were a number of scenarios which cost anywhere from \$2 million to some \$70 or \$75 million, and which require the participation of 50 to 3,000 troops in the international NATO-led implementation force. This morning, I thought the minister would suggest a specific scenario which, in his opinion, reflects what the public is prepared to support as regards such missions, and what our forces can do.

The minister said that we must fulfil certain commitments made to NATO. Indeed, whenever NATO participates in missions, its members must provide 1,000 troops. Is that a minimum or a maximum? Do we send 1,000 combat troops, or can we send military personnel for various tasks? The minister should have been a little more specific since, in a debate such as this one, he not only informs members of this House, but also the public at large.

● (1235)

I did not hear anything in his speech about the direction we might take. Later on in the debate, I will suggest a few avenues to the minister which may be of help to him.

In his speech, the Minister of National Defence quite justifiably listed all of Canada's military contributions from the onset of the conflict during the summer of 1991, throughout 1992, the opening of the Sarajevo airport, Canadian forces' participation with NATO aircraft, all of the *Hercules* transport flights, participation in the Adriatic embargo, and so on.

I say justifiably, because Canada has indeed made an extraordinary contribution to this conflict, and has always been equal to the task in traditional peacekeeping missions: to civilian population monitoring of humanitarian convoys, assistance, food shipments, food convoys, communications, etc. For anything connected to traditional peacekeeping, as the minister has said, Canadian expertise is recognized throughout the world. There is no problem in this regard; our military does an outstanding job and everybody acknowledges it, including the people of Canada and Quebec.

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However, I see this type of mission as a radical turnaround. We will now be governed by chapter VII of the UN Charter instead of chapter VI; this allows far more latitude for interventions, military or otherwise. According to U.S. Secretary of Defence William Perry, once the NATO contingent is in place in Bosnia, if we run into any difficulties in implementing certain provisions of the Dayton peace accord, we will just implement them by force, and we will respond in kind to any attack.

Now this has absolutely no connection with the peacekeeping missions in which Canada has been involved in the past. This is a totally new ball game. The Bloc Québécois and the people of Quebec and of Canada have concerns about the change in the nature of our mission.

In the same vein, I would like to add that perhaps making comparisons is unwise. Unfortunately, the minister focussed on the attractive aspects of peacekeeping missions, listing results achieved by the Canadian army and Canada in a number of peacekeeping missions, results that cannot always be readily measured. There are, however, some things that have to be looked at when playing under different rules. When the minister referred just now to Canadian participation in the discussions on the rules of engagement under chapter VII, I would have liked to hear him specify what those rules of engagement will be if Canada does commit under NATO auspices to taking part in this new peacekeeping mission to implement the Dayton accord.

From logistics or linguistics point of view, it struck me that the mission now being organized under NATO is not called a "peace mission" but rather "peace enforcement mission".

Going back in time a bit, as I recall, the Americans' mission to Somalia was also labelled "peace enforcement". We cannot ignore the fact that this additional connotation of "peace enforcement" on top of the traditional "peacekeeping mission" bears some similarity to what happened in Somalia. Far be it from me to go back over the unfortunate events involving the Canadians, the Belgians and even the Americans, but as soon as things started to heat up, the U.S. pulled out and left Canada, Belgium and other countries holding the bag, which led to major problems, unfortunately.

● (1240)

I think, and it is also the position of the Bloc Québécois, that the change in mandate must be made very clear. The last time NATO organized a mission under the auspices of the UN dates back to the war in Cyprus.

You may think my analogies are a bit far fetched but the fact is that nothing in the Canadian military's experience in peacekeeping missions has prepared us for the kind of participation to

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which we are committing ourselves or was ever approved or accepted by the people of Quebec and Canada.

I think it is important to say this and to be prepared to consider all eventualities. In any case, the Dayton agreement divides certain territories—Bosnia, Croatia and Serbia—and was signed by representatives from Bosnia, Serbia and Croatia.

One of the problems in Bosnia around Sarajevo is that the so-called chiefs of Pale, Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic, the military chief, did not sign this agreement. Only yesterday we saw on the news that Mr. Mladic, the military chief heads a group that is opposed to the Dayton agreement. For at least two years they thumbed their noses at the UN's resolutions, brought their heavy weapons near the perimeter of Sarajevo and then withdrew them after a number of air strikes, playing cat and mouse with the UN. Now an agreement has been signed and these people are still there on the outskirts of Sarajevo. In fact, the self-styled Bosnian Serb Republic headed by Mr. Karadzic has so far been very inconsistent in its acceptance and has always been rather hard to pin down.

Another argument which casts some doubt on the security of the mission and I believe amplifies certain problems is the fact that the UN set up a war crimes tribunal. Recently, eleven judges from six different countries took part in the proceedings and convicted Mr. Mladic and Mr. Karadzic of war crimes.

Based on international opinion, various experts in diplomacy or international law or crimes against humanity suggest that peace will not have a chance until these people have been convicted.

As far as I know, those people who were at the root of the conflict in Bosnia never accepted the Dayton agreement and are already preparing to sabotage the process. I do not think it will be very pleasant or even easy to impose anything at all, because I do not see this as a peacekeeping mission but more as a mission to impose peace.

I think that in this House, parliamentarians have a duty to make it clear to the public and to other parliamentarians that this means a change in what the extraordinary reputation of Canadian peacekeepers is built on. It will be a different application.

A previous change has unfortunately produced the kind of incidents we saw in Somalia, and I think it is a shame they were allowed to happen.

• (1245)

My second point is the economic considerations. I think we all agree, and perhaps this is less true of members of the third party, that Canada has a duty to take part in these peacekeeping missions, to deal with the conflicts that arise in various countries throughout the world.

I think it is important to tell the House and the public what all this costs. The public realizes that when the government says: "We have soldiers, they need practice, we have equipment we use", all that costs money. However, in the past three years, in 1993, 1994 and 1995 which is now drawing to a close, we were \$517 million over budget in Bosnia, which includes humanitarian aid and military spending as well.

This morning, the minister mentioned that costs might vary from \$30 million to \$50 million, depending on what the government decided. I found this hard to believe, because at the height of Canada's participation we had around 2,100 soldiers with the peacekeeping forces in Bosnia and Croatia and we were over budget. In other words, it cost more than would normally have been expected, about \$170 million per year more over a period of three years, for a total of \$517 million.

And now the government wants to either maintain or reduce Canada's participation, at a cost of say 30, 50 or 70 million, and if they send up to 3,000 soldiers, we are talking about \$75 million. When at the height of Canada's participation, it cost us an additional \$170 million for 2,100 soldiers, then how can it possibly cost \$75 million for 3,000 soldiers? I find it hard to follow the calculations of the Minister of National Defence, and I think some clarification is in order. In fact, it should even be incumbent on the government to provide this clarification. It must be more precise.

When we decide to participate in these missions, guided by our suggestions or those of the Reform Party, and the government says that we will meet our commitment to NATO and provide, say 1,000 soldiers, it should tell us exactly how much more that will cost. I am not talking about costs pertaining to soldiers in the regular forces who are already getting their salary. Not those costs. But we must clearly stipulate the additional costs that can be expected. What is also needed is a clear indication of the duration of the mandate and the rules of engagement over which, as the minister said earlier, Canada would have the last say, but I would have appreciated some further indication from the minister.

As far as Canadian aid is concerned, I would like to refer to a statement by the Minister of Foreign Affairs who said that Canadian aid might not necessarily be military. We have seen no indication of this option in the approach taken by the Minister of National Defence. The Minister of Foreign Affairs said that we could, for instance, take part in certain humanitarian missions through funding or by receiving immigrants. We know that since the beginning of this conflict in 1991, nearly 250,000 people have died in Bosnia and nearly 800,000 are trying to leave to get away from their wartime experiences and tragedies in their own families, with many killed or wounded. And there are also quite a few people who were maimed as a result of bombings, mines or sniper fire.

• (1250)

Bosnia greatly needs all kinds of help, but we in the Bloc wonder if our armed forces' ceaseless efforts are still needed. I can tell you that about two weeks ago at CFB Valcartier in my riding, the soldiers coming back from peacekeeping missions in Croatia looked a little tired. Some of them were on their fifth mission, others on their fourth or third, and I can tell you that a number of them have experienced psychological problems, family problems, all kinds of problems.

Once again, we are being asked to step up our effort because, as the defence minister said earlier, Canada has been continuously involved since 1992. We must keep in mind that this is a European conflict and that the international community could never accuse Canada of not participating, sometimes beyond its capabilities in terms of human and financial resources, and of not doing more than its fair share.

We in the Bloc are not calling for a definitive pullout. Not at all. What I insist on, however, is that the government should think very seriously about all the implications and disclose them without any restrictions to Canadians and to Parliament.

I would like to get back to the statement made last week by the defence minister, that Canada would send troops unless the Americans got involved. Last night, I heard some Americans arguing that Congress had not yet agreed to send 20,000 and 25,000 American troops. As far as I and my Bloc colleagues know and understand, if the American effort is not approved by Congress, I seriously wonder how the famous Dayton agreement can be fulfilled.

It is a little akin to debating whether Canada should participate without clearly defining what kind of support we will provide. Should we send a fighter squadron, as suggested by the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands, an engineering battalion to repair roads, or a communications platoon? None of these options was suggested by the minister. I think it would have been an excellent opportunity to tell the people: "Yes, Canada participates in peacekeeping missions in line with its means and human resources".

As I pointed out earlier, I think that our soldiers are exhausted from all their missions, even if the white paper and the special standing committee's report call for increasing the number of land forces members. This has not been done yet. Recruitment is under way, but these people are not ready to leave now. I think we should take a different approach or limit ourselves to the 1,000 troops required under the terms of our agreement with NATO, and perhaps participate as observers or communications people, for example.

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Before we make this decision, however, I have trouble understanding how the Prime Minister could tell Mr. Boutros-Ghali beforehand that we would send troops, that there was no problem.

• (1255)

Then we will figure out how much that will cost and what kind of assistance will be provided. And how long will we stay there? Well Mr. Boutros-Ghali indicated that commitments could be for six months, twelve months or three years, depending on how long the conflict lasts. That is another question mark for the public as well as for the military personnel involved and for members of Parliament. How long will the Canadian contribution in Bosnia be for? If the government decides on a twelve month commitment, as requested by NATO members, but the conflict has not been resolved after twelve months, will we do as usual? Two days before renewing the agreement, we will hold a short debate and say: "Let us extend for another six months or twelve months. We will figure out how much all this costs after".

I am far from being certain that this is what the public expects. I think it is high time that the government, and DND in particular, be more specific. We Bloc members agree with a Canadian and Quebec contribution to peace missions intended to protect values and traditions, but these contributions must be defined. In addition, our troops need a mandate clearly stating what they are expected to do and for how long, and the public should know how much it costs to uphold the principles and values Canadians believe in.

To conclude, regarding the geopolitical context and the Dayton agreement that was signed, we should be reminded of what Justice Deschênes, from the international court dealing with war crimes, whom I quoted, said; let us not forget that Mladic and Karadzic were declared war criminals. I do not think that Canada did anything about it or very little.

Are we going to pacify the region forcibly and then negotiate with these criminals? That is assuming that all Bosnian families who were the victims of the atrocities inflicted by these individuals will just forgive them and forget all that happened. That a bit much to ask.

I know of a member of the Croatian army who was also found guilty of war crimes. He was recently promoted in the army.

Again, I doubt that the population, on either the Serb or the Bosnian side, could put up with that. Consequently, peace will continue to be threatened. The international community and NATO should ensure that the sentences given out in these cases are carried out. Otherwise, several observers, and I agree with them, feel that peace will remain precarious as long as justice does not prevail.

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In conclusion, before making a decision, the government should clearly explain all the political, financial and human implications relating to the rules of engagement mentioned, but not specified, by the minister. I think the time has come to discuss these rules openly before a decision is made.

Therefore, the Bloc recommends that the government set a specific duration for such missions. If, as a NATO member, we are asked to stay for 12 months, then we commit ourselves for 12 months and, in doing so, we avoid problems such as the recent hostage-taking incidents in Visoko, Tuzla and Gorazde. As some will remember, this was the Cobra mission. Since that mission is now completed, we are somewhat ahead in terms of training some troops that will be sent to Bosnia. I think that if we decide to go there, we should, and the minister talked about facilitating the withdrawal of peacekeepers, provide for the withdrawal of these troops at the end of their stay.

• (1300)

We should at least plan the withdrawal of our troops, so that it is not improvised, as was the case last spring or during the winter, with the hostages.

Finally, I would suggest, on behalf of the Bloc Québécois, that Canadian troops be more specialized in what I call the traditional type of involvement in peacekeeping missions, which include activities such as monitoring, as well as communications and humanitarian operations. If we decide to participate in such missions, we should concentrate on such activities, given, as I mentioned, our limited human resources. We should also avoid breaking the Canadian tradition of excellent and extraordinary participation in peacekeeping missions. I do hope that Canada will never become an expert in peace enforcement missions.

Finally, it is always very satisfying to actively protect the values and principles that Quebeckers and Canadians hold dear. But let us not forget that we must first help our own people, and work with them. If we want to be able to continue to help populations in distress abroad.

[*English*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Before resuming debate, today our deliberations are guided by Standing Order 43, whereby members now will be entitled to 20-minute interventions with 10 minutes for questions or comments.

Mr. Mifflin: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Are there questions and comments on the hon. member's presentation?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): If we refer to Standing Order 43 we would find that in this case the minister under whom the motion stands today and the next speaker have unlimited time and are not subject to question or comment.

As I understand, there are no questions or comments to the last speaker. To each speaker here forward there will be a 10-minute question or comment period available to all members.

Mr. Mills (Red Deer, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, that points out something very obvious. This is supposed to be a debate. We are supposed to be able to ask questions. We are supposed to be able to ask the minister questions. Obviously the orders are set in such a way that we will not be able to do that.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Far be it from me to engage in any debate but these rules were made by the membership. If members wish to change the rules or ask for unanimous consent to ask questions, those opportunities are always available every day in the House of Commons in this 35th Parliament and all previous Parliaments and hopefully in future ones.

Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I apologize. No decision has been made but we will send troops. Parliament is here to inform Canadians, to talk about the issues, to have answers to the questions. What I hope to do today is talk about the process we are undergoing right now, the criteria the House should follow and some of the pitfalls we possibly can go into.

It is not for me to say anything about our peacekeepers. We have done a lot of backslapping here. We agree our peacekeepers are the best. We are proud of them and we would say nothing negative about our peacekeepers or our Canadian forces when they get over there to do a job. We are proud of them and we should say that loud and clear because we mean it.

• (1305)

We have gone through the process of take note debates before. I believe this is a democratic fraud, an illusion of consultation, a red book promise. We know many of the decisions have already been made. We know the leaks to the media have not been accidental. We know we will not get to vote on the issue. We know in the following weeks we will hear that there was a full, democratic debate in the House and that the full democratic debate was the basis on which the decision was made.

The Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs have announced a number of things regarding this issue. This is not peacekeeping; this is peace enforcement. We are using combat troops, not with the UN but with NATO. This is not part of the NATO mandate. This is not a NATO member that we are going to the defence of. This is quite different than the mandate for NATO. Let us not let the spin doctors turn this into a NATO, non-NATO, not participating with our partners debate. This debate is to get information for the Canadian people so they know what we are getting involved with.

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When Mr. Mulroney decided we should go to the gulf war, everyone was absolutely abhorred the decision had been made without consulting the Canadian people. But how an election changes things.

A week ago Friday we sent a letter to the Prime Minister asking for three things. We wanted the proposal. What is the proposal so that we can discuss it? We want a full briefing, a full debate in the House and a free vote, three relatively straightforward requests. We did not even get the courtesy of an answer to the letter. We have had answers in the House that there will be a full debate; we would have all the details, maybe even a vote. We have gone through it. What a laugh the briefings were. I will get to that in a few minutes.

What is wrong is there is no true debate, no details for the proposal and we did not hear any this morning from the minister. There has been no adequate briefing, no chance to consult with Canadians. I was with 800 Canadians in one place on Saturday night. It would have been great to consult them on some of these issues.

There is no vote, let alone a free vote. It is not open, transparent and honest. The decisions have already been made. We can listen to the media talking about the decisions yesterday.

The government believes the opposition is basically an inconvenience, keep us in the dark. Obviously the backbenchers will go along with what they are told and with the speeches written for them. The spin doctors will say we are not supporting NATO, but this is not a NATO mandate. Let us get that right off the table now. Let us not make this a partisan political thing. Let us make it what is good for Canada. That is what this should be all about. That is why we need the information to debate and discuss. This whole sham we are going through is wrong and the minister knows it. He knows the information is not on the table for us to see.

What sort of things should we have discussed? We should have looked at some criteria. What kind of criteria? The last two speakers talked about the cost. This is not hard, cold and heartless; it is reality. Canadians are losing their health care. They are having difficulty educating their children and they have other problems, and we hear in our briefings that the cost may be between \$2 million and \$70 million. That is an accurate estimate. Now we hear in the House that it may be \$50 million or \$60 million. We already have made an investment of \$600 million and ten lives in this area of the world. Let us talk reality here. Let us talk about what this means.

• (1310)

Let us look at some of the estimating that has been done. We estimated \$22,000 for 1995-96 in foreign affairs for the Haiti mission. We now have requested another \$67 million. Twenty-

two thousand dollars for the Haiti mission in the estimates. Everybody must have known that was wrong. Let us get some estimates. Let us talk about the cost. It is a real issue.

What about the length of the mission? NATO says 12 months and we are out of there. The Prime Minister said last week that 12 months is not very long, maybe we will need three years. Maybe we will need 30 years as we did in Cyprus. How long will we stay if NATO leaves?

We also need to look at the record of 12 months in any place. Let us talk about Cyprus—30 years. Let us talk about Somalia. How successful were we in 12 months there? Let us talk about Haiti. We now have Mr. Aristide talking about taking another three years as dictator. Let us talk about the deterioration in Haiti which is ongoing. Let us talk about the duration of this mission and what we hope to accomplish.

Let us talk about the command. We have a hint that the minister knows quite a bit about it. I hope he does. In our briefing we were told that when NATO leaves it will be turned over to a group. Will we be part of the group? These are the questions Canadians want answered.

What about the mandate? What is the job we are to do? Obviously if the minister does not know we will tell him today. We will shoot to kill. We will be mean junkyard dogs. That is what the U.S. defence minister said. What does that mean for our troops? Can we really fight force with force? Is that how we get peace? Has it worked throughout history? Let us look at that.

Let us talk about the escalation of the threat to world peace. Let us talk about Germany, Russia, the Turks and the U.S., their involvement over many years. This civil war started in 350 B.C. We must look at history if we want to understand it.

What about our commitment to allies? We talked about that. This is not a defence mission. This is not the protection of an ally. This is something totally different.

There are many criteria which need to be discussed and we must get honest and non-partisan answers to these questions.

What about the threats? Let us look at Sarajevo. They will take a city with 120,000 Serbs in it and say "get out". What does that say? How will we handle that in a peace sense?

Let us ask questions about elections. There are thousands of refugees. There is a scorched earth policy and houses are being destroyed. There is no infrastructure and they are to hold elections within one year? How will they have a democratic election? What role will our NATO troops play in the elections? We need the answers to those questions and the Canadian people are asking the minister for those answers.

What about the refugees? How will we get them food, shelter and infrastructure, the basics of life? How will we handle the emotions? They have seen their children, grandparents and other

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relatives killed. They have seen their daughters raped. How will the NATO troops handle those emotions?

What about the stability between the Croats and the Muslims? What about the potential for a Croat–Serbian war? We need answers. We need to ask those questions in a non–partisan manner.

What about the American policy of rearming the Muslims? How do we rearm one faction while ignoring the other two factions? How will that help to create peace? How will arming that faction give more stability? Those are the questions we have to ask.

What about the war criminals, a gigantic moral dilemma? What will our NATO troops do when a little kid tugs on their tunics and says: “That guy over there killed my parents and raped my sister. What are you going to do about it?” We need to talk about what we are to do about it. We need to tell our troops what they are to do about it. We need to know what that means. How do we deal with those human rights areas?

• (1315)

Will the combatants simply wait for the year and then hope they all leave? What is the real commitment of the Americans? If I were an American looking at this, I would say that I know my troops are targets. An American GI is worth a lot more than anybody else. That is the big power. They have an X on them the minute they go somewhere.

Let us look at the background. Let us look at what Vietnam did to the U.S. psyche. Let us look at Beirut, Lebanon, as soon as the suicide bombers came. Let us look at Somalia where a dead marine was dragged through the streets and it showed up on the front page of every American newspaper, what impact that had on the American psyche again. What about Haiti?

The minister must tell us what happens if the Americans decide to leave. It is a lot different when we are on the ground and starting to go through this kind of thing. Will Canada stay if the Americans leave? Is this possible? How will this work? We need answers to these questions and we will not get them in the House because the minister will not respond.

The question for us is whether Bosnia is worth dying for. That is what the Americans are asking. Would the minister send his son or daughter into this conflict? Does it pass the mother test? We have to ask those questions. We should be talking about those in the House.

In conclusion, the government has refused to provide detailed briefings. The government has chosen to rule by decree. We cannot in this party honestly support or reject this process. How can we support or reject when we do not have the adequate information or opportunity to get answers for these issues? If this were an honest approach and we got honest answers, we could give an honest answer back. If we talk about it from a

strictly military sense, the next speaker on our behalf will talk about why militarily we are not equipped to say yes.

I am talking about the big Canadian picture. The method was wrong. The decision is totally the government’s. I never want to hear the minister pontificate again that we discussed it, had a democratic free debate in the House and are part of the decision. We are not part of the decision. The decision is the government’s. They had better remember that. The government will be responsible. It cannot hide behind this parliamentary phony sham we are going through today and have gone through before.

The government actions are the same old–style politics. Liberal, Tory, same old story: Ottawa knows best; we do not need to inform or ask the people, we will just set it up in Parliament so that it looks like it is democratic.

The government can send our troops, and I hope the minister is right. I hope there will not be a disaster. I hope not one Canadian will be killed. I hope the NATO mission is a big success and Bosnia has permanent peace. But how much better would we feel in the House if we had been part of and heard the answers and looked at the commitment, looked at all this in a non–partisan way where we had an open discussion, where we had the House full of members. The reason it is not full of members is they know this is a sham.

I hope the war criminals are brought in. I hope for Canadians that nothing goes wrong with this mission. This is a government decision. The decision has been made and the government must live with that decision.

• (1320)

Mr. Fred Mifflin (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his presentation. I am left in some doubt as to what he was proposing in particular.

First I want to clarify the record. The hon. member said they do not have enough information in the third party. If my understanding is correct—and I am not sure if the hon. member was there—there was a briefing on Thursday. I do not know how long it went on, but I understood from at least two members of the third party that they were happy with the briefing.

At the briefing it was presented what Canada’s role might be. They were given 15 options of some of the things we may be able to do, what the command and control arrangements were. I would have thought there was enough information there to provide the basis, with further learning and research, to come to the House in a debate with at least four days’ warning to provide some useful input.

I am not really sure where third party members are coming from. I am very serious about this. For the last week they have been complaining that morale is not good enough to participate. I can only assume they received irate telephone calls from members of the Canadians forces, because that does not now

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seem to be part of their presentation. I am not really sure where they are on that issue.

On the issue that they are not being included, we have had countless debates in the House, and he knows that no decision has yet been made on the troops that will be committed. I do not know if he expects that the third party and the opposition can go over to Brussels and meet. In our system of democratic government it is the ministers of the crown, the Minister of National Defence and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, who go and meet with their counterparts in the NATO countries and the partnership for peace countries. There is no built-in system, other than corresponding with the minister. Have they ever heard of letters? Have they ever heard of meetings in the minister's office?

We have today this special presentation, a debate. As parliamentary secretary—and I am sure I am speaking for my colleague, the Minister of National Defence and Veterans Affairs—I want to hear from the member and from other members who speak from the third party, the opposition party and our own party. We have this debate today to find out what the opposition parties want to do. Give us some proposals. Help us. That is why we are having the debate, not to hear the sort of rhetoric we hear: we are not really sure what we should do, sitting on the fence, maybe we should and maybe we should not.

This is a golden opportunity. It is the first time in 45 years NATO will do a peacekeeping job all on its own, with the approval of the security council, with the possibility of participation of partnership for peace countries, with the involvement of Russia, our old cold war ally, under a system that should cause so much excitement and so much possibility for fertile imaginations and learned debate.

I am very disappointed at what the hon. member had to say. What would he like to do?

Mr. Mills (Red Deer): Mr. Speaker, I guess the member obviously did not listen to the Bloc member either. The Bloc member said the same thing: we do not have the details.

The briefing was a laugh: it might cost between \$2 million and \$70 million; we do not now what the mandate will be; we do not know who will run the show after NATO leaves.

We need to know the cost, the exact budget. We need to know the mission. What is the mission all about? We need to know who will be in command. We need to have something to debate. We have not been given any information. The briefing is a laugh.

We know the government has made up its mind, just as in the past. It has the information, which is why we ask for it. Check out the letter to the Prime Minister to see what we asked for. Two weeks ago we outlined exactly what we want. We want a free

vote in the House. We do not want a bunch of parrots. We want a free vote where people can consult with their constituents and come here and say exactly what they think, based on the facts, not based on a bunch of stuff that spin doctors turn out. I am sick and tired of the spin doctors. I am sick and tired of how the government tries to turn it and put the responsibility on the third party.

• (1325)

Mr. Collenette: What do you think? What do you want?

Mr. Mills (Red Deer): You know what we want. We have said we want the criteria, the details.

Mr. Vanclief: We want the same.

Mr. Mills (Red Deer): I do not really think I can add any more to what the members do not understand.

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I wish to invoke Standing Order 43(2) so that Liberal members from here on in will be sharing 20-minute speeches, 10 and 10.

Mr. Glen McKinnon (Brandon—Souris, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I heard reference to the initiatives put forward by the Mulroney government when it sent troops to the Middle East a few years ago. I wonder whether in fact he preferred that approach to the approach being taken by our side whereby we are involving all sides of the House before any action actually occurs.

Mr. Mills (Red Deer): Mr. Speaker, what difference is there whether the decision is made in a caucus room or a cabinet room and then put out that way or whether we come here with the decision already made and for show only listen to the opposition members saying whatever they have to say, which is not important anyway, and the government members saying what in fact the government wants them to say? The government will pick on something like NATO: “They do not want to be part of NATO”, or “They are not for our troops”.

We are proud of our troops. They have done a great job. But let us not keep asking them to do the impossible. Do not tell me that another member will disagree with that, because another member in our party will look at it from the defence standpoint, as the defence minister should. I said I was looking at it from the big picture. I said we should look at it from the NATO involvement, the countries, the history, the mandate, the criteria and so on. Our other member will look at it simply by asking whether we can continue to ask the military to do the impossible. That will be the question he will deal with.

Mr. Leonard Hopkins (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member who has just spoken said he was looking at it from the bigger picture. When he sat down after

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his second last comment he said he had nothing further to add. I might say that he had nothing to add in his entire speech.

If the member is looking at the broader picture, if he is looking at the history of it, heaven help history students. We know what has happened in world history when people have failed to come together and unite for a common, humanitarian, good cause. We have had world wars started from this very part of the world. Are we to stand by and let them go to it again? Are we to put the world at risk and all those young people in the free world today coming up in the future in the armed forces? He wants to know what the cost of this will be. What is the cost of it if we do not do it? That is the question that has to be asked.

When we are debating these things on the floor of the House of Commons, let us look at the broader picture. I welcome the invitation to look at the broader picture. But if we are to look at the broader picture we have to understand what has happened along the road in history itself.

When we were over there as a defence review committee we met with a Croatian mayor, a Bosnian mayor and a Serbian mayor. Each of them had a solution and everything was different. Today, the peaceful world, the world that wants peace among humanity, will have to go in there and lay the groundwork. We talk about starting governments up. Of course we have to start putting governments in place. Nobody will walk away from something when things are going well. However, it takes courage and determination on the part of united countries and the United Nations to move in and do things when the going gets tough. It is the same thing as debates in the House of Commons. We do not sit in our seats and listen when the going gets tough. We get up and add our points.

• (1330)

I want to look at the broader picture. I compliment the government, I compliment NATO and I compliment the UN for showing the guts and the courage they have. In doing so they are supporting every young person in this world who may end up in a broader conflict. Yes, let us look at the broad picture. Let us look at the cost of this war. Also, let us consider the cost of not doing anything at all.

Mr. Mills (Red Deer): Mr. Speaker, I compliment the member for saying it a different way. We need to debate this in the House. We need to look at all the issues. But we are not doing that. That is the problem.

The real issue is about talking to the people. I have talked to the Croatian communities. I have been invited to the Serbian communities. I have talked to them. I know what the people are saying. They are saying: "Give us the facts before you write the blank cheque". That is the point: "Give us the facts before you write the cheque".

Would the member who just spoke send his grandson or granddaughter to this conflict knowing what he knows today? That is the question.

Mr. Jesse Flis (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, where some of my colleagues have criticized and given the member for Red Deer a hard time, I would like to compliment him. I see a change in attitude in the Reform Party. In the past it criticized our peacekeeping forces and was afraid to involve them in peacekeeping situations. At least today we are hearing from the Reform Party that we have the best peacekeepers in the world. I am very pleased that members of the Reform Party have evolved to the stage where they now see the importance of peacekeepers in the world.

My hon. colleague, the Minister of National Defence, has outlined the options of our participation in the international force which is being assembled to bring peace and stability to Bosnia. It is those options I hope we will debate today.

I would like to take us through a foreign affairs perspective. I would like to give a little broader analysis of the question before the House which underscores the importance of Canadian participation in this effort from a foreign policy perspective.

The suffering of thousands of innocent persons in the former Yugoslavia has deeply affected us all. Persons have been driven from their homes, subjected to ethnocultural cleansing and too frequently killed. These developments deeply offend Canadians' humanitarian values and sense of justice.

Who can forget the tragedy of Sarajevo and the suffering of the people in that city, under siege for over three full years, one of the longest sieges in European history? Against this backdrop of conflict and human suffering, Canada and the international community were asked by the United Nations to provide peacekeepers.

As a country committed to multilateral peacekeeping and the effectiveness of the UN, Canada responded. Canada responded to these challenges positively and at some cost. In each of these areas of challenge we have taken a stand in defence of Canadian values and as leaders on the world stage.

As we review what we have done in the past and consider what we will do in the future, it is important to place these challenges in a broader context. As the tragic story of the former Yugoslavia clearly demonstrates, international security is indivisible from human security.

To restore peace to Bosnia we must also restore the human conditions that support peace, conditions which will allow families to reunite, schools and hospitals to reopen and communities to rebuild. Peace and stability are in many respects preconditions to a degree of human security that will allow the

people of Bosnia to learn the lessons of peace, the lessons of trust, tolerance and co-operation. Without peace and stability we risk teaching an entire generation of Bosnians the lessons of war, the lessons of mistrust, hatred and violence.

From the very beginning of the crisis in the former Yugoslavia, Canada recognized the importance of early action on behalf of the international community to prevent the spread of violence. It was Canada which led the call in 1991 for the UN Security Council to address the crisis in the former Yugoslavia.

• (1335)

As we heard from our Minister of National Defence this morning, Canada was among the first to send peacekeepers to the former Yugoslavia, undertaking some of the most difficult assignments. In June 1992 it was Canadian troops that were deployed to Sarajevo to reopen and secure the airport so that the airlift of relief supplies could begin.

Canadian troops were in Srebrenica in eastern Bosnia-Herzegovina to establish the UN presence in that besieged city. Until the drawdown of UN forces this fall, Canada was the fifth largest contributor to UN peace forces in the former Yugoslavia.

As well, since the autumn of 1991, Canada has contributed well over \$63 million in humanitarian assistance for the victims of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia. Canadian money has been used to purchase and deliver food, medical supplies and clothing, to provide shelter, to assist refugees and displaced persons and to support victims of sexual violence.

In 1992 Canada also introduced special measures to help citizens of the former Yugoslavia join their relatives in Canada. Over 7,000 persons have been landed in Canada under these special measures. In addition, over 11,000 refugees have been admitted to Canada from the former Yugoslavia through government assisted and privately sponsored programs.

Outraged at reports of horrendous crimes against humanity committed during the conflict, Canada led efforts to investigate and prosecute those responsible. A Canadian judge was one of 11 elected by the UN General Assembly to the International War Crimes Tribunal. The critic for the Reform Party did not make note of that.

Today, with the initialling of the Dayton agreement on a general framework for peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the parties to the conflict have committed themselves to sign later this month in Paris, an agreement that would ensure that Croatia, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina respect each other's sovereign equality. The agreement guarantees that Bosnia and Herzegovina will remain a single state within its internationally recognized borders.

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The Dayton peace agreement touches on issues such as the new constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, territorial divisions, human rights and policy and military forces. Among the key points agreed:

Bosnia and Herzegovina will be composed of two entities, known as the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Serb Republic. These will be joined in a loose union with a central government.

Bosnia-wide elections, assisted and supervised by the Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe, OSCE, will take place within nine months of entry into force of the agreement.

Sarajevo will be a single city.

Parties will begin negotiations on confidence building measures, or CSBMs and on a sub-regional arms control arrangement under the auspices of OSCE.

Refugees and displaced persons will have the right to return to their homes of origin or receive compensation.

Admittedly the Dayton agreement is fragile. We know that, but that is all we have at present. Questions remain. Serious difficulties must still be worked out and much could go wrong. Yet this agreement represents a major commitment to peace by the parties to the conflict. It is the best chance at peace we have had since that conflict began. The Dayton peace agreement presents us with an opportunity to end the suffering in the former Yugoslavia. This is an opportunity we must seize now.

The formation of the implementation force for Bosnia will be authorized by the United Nations Security Council. It will be placed under NATO command and tasked to separate the warring forces and implement the military aspects of the Dayton peace agreement over a 12-month period. That is why it is wrong to compare this to Cyprus, where we had peacekeeping forces for almost 30 years. This is an essential part of the peace agreement. Without it, parties to the agreement believe there can be no peace.

The parties to the Dayton peace agreement are not alone in recognizing the importance of seizing this opportunity to bring peace and stability to the former Yugoslavia. The response of the international community to the call for an implementation force has been rapid. In addition to our partners within NATO's military structure, 19 non-NATO countries have indicated their willingness to participate in IFOR.

• (1340)

It is important to recognize that a Canadian contribution to IFOR represents but one dimension of a comprehensive approach to bring a lasting peace to the former Yugoslavia.

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Canada will also remain engaged in humanitarian and refugee issues. We will remain politically involved, counselling diplomacy and negotiation in addressing problems as opposed to a resort to arms only. We will engage ourselves fully in the multinational effort on economic restructuring and social rehabilitation in the former Yugoslavia.

In this regard I would suggest that Canada's focus should be on social rehabilitation and the development of democratic and just societies. This focus would include the promotion of human rights and ethnocultural tolerance in the states of the former Yugoslavia and continued support for the work of the International War Crimes Tribunal.

Canada should engage itself in the promotion of free elections in co-operation with OSCE. We should support the creation of national human rights institutions and work to promote free media. Some are even accusing the international media that fuelled this conflict in the first place.

Canada's commitment to the building of civic societies should also entail a concentration of assistance on community based projects and on the rehabilitation of social infrastructure in the former Yugoslavia. Canadian projects should be initiated in communities where inter-ethnic co-operation is beginning to emerge.

With regard to economic rehabilitation, Canada's contribution to a multilateral effort should be significant but not disproportionate to the contributions of European allies and the U.S.A. We could consider some debt relief within the framework of multilateral agreements reached at the Paris Club, if countries were to meet the eligibility requirements of such relief.

All these activities will ensure a comprehensive Canadian approach to the post conflict situation in the former Yugoslavia. Integral to this is a continued Canadian effort in the field of security. The peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina remains dangerously fragile. The stability that can be provided by an international implementation force is essential.

In participating in the implementation force, IFOR, Canada can make a unique contribution. There is no more experienced or well trained peacekeeping force in the world than ours. To participate in IFOR means to accept our responsibility to continue addressing a conflict we have been concerned with from its very inception. To do less would mean walking away from a conflict that has challenged key Canadian values and interests before it is effectively resolved.

It would be wrong for us to walk away from a job only three-quarters done, ignoring the hard fought investment of Canadians made over the last four years. We must continue our efforts to bring peace and stability to the former Yugoslavia. This requires solid Canadian participation in the military force to guarantee the implementation of the peace agreement.

It is an essential element in a comprehensive Canadian approach to peace in the former Yugoslavia. It is our best hope to ensure that the dreams and talents of the entire generation of Bosnians are not lost to war.

On a personal note, I have many constituents from the former Yugoslavia, from the different ethnocultural backgrounds. Every one of them is urging us to continue the Canadian participation and assistance. That is their wish as Canadians. I welcome concrete suggestions rather than hon. members taking their 20 minutes—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Order. I understand a large number of members from all parties want to participate in this important debate. If in fact members will be splitting their times, 10 minutes is not as long as members are customarily used to. I would just caution the House so that we might get as many members as possible to participate in the debate.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Philippe Paré (Louis-Hébert, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I rather agree with the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs that there are two reasons why we cannot easily pull out of these peacekeeping missions.

• (1345)

Strictly on humanitarian and compassionate grounds, I do not believe we can ignore such suffering. However, we must also recognize that, in an open world, there is so much interdependence that we have to realize that any conflict anywhere on this planet will affect us sooner or later.

Having said that, I must state that, in my opinion, the problem lies in the type of mission in which Canada will be participating. The bottom line is that Canadians would like to know, as would Quebecers, what the exact nature of Canada's involvement over there will be.

What I would like to ask the secretary of state is the following: How can we make sure that Canada will have a say, significant say, in the decision on what type of contribution it will make in the former Yugoslavia?

[*English*]

Mr. Flis: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his intervention. There will be a series of implementation conferences, co-ordination conferences, et cetera. That is why this debate is so crucial. Before ministers go to these conferences, they want input from parliamentarians sitting in this House.

Let me make it very clear. Before it even goes to that level, it must go to cabinet. Before going through cabinet, cabinet wants our ideas. While we are debating here, the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Department of National Defence are holding expert consultations.

This process is ongoing. The process of consulting Canadians never happened under previous governments. It is happening now. Again I urge members, if they have constructive ideas they

should go to the cabinet table and to the international discussions we will be having. This is where we will show the world another example of how Canadians can work through consultations, how we can work putting partisan politics aside.

When we are representing Canada abroad, be it in peacekeeping, be it in any forum, that is when partisan politics are put aside. We are representing Canada, united, undivided, strong. That is when the peacekeepers really have high morale and that is why I am so pleased that the Reform Party has changed its attitude toward our peacekeepers abroad.

Mr. Fred Mifflin (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I remind myself that I am speaking on a motion by the Minister of National Defence:

That this House take note and welcome the recent Dayton peace agreement and the international community's continued efforts to bring enduring peace and security to the Balkans, and Canadian support of these efforts by participation in a multinational military implementation force under NATO command.

In the next 10 minutes or so I plan to talk about the new ground we are breaking, what are the trends, talk about what I see the missions are and give some possible areas of the difficulties that I foresee. Maybe from that one could draw some ideas about some of the things that Canadians could do with the considerable experience they have had in peacekeeping.

I want to start by going back to 1947. It depends on how one reads history, as the member for Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke mentioned. If members look at history they have to look at the trends. If they look at the trend beginning in 1947 and the 40 years until 1987, there were really 13 peacekeeping missions.

From 1987 until this year there have been double that or 26. If members look at 13 in 40 years and 26 in 5 years, there are twice as many in one-fifth the time. Therefore there is a factor of 10.

Whether that factor of 10 will continue to rise, I am not sure. It is an indicator that what we are doing now we are likely to have to do again some time in the not too distant future.

This is peacekeeping operation No. 40 in the world. I believe it is the most challenging one and that it will allow us to break new ground.

• (1350)

There is another aspect of this which, if it does not bother me, it guides me in my personal belief of what should be happening. There are 184 countries in the world. Some are very large. We are the second largest of the countries. Some are very small. Of the 184 countries, what is important to remember with respect to ethnicity, cultural differences and various other differences is that only 10 per cent of those countries have any kind of homogeneity in their population. Of those countries the 10 per cent has an ethnic grouping of about 75 per cent.

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What we are seeing here may not be the end of our involvement in historical patterns. For that reason it is important for us to debate this issue. What we decide today will be debated in cabinet and will eventually become the Canadian decision. It will set ground rules for future involvement in what will inevitably be the result of these kinds of actions downstream, hopefully not too soon, but in all likelihood before this Parliament ends.

When considering the 44 months of difficulty which have existed in Bosnia, it is uplifting to talk about a chance to change the horror of war to the prospect of peace. A quarter of a million people have been killed. In the city of Sarajevo 10,500 people were killed. There are up to a million refugees. It is a very sad situation. They have a decimated landscape of shattered buildings, roofless homes, deserted towns and countless graves scattered in the hillsides, bearing the names of young men and women who were born after 1970.

The special joint committee of which I was privileged to be a member saw all of this. There is a battered, bombed out mental institution in Bacovici being run by Canadian soldiers and the wretched inhabitants of this institution depend on Canadians for their very existence.

In a civil war such as the one we have witnessed in Bosnia there are no winners nor are there likely to be winners. The only likelihood of a winner is the prospect of peace. Peace can be the only victor in this lexicon of issues.

The peace implementation plan, although it is not perfect, offers hope that some things will be no more. There will be no more days of dodging bullets and nights of artillery barrages. There will be no more winters of freshly dug cold and sinister graves. There will be no more years of isolation from the outside world.

There are 10 highlights to the Bosnia peace accord that were mentioned by the Minister of National Defence this morning. First, Bosnia remains a single state within a present border. There will be a Bosnian-Croat federation with 51 per cent of the territory and a Bosnian-Serb republic with 49 per cent.

Second, there will be a rotating presidency, beginning with a Bosnian-Muslim, a two-house Parliament and a constitutional court. The central government will have responsibility for foreign policy, foreign trade, monetary policy, citizenship, immigration and other collective issues.

The capital, Sarajevo, is united and under Muslim-Croat control. This may prove to be difficult in the future honing and improving of these negotiations.

International supervised elections should take place next year, or in the foreseeable future.

S. O. 31

Almost a million refugees will be able to return home and people may move freely.

The control of Brcko, a Serb held town, will be decided by an arbitration panel made up of Muslims, Serbs and Europeans.

It is important to the issue that there will be a corridor of between three to five miles in northeast Bosnia linking the Serb held smaller territory to the east to the central northern part by a corridor called the Posavina corridor. That is still the subject of some intense negotiation.

• (1355)

The Muslim held town of Gorazde will be linked to the federation by a land corridor. The Serbs retain Srebrenica and Zepa, Muslim enclaves they overran last summer. Last but not least, the NATO implementation force will be participating in the near future. In fact it has already started.

What are the NATO objectives? There are two, primary and secondary. The primary objective, as I see it, which I will put slightly differently but with the same thrust as the Minister of National Defence, is to oversee the withdrawal of warring factions from a buffer zone about five kilometres or two and a half miles wide created in most places along the current cease-fire lines. After a certain period of time, maybe 30 or 45 days, this zone will be widened to five miles or more, except in Gorazde, Sarajevo and Brcko which, as I mentioned earlier, will have special boundaries.

The secondary mission is removing land mines and also quasi-military roles such as providing security for relief agencies, delivering food and other necessities of life and ensuring passage for the thousands of refugees that I mentioned.

To try and prevent small conflicts from growing there will be an agreement that several commissions could be created to discuss this.

I have given the background of what I believe is the setting for Canada's participation. We are breaking new ground. This is the first time that NATO has had a pure peacekeeping role. It is not only NATO. We are involved with the partnership for peace, our future allies, and Russia has a role to play with a command and control system that has been set up for the very first time.

Quite frankly, as a parliamentarian and a member of the government, there are risks involved. There have been risks in every peacekeeping operation. However, I quote the hon. member who stood up a few moments ago and said: "The risk of not participating either monetary wise or the risk of lives or wounded may be much greater than not participating".

From the various debates we have had in the last two years, from the special joint committee on defence, the white paper

discussion and the present discussion on reserves, it is very clear to me that Canadians are prepared to and want to take this risk and participate in this operation.

It is the role we have to play. I really implore the opposition members, after their political rhetoric, to give the government some indication of what they believe the Canadian people would like us to do so that we can be guided in the cabinet discussions and downstream decisions.

[Translation]

The Speaker: My dear colleague, we shall proceed to the period set aside for questions and comments immediately after oral question period.

[English]

As it is now two o'clock, we will begin Statements by Members. The hon. parliamentary secretary will have the floor when we come back.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

CANADA SAVINGS BONDS

Ms. Susan Whelan (Essex—Windsor, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize and commend the Minister of Finance for his announcement in September that Canadians were able to purchase Canada savings bonds for registered retirement savings plans, RRSPs, this year.

In my riding, when I held prebudget consultation meetings last year, many of my constituents recommended the creation of a debt bond similar to victory bonds as a way to ensure that more of our national debt was held by Canadians, lessening our dependence on the international money markets and money speculators.

The Essex Canadian Auto Workers political action committee met with me this summer to advocate that Canadians be able to use Canada savings bonds as RRSPs. I thank the members of the CAW for their continued interest in Canada's fiscal health.

The changes made this year show that the government and the Minister of Finance listen to Canadians and are willing to act on Canadian suggestions for better handling the nation's finances.

I encourage all Canadians to participate in prebudget consultations. Their suggestions will be heard. I also thank Canadians who took advantage of the new option and purchased their RRSPs through Canada savings bonds this fall.

[Translation]

INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ): Mr. Speaker, on Friday Bloc members questioned the Minister of Indian Affairs on the paternalistic and disdainful attitude and intentions toward aboriginal people shown in a memorandum written by his assistant deputy minister.

In his reply, the minister launched into a full scale attack on sovereignists and on the government of all of the people of Quebec.

While refusing to be answerable for the inappropriate suggestions of his assistant deputy minister about buying off the aboriginal people, the minister launched into an attack on Quebec which was remarkable for its exaggerations and inaccuracies. He even said that I had been kidnapped by the Mohawks. What a pitiful performance, and what disdain for the democratic system, coming from a minister of the crown.

* * *

[English]

NATIONAL UNITY

Mr. Ray Speaker (Lethbridge, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, when the Liberal government came to power in 1993 it promised things would be different. Yet the more things change the more they stay the same.

Look at the Prime Minister's Quebec package. In the referendum aftermath Canadians in every region of the country looked to Ottawa for a vision. The best our Prime Minister could offer was "Charlottetown lite", reheated Tory policies that had already failed inside and outside Quebec. Not only did the Prime Minister have to borrow the Tories' vision, he has also resorted to their bag of dirty tricks by invoking closure on his Quebec veto bill.

That's right, the government is going to shove its unity package down Canadians' throats whether they like it or not, limiting debate on a package that will not fly in any region of the country. The Tories were never so bold or undemocratic.

This may unite Canadians yet in their conviction to reject the old Canada and begin building the new: no more Liberal, no more Tory; in '97 Reform's the story.

* * *

NATIONAL SAFE DRIVING WEEK

Mr. Joe Fontana (London East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this week is National Safe Driving Week sponsored by the Canada Safety Council.

To mark the 40th anniversary of this campaign which is designed to promote safe driving on Canada's roads, Transport

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Canada would like to take this opportunity to remind Canadians that road safety is everyone's responsibility.

The theme of the campaign this year is the hidden face of impaired driving. Impaired driving is still a serious issue. Recent statistics suggest that over 40 per cent of drivers killed in car accidents had been drinking.

Transport Canada has also been working hard to reduce death and injury on our roads through initiatives such as the national occupant restraint program and the introduction of mandatory safety equipment for vehicles.

All Canadians can play a role in promoting safe driving, which begins with safe driving practices. Drivers must take extra care to use safety equipment such as airbags and seatbelts properly. Exercising common sense when driving a vehicle, observing speed limits and respecting the rules will make our roads safe for everyone.

National Safe Driving Week is an important campaign and I urge hon. members to endorse its goals.

* * *

PEACEKEEPING

Mrs. Dianne Brushett (Cumberland—Colchester, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today as we debate sending troops to Bosnia we must remember the accomplishments achieved over the past half century by Canadian UN forces.

We must embrace the vision of global peace and unity so recently articulated in Ottawa by UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali. Canadians must set the example as ambassadors of peace. To waver at such a historical moment in the history of these warring countries would be paramount to turning a blind eye to a starving child. Bosnia is starving for peace.

As members of a united nation, all Canadians must accept the challenge to make a lasting peace for all Bosnians.

* * *

NATIONAL UNITY

Mr. Leonard Hopkins (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, since the early 1600s Canada has grown geographically and maturely as a nation of which we are very proud.

We as the Liberal Party sat recently in opposition. We looked across the floor of the House of Commons and watched the present leader of the separatist party and Marcel Masse as Minister of National Defence and Roch LaSalle sitting in the cabinet benches of the Government of Canada wielding all their power and political philosophy at the utmost. Today they are campaigning to separate Quebec from Canada. They are misrepresenting the facts of life to the wonderful people of the province of Quebec.

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Today we think about statesmen such as Baldwin, Lafontaine, Georges Etienne Cartier, Ernest Lapointe, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Louis St. Laurent, Pierre Elliot Trudeau and the current Prime Minister who have and who are laying the foundation for a great future of a Canada that will always include Quebec. Unlike the leader of the separatist party in the House who changes political parties like he changes clothes, the Prime Minister and the Liberal Party—

* * *

[Translation]

MANPOWER TRAINING

Mr. Jean H. Leroux (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister, who announced that the federal government would withdraw from manpower training, did not keep his promise.

• (1405)

By tabling a proposal that offers even less than the proposal made to the government of Quebec in June 1994 and dismissed out of hand by Daniel Johnson, Ottawa has again shown its inability to acknowledge the consensus in Quebec on the need for transferring the authority and resources for manpower training to that province.

From now on, the minister will be able to impose national standards if the provinces want federal funding, and if they do not accept Ottawa's standards, the minister will be able to go over the heads of the provinces and offer these programs directly to the unemployed.

It is now obvious why the minister waited until after the referendum to table his reforms.

* * *

[English]

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Herb Grubel (Capilano—Howe Sound, Ref.): Arise, young people of Canada. You have nothing to lose but poverty. This generation is ruining you. It leaves you with horrendous mortgages. You have heard of the visible mortgage.

The federal and provincial debt is about \$800 billion and grows at well over \$100 million a day. When you are raising your family almost certainly about one-half of every dollar you pay in taxes will go to pay interest on the mortgage this generation leaves you. Sadly this is only half the story.

There is another little known and largely invisible mortgage. Actuaries estimate the cost of benefits promised to pensioners through the CPP, OAS and medicare programs will double from

about \$50 billion to \$100 billion per year. Your income taxes will be 50 per cent higher just to cover these costs.

Young Canadians, arise and join the—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Regina—Qu'Appelle.

* * *

SASKATCHEWAN

Mr. Simon de Jong (Regina—Qu'Appelle, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan is the best place in the world to live according to Martha Justus, an economist with Informetrica. She used the same United Nations human development index that ranked Canada number one among the countries of the world.

When this index was applied to the provinces, Saskatchewan came out on top. The UN ranking is an attempt to define quality of life by combining life expectancy, educational attainment and gross domestic product adjusted for cost of living.

The findings of Informetrica were no surprise to those of us from Saskatchewan. Our community oriented history and culture have produced some of the best social legislation. For example, the recent initiatives by our provincial NDP government gives many part time workers access to benefits usually enjoyed only by full time employees. This further enhances our quality of life.

Yes, Saskatchewan is number one.

* * *

INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Canadian infrastructure program is still in full swing in Peterborough where it represents more than \$35 million and 68 construction projects in every village, township and city, both school boards, Fleming College and Trent University.

One feature of the program has been the way it has released moneys, private and public, being held in reserve for future projects. The release of these funds now has resulted in useful projects and has created much needed jobs. Money has been spent at the grassroots of the economy.

I strongly urge the government to build on its experience with the current infrastructure program and launch another. Perhaps the new one could be redesigned to deliberately tap more private sector funds. Perhaps it could include regional variants to accommodate special local needs. Perhaps priority could be given to particular types of infrastructure.

Let us consult with the municipalities and launch a new invigorated infrastructure program.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Ms. Jean Augustine (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, six years ago this week the promising lives of 14 bright, talented young women were lost in a senseless act of violence at l'École Polytechnique in Montreal.

Canadian women everywhere remain haunted by this tragedy. On Wednesday, Canada's national day of remembrance and action on violence against women, the tragedy of December 6 should stand as a symbol of the safe, just and peaceful society we must strive to create.

We must remember there is much strength to be gained from this awful sacrifice. Through dedication and effort and regardless of regional, linguistic, racial or partisan divisions, the memory of these women should inspire us to rebuild a nation founded on the principles of equality and respect where women shall no longer be victims.

* * *

• (1410)

[Translation]

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE REFORM

Mr. Antoine Dubé (Lévis, BQ): Mr. Speaker, last Friday the Minister of Human Resources Development tabled his unemployment insurance reforms. The minister told whoever wanted to listen that the purpose of his reforms was to adjust to the new demands of Canadian society and that it would be easier for the unemployed to re-enter the labour market.

However, now that the reforms have been tabled, it is clear that the impact will be far worse than we expected. The federal government hopes to reduce its deficit at the expense of women and young people.

Furthermore, in order to ensure that wealth is redistributed, Ottawa has decided to reduce the premiums of those who are well off by one billion dollars and, to make up for this reduction, increase the premiums of low-income workers by \$900 million. Is that what the federal government calls justice and social equity?

* * *

[English]

THE LATE ROBERTSON DAVIES

Mr. Ian McClelland (Edmonton Southwest, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I stand today to pay tribute to the late Robertson Davies, one of Canada's most treasured writers.

Bridging Canada's two solitudes, a headline in the Quebec media reads:

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[Translation]

"With Robertson Davies, Canadian literature has lost one of its titans".

[English]

This sentiment accurately describes Robertson Davies' status: a monument to Canadian literature.

Robertson Davies was to me a person of another world. I knew him by reputation only. When I first heard him on the radio I was impressed that he appeared as interested in hearing the opinions of others as in expressing his own. Acknowledged the world over as a great man of letters, Robertson Davies was also a man of the people.

Canada and the world are much the better for his presence and for being the beneficiaries of a great literary legacy on his passing.

* * *

BANKS

Ms. Bonnie Brown (Oakville—Milton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Toronto Dominion Bank and the Bank of Montreal announced substantial increases in 1995 profits last week. Their profits rose 17 per cent and 19.5 per cent respectively over last year.

While these figures may earn the industry the respect of its shareholders, they are also drawing criticism from small and medium size business owners. We have all heard their frustration at the banking industry's reluctance to lend to the small business sector. We know it plays a critical role in our economy. That is why we are working hard to foster a new environment of opportunity for it.

We cannot do it alone. It is our view that the banks have a special obligation to assist small businesses in obtaining financing. Let us hope their increased profits motivate them to fulfil that important obligation.

* * *

THE LATE ROBERTSON DAVIES

Ms. Albina Guarnieri (Mississauga East, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, Canadians mourn the passing of master writer, scholar, leading playwright and critic Robertson Davies who was instrumental in establishing Canadian literature at home and abroad.

His writings and teachings, particularly as Master of Massey College, had a profound impact on Canadian writers. A finalist for the Booker Prize in 1986 and recipient of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1992, Robertson Davies was a recipient of the Governor General's Literary Award in 1972 and the Molson Prize in 1988.

*Oral Questions**[Translation]*

His works contain a world of the imagination that mingles passion, magic, fate, lust and humour. His astonishing erudition made him an outstanding ambassador of Canadian letters.

[English]

A modest man with a gentle wit, when asked for a self-description he proclaimed: "I may not be the world's foremost swan, but I am not a duck". He leaves us, nevertheless, with a remarkable swan like legacy. He will continue to be an icon for future generations.

* * *

QUILT MAKING

Mr. John Richardson (Perth—Wellington—Waterloo, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the fascinating art of quilt making.

Quilt making and the preservation of quilts are an integral part of our history. The art of quilt making reflects Canada's rural beginnings, and its continued popularity is living proof of the vitality and the art of this form.

Today quilt shows are just as popular as they were generations ago. Currently I am seeking Parliament's approval to proclaim the fourth week of every May as national quilters week. Such a proclamation will give these committed and tireless artisans the recognition they deserve.

• (1415)

I ask all members of Parliament to lend their support to this worthwhile effort.

The Speaker: I would say that that request was just a stitch in time.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD*[Translation]***UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE REFORM**

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, on Friday, the Minister of Human Resources Development finally unveiled his unemployment insurance reform, which will make it increasingly difficult for the unemployed to access the system. The reform provides that eligibility levels will be considerably higher and that those frequently out of work will be penalized, so that the first victims of these cuts will be young people, women and seasonal workers. The federal government is cutting \$2 billion from the program.

Will the minister finally acknowledge that he waited so long to table his reform in order to avoid having Quebecers know

before the referendum that they would get hit with two thirds of the UI cuts, that is, about \$640 million?

[English]

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member does not have his facts straight.

The reality is that Quebec is affected no differently than the other provinces. The full mature year after the transition takes place, the next impact on the province of Quebec would be 7 per cent of benefits because a large proportion of the money we are saving is being reinvested to ensure that people in Quebec can go back to work.

That is what I do not think the hon. member fully understands. The whole purpose of the reform is to give people the opportunity, the resources and the support to be re-employed. It is about jobs. It is about work. It is about employment and the way in which governments can work together to develop partnerships to help people attain those very important objectives.

That is what it is all about and that is where the money is going. It is going to shift us from a program that previously provided a simple income benefit program. However because it is no longer relevant to the much tougher world of work we live in, we are now giving people a better ability to meet the kinds of demands and to do what they really want to do, which is to get a job.

[Translation]

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the minister cannot deny the terrible effect the cuts in his reform will have on young people, women and seasonal workers, especially. Everyone is affected, but they are more so.

The minister cannot deny it, and I would ask him this: Since the federal government is using the surplus in the unemployment insurance fund to reduce its enormous debt, are we to understand from the \$2 billion cuts announced Friday that, rather than improving its own finances through better management, Ottawa is trying to reduce the deficit on the backs of the unemployed?

[English]

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let me again point out some relevant facts. It is quite clear the hon. member has not looked at the report. He does not know what we are proposing.

There will be a substantial extension of coverage under the new proposal for part time workers or people who have multiple jobs. Half a million Canadians will be included in the program where before they received absolutely no coverage at all. A quarter of a million seasonal workers will be able to receive extended benefits beyond what they receive at the present time.

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There will be the opportunity for more people to improve their earnings because we are basing it upon a much more realistic test, the test of hours.

To get to the question raised by the hon. member and not the prologue where his facts were wrong, the reality is that the money we are using is first to go into a reserve to stabilize premiums against a further recession. In that way we can ensure that future workers will not be hurt the way workers were in the past recession and we can ensure there is an infusion of money at that point in time. We are reducing the costs for both employees and employers as a result of this measure to stimulate job creation. We are ploughing back \$800 million of employment benefits to help people get back to work.

• (1420)

This goes back to the very heart, the goal of what we want to do, which is to ensure that Canadians will have the opportunity to get a good job.

[Translation]

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval, BQ): Mr. Speaker, when the minister talks of getting Canadians back to work, we cannot forget that, for more than two years, the government in power has done absolutely nothing to get Canadians back to work, except the poor and the unemployed with cuts. That is what happened.

The minister cannot deny this. Given that the level of employment in Canada has hardly budged and given the enormous cuts he is making to unemployment insurance, will he admit that, far from giving Canadians the dignity of work as he calls it, he is hitting them, pushing them towards welfare and condemning them to poverty? Because that is what his plan is about.

[English]

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the poor member really has got himself wound up into the wildest coil of exaggeration I have seen in a long time.

As the member well knows and as he obviously should know, the reality is that since this government has come to power we have created close to 500,000 permanent jobs. The unemployment rate has gone down from over 11 per cent to 9.4 per cent. In Quebec alone, 119,000 new jobs have been created.

As we all know, one of the most important elements of this program is that in addition to helping people adjust to the labour market, buying the opportunity to get the kind of skills they need, they will also be able to generate between 100,000 and 150,000 new incremental jobs, of which 40,000 would be in the province of Quebec. It is worth fighting for 40,000 jobs, which is what we are doing. I wish the hon. member would join in that fight.

[Translation]

Mrs. Francine Lalonde (Mercier, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Human Resources Development. Thanks to the cuts resulting from the February 1994 budget and the present reform, the minister will enjoy a \$5 billion surplus by the end of 1996, after requiring workers and employers to pay \$6 billion back into the recession fund. This is a very substantial grab. Yet, this surplus will not be set aside but will go into the federal government's current revenue to reduce its deficit by \$5 billion.

Are we to understand from its UI reform that the government intends to reduce its deficit not by improving management of government operations but by reducing UI benefits by another \$2 billion?

[English]

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, at the present time the unemployment insurance account is still in a deficit. That deficit was allowed to rise to \$6 billion in the last recession because there was no reserve placed against it.

What is even worse is that at the same time the previous government jacked up the premium rates from about \$2.05 to almost \$3, a 50 per cent increase in premium rates at a time when the economy was going into recession. All that did was make the recession all that much worse.

We should learn from those lessons. We should not put Canadian workers in a position where all of a sudden money is drawn out of the economy when in fact money should be going back into the economy. One of the basic principles of this national program is to be counter-cyclical, to reinvest when times are bad and to put a surplus aside for protection when times are good.

• (1425)

We are learning that lesson. We are setting up a reserve fund so we can stabilize the premiums. In that way when there are problems in the economy we will not have to jack up premiums, we will not have to deficit finance, but we can make sure that we put the money back in the economy to keep jobs for Canadian workers.

[Translation]

Mrs. Francine Lalonde (Mercier, BQ): Mr. Speaker, given the size of current surpluses and the maintenance of high premiums, workers will never be able to benefit from this surplus, which will only be used to reduce the deficit.

Since UI premiums and benefits are part of the government's revenue and expenditures, does the minister recognize that his so-called recession reserve is nothing but an accounting fiction and that this UI fund surplus will be used strictly to reduce the

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federal deficit, as specified on page 11 of the government's own annual financial report?

[English]

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, from time to time I have heard the hon. member for Mercier talk about the responsibility of members of Parliament to listen to the grassroots, to listen to people in their own regions.

I would like to quote a very important statement: "In order for unemployment insurance to fully play its role of automatic stabilizer, we feel that it would be advisable to set contribution rates in such a manner as to allow a surplus to accumulate during periods of expansion, thus avoiding the necessity to increase contributions during periods of recession". Was this le Conseil du patronat? No it was the CSN and the CEQ, the two major unions of Quebec which have advocated exactly what we are doing.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mrs. Jan Brown (Calgary Southeast, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the changes to unemployment insurance that the Minister of Human Resources Development announced on Friday will not create a single sustainable job.

The new 7 per cent payroll tax is a full time tax on part time workers and amounts to a massive tax grab. Since tabling his bill the minister and his officials have failed to inform Canadians exactly how much more money the government is getting from this tax grab.

Why will the minister not tell Canadians exactly how much money he is pulling out of the pockets of part time workers?

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, frankly the hon. member from Calgary just does not get it.

The member just does not understand the whole point of the reform which is to make sure that for the first time part time workers would get the security protection of the unemployment insurance fund. That is the whole point of the reform. If those workers make less than \$2,000 they get the premiums refunded. She still goes not get it.

What has happened is there has been an artificial glass ceiling. Employers have set 15 hours where nobody has the opportunity to get access to maternity benefits, to get job security, to get retraining. As a result they have been sent home. What we are doing is we are opening up the door of opportunity and security for part time workers in Canada.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Some hon. members: More, more.

Mrs. Jan Brown (Calgary Southeast, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, let me continue.

The new tax will hurt 2.5 million part time workers and their employers. The minister wants us to believe that this tax is revenue neutral. The fact is that the students and working moms targeted by the tax will be forced to pay for months, 910 hours to be exact which accumulates to months, before they can collect and few ever will. This is not a revenue neutral tax. This is a cash windfall of \$1.2 billion at the expense of part time workers.

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I did not hear the hon. member's question, but I suppose I can make up one for the hon. member and then answer it. Seeing she seems to make up most of the facts she uses, I might as well make up the questions that she wants answered.

• (1430)

Let us deal with the part time worker issue, one of the strongest cases that was made to us during the public hearings. I heard the hon. member's leader last week saying that we have to listen to the people. We did. They said that at this time, when there are increasingly more jobs of a part time nature or of a multiple job nature, we have to give people coverage. They did not have coverage. Under the old weekly basis, after 15 hours people were sent home; they were told not to work any more. The whole labour market was distorted as a result, and those people had no security. We have opened up eligibility for over half a million Canadians.

If that person, a student, male, female, or whatever the case may be—

An hon. member: A Reformer?

Mr. Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): We may have to look at the charter of rights for that.

Mrs. Jan Brown (Calgary Southeast, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, it is habit forming when we have to respond to the question mark. This is about killing part time jobs.

There is very little evidence that the part timer tax will benefit anyone except the federal coffers. Many businesses are opposed to this scheme. Ultimately, the increased cost to business will kill off the creation of part time jobs and generate huge tax revenues. In fact we expect this tax will generate over \$1 billion.

How can the minister justify this \$1 billion tax grab at the expense of part time workers?

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member should know, the cost reductions we have built into the program amount to \$1.3 billion for small business employees and employers. That has a very strong job stimulating effect.

Second, we have also built in a rebate for small business. If there is an increase in premiums they will receive a 50 per cent rebate. Obviously the hon. member did not know that either.

Third, to repeat, if a worker, up to \$2,000 of income, does not want to claim their eligibility, they have a right to a full \$2,000 refund on their taxes.

It seems very clear. Now that we have a question from the hon. member, we understand that the question is not based upon anything she has read in our report.

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[Translation]

MANPOWER TRAINING

Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Human Resources Development.

In June 1994, the federal government offered to transfer budgets for several manpower training programs to the Government of Quebec. Daniel Johnson rejected the proposal out of hand, calling it a bargain basement agreement. Ottawa is now offering to give assistance the unemployed directly.

Will the minister admit that his reform proposal does not even go as far as the offer made in June 1994, in that the plan is no longer to transfer budgets to the Government of Quebec but to send cheques to the unemployed directly? Does he recognize that the federal government is not, in fact, withdrawing from the area of manpower?

[English]

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would have expected that surely by this time the hon. member would have caught on that in fact we are going much further than the previous offer.

The Prime Minister over a week ago said that we are withdrawing from the area of education and training. In fact we have introduced in the legislation that there would be no direct involvement in terms of a voucher unless there was provincial consent.

Furthermore, we have clearly put on the table the entire global amount of expenditures we make, which in the province of Quebec right now is about \$500 million or \$600 million, plus the savings that will be generated, which will be another \$240 million, to determine how we could work out a partnership with them. If they have delivery mechanisms that suit the criteria for the clients we must serve, we are quite prepared to use those delivery mechanisms. We can sit down to work out how we can

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eliminate duplication and overlap in these areas. We can work out common employment plans at the community level. We can discuss how we can share resources.

This is a real attempt to find a new partnership for employment with every province and help people get back to work.

[Translation]

Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, BQ): Mr. Speaker, what Quebec wants is for the federal government to withdraw from this area where it has proven totally ineffective over the past 15 years.

Does the minister realize that by sending cheques directly to the unemployed, his department is preventing Quebec from putting in place a real manpower policy, just to give the federal government visibility with the unemployed?

• (1435)

[English]

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in 1941 the provinces, including the province of Quebec, gave to the federal government the responsibility for the unemployment insurance program. It is part of the Constitution. In case the hon. member has not read the Constitution lately, it is in the Constitution. For all those who pay into the system, we are the trustee to ensure they receive proper benefits.

We are making sure that those who have the right they establish with their payment of premiums have the right to receive the benefits. We do not care who delivers them; we simply want to ensure, as a result of our trusteeship, that they receive those benefits. That is part of the Canadian Constitution.

* * *

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Miss Deborah Grey (Beaver River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Human Resources Development announced that his five-cent reduction in UI premiums on \$100 of insurable earnings would create 24,000 full time jobs in Canada. More money in Canadians' pockets equals more jobs. It is as simple as that.

We have to wonder why then the Minister of Human Resources Development is taking a 7 per cent tax bite out of the pay cheques of part time workers in this country.

If a token UI premium reduction creates 25,000 full time jobs, how many jobs will be lost when the government takes \$1.2 billion out of the pockets of part-time workers?

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Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the problem with that question is that the hon. member has been listening to her colleague from Calgary and they both have it wrong.

We have said very clearly that part time workers will now be covered by the UI system, and if they want to have a rebate on their premiums they will receive a rebate. Should I repeat that again? Should I underline it? Should I get a red pencil so they can understand it properly? Up to \$2,000 there is a full rebate of all those premiums.

On the other hand, those who want to come into the system and become eligible will pay the proper premiums so they can receive the protection of maternity benefits, sickness benefits, they are protected against being out of work and have programs to get back to work, all the protection they do not have now.

Miss Deborah Grey (Beaver River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, we are talking math, and I suspect it was not a prerequisite when the Minister of Human Resources Development got his job.

My strength is not math either, but I can figure out this much mathematically. According to his own department, a \$900 million reduction in UI premiums creates 25,000 full-time jobs. That is one job for every \$36,000 in reductions. Using those same figures, the minister's \$1.2 billion tax grab would kill close to 34,000 jobs in this country.

Will the minister confirm that this tax grab on part time workers is a job killer? And if he does not agree with our figures, maybe he could provide the House with his department's own research in this area.

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that the hon. member read the guide that was tabled at the same time, because that is where the full information would be disclosed.

The reality is that when someone receives coverage under the insurance program they pay a premium. That is what an insurance policy is all about: they pay a premium and get a benefit. Now we are saying that part time workers who were denied any coverage and not included in the program will be able to get the coverage. If they do not receive eligibility they get a rebate. That seems to be simple mathematics. They receive a rebate. That is the point of the program.

What I think the hon. member is clearly missing is that as this workplace goes through very substantial changes, part time workers and many workers who now have two or three jobs do not have sufficient hours or income to get coverage. As a result, it creates insecurity, which creates problems in the labour market. We are trying to restore security for over half a million workers.

• (1440)

[*Translation*]

OLD AGE SECURITY

Mr. Maurice Dumas (Argenteuil—Papineau, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Human Resources Development. After tabling a UI reform package that is really an extensive cutback program, the Minister of Human Resources Development is about to table an old age pension reform that goes along the same lines.

Will the minister admit that, after his all-out attack against unemployed Canadians, he is about to do the same thing to seniors?

[*English*]

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have neither attacked Canadian workers nor do we intend to attack Canadian seniors.

What we are doing as a government is ensuring that this country is able to govern itself effectively. For workers, that means getting back to jobs. For seniors and people over the age of 65, that means making sure they have good security in their old age. That is the intention of this government.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Maurice Dumas (Argenteuil—Papineau, BQ): As a supplementary, Mr. Speaker, will the minister confirm that not only is the federal government set to cut old age pensions but that it will encourage, I repeat encourage, seniors to work part time upon retiring?

[*English*]

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the only person who is guilty of inciting is the hon. member, who is making those kinds of false statements in the House and trying to raise fears that people should not have.

He has been told many times in the House, by the Prime Minister and others, that we would not be touching seniors' existing pensions. What we are looking at is the need to make a major reform in the Canada pension plan and other forums to make sure it is a sustainable program, that it provides security not just for this generation of seniors but for the next generation of seniors.

The basic purpose of government is to look ahead to the future. Unfortunately, this member only seems to be able to look to the past.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. Herb Grubel (Capilano—Howe Sound, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I was going to ask a general question about job losses, but I am upset about the logical inconsistency of the minister. He should have been coached by somebody who understands this.

On the one side, the minister claims that reduction in legislatively mandated premiums on unemployment insurance creates jobs. Then the minister turns around and says now we will legislate increased premiums for part time workers. He claims that one will gain jobs and the other one does not lose jobs. Could he clear up this inconsistency for me?

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, yes, because we are offering a rebate to employers who pay the premiums.

Mr. Herb Grubel (Capilano—Howe Sound, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, that is clearly on some of those who get rebates, not the others. It is inconsistent.

Last month Canada lost 64,000 full time jobs. There are reports of a coming recession with threats of still further job losses. The red book reference to jobs, jobs, jobs appears to have been about job losses, not jobs gained.

My question is for the Minister of Finance. Since he proudly claimed credit for jobs created in previous months, will he now take responsibility for these job losses and tell us how he plans for Canadians to get back to work?

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, one of the obvious instalments in the job program is what we did in this program, which was to take a program that had ballooned to double its size over a decade and provide a way of refining that program and reducing many of its costs so that it can be a sustainable program.

Second, we are substantially streamlining the program so that business can save about \$150 million on administration costs, which they can convert back into the job areas.

Third, the program generates \$800 million of new employment benefits, which create a number of jobs for Canadians, especially those who have been long term unemployed.

Fourth, we have a major investment of \$300 million to help develop in high unemployment areas specific investment funds and initiatives to help create jobs in those areas.

Oral Questions

• (1445)

This is a major instalment of the job creation of this program.

* * *

[Translation]

PURCHASE OF HELICOPTERS

Mr. Jean-Marc Jacob (Charlesbourg, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Defence.

Probably in the hope of saving enough money to buy submarines that we do not need, the government is contemplating the purchase of about 20 American built Sea Hawk helicopters. However, this type of helicopter is known for experiencing problems at sea. This is not very reassuring, considering that these helicopters will fly over the sea 80 per cent of the time.

Will the minister confirm that he intends to spend close to one billion dollars to buy inadequate helicopters at a reduced price?

Hon. David M. Collenette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): No, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Jean-Marc Jacob (Charlesbourg, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the answer is short and clear.

Even if he will not confirm it, how can the minister justify his intention to award, once again without tender, a contract worth close to one billion dollars to buy helicopters from an American company, thus depriving, as we already mentioned, the Canadian aircraft industry, which is primarily located in Quebec, of any economic spinoffs?

Hon. David M. Collenette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member's statement is totally wrong.

* * *

[English]

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Mrs. Sue Barnes (London West, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on December 1 last year I asked the Minister of Justice what action he was taking to protect women from violence.

Today I ask the Minister of Justice what legislative measures he has taken in the past year to implement the government's plan to deal with the issue of violence against women?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first I must acknowledge the deep commitment and the enormous contribution of the hon. member in this area.

Oral Questions

Although a great deal remains to be done, those things that have been achieved over the last year in dealing with men's violence against women have been brought about largely because of the contribution of my colleague and other members of the Liberal caucus.

Over the last year a number of steps have been taken to which I can refer in response to her question. On February 15 of this year, Bill C-42 became effective. Among other things, it provided in peace bonds that application can be made by someone other than the woman affected. An application might be brought by a police officer. The penalties were increased, the terms were made firmer.

I can refer as well to Bill C-41, the sentencing bill given royal assent in mid-July. Among other things, as a result of the initiative of the hon. member for Mississauga South, domestic violence was made an aggravating factor. As a result of the work by the hon. member for Brant, restitution was provided for victims of domestic violence.

A great deal remains to be done. I am proud to say we have already taken steps this year that will make a difference.

* * *

IMPLEMENTATION FORCE

Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, we have no details about the Canadian role in the upcoming NATO deployment or the size of the contingent or much else. The defence minister says the cabinet will decide tomorrow.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Mills (Red Deer): Will the minister table this proposal in full detail and allow Parliament to have—

The Speaker: Members will recognize that the Chair must wait and listen to what the question is going to be, rather than just the preamble. This question, in my view, is out of order.

If the hon. minister would like to address it, I will permit him to, but in my view it is out of order. We will go on to the second question.

Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I apologize for that. I did check with the Clerk to try and look at the rules.

We have talked about many human rights abuses in all parts of the world. We have talked about the genocide that has occurred in places, particularly the former Yugoslavia.

• (1450)

I would like to know what the government has in mind for all of our forces any place in the world to handle how they are going to deal with the issue of genocide.

Hon. David M. Collenette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, again this does touch to some degree the debate that is before the House.

The troops of the Canadian forces proved what the appropriate actions are when faced with the genocide in the former Yugoslavia. Were it not for the presence of our forces and the UN in general many more thousands of lives would have been lost.

The Canadian Armed Forces need no lessons from the hon. member across the way with respect to dealing with difficult situations. In any combat or any engagement the forces are committed to they will operate to the best of their abilities. They will use the Canadian standards of fairness and tolerance in the application of their duties including the application of force.

* * *

[Translation]

INFORMATION HIGHWAY

Mr. Michel Bellehumeur (Berthier—Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Industry.

We just learned that the Minister of Industry is about to award a \$100,000 contract, to write his speeches and advise him on the development of the information highway, to the firm that lobbies him on behalf of businesses having an interest in the information highway, including Astral, Unitel, Western International Communications and many others.

By letting lobbyists representing these businesses write his speeches and dictate to him his policies concerning the information highway, how can the minister claim to protect the interest of Canadians in that regard?

[English]

Hon. John Manley (Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first I remind the hon. member that it was not that long ago that we brought forward the toughest, most extensive lobbyist registration legislation in the western world and he did not support it.

Second, I would indicate to him that in the matter he has raised, the issue of conflict of interest was raised with the ethics counsellor. He reviewed the arrangements the firm in question had put in place with a view to applying the same principles which apply within the legal profession, as approved by the Canadian Bar Association.

The ethics counsellor indicated that in his view there is no conflict of interest that would arise if the contract in question were to be awarded.

[Translation]

Mr. Michel Bellehumeur (Berthier—Montcalm, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is to the Prime Minister, who is the main person responsible for preserving the integrity of this government.

Does the Prime Minister not find it unacceptable that the industry minister should be the spokesperson of businesses having an interest in the information highway, and what should we think of an ethics counsellor who sees nothing wrong with that?

[English]

Hon. John Manley (Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am not sure whether the member had trouble understanding the answer, but what he needs to understand is that questions of conflict are ones which are taken extremely seriously.

The moment such a conflict was raised by a competitive firm for a contract which was being offered in response to a request for proposals, that matter was investigated thoroughly. The undertakings given and the oaths given were judged by the ethics counsellor to be sufficient to give us the confidence that no conflict would prejudice the work that was being done.

I want the hon. member to understand that the issue of integrity and conflict are very important. If he has any basis on which to suggest that we should not accept the oath or the systems that are in place, then let him come forward with specifics as to what his problem is in particular.

* * *

CANADIAN WHEAT BOARD

Mr. Jake E. Hoepfner (Lisgar—Marquette, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food.

Prairie farmers are outraged at the recent revelation that Canadian Wheat Board commissioners were given severance packages of up to \$290,000. In November 1994 I submitted an access to information request for all available information on pension plans and wages for Canadian Wheat Board commissioners. Agriculture Canada replied "no such documents exist" regarding my request.

● (1455)

In August I challenged that reply but got no response. Why was the minister hiding this information?

Hon. Ralph E. Goodale (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will check the paper trail to which the hon. gentleman refers and I will ensure that all requests for information are properly responded to.

However, the hon. member should know that the severance arrangements to which he has referred in his question with respect to the Canadian Wheat Board were developed about 15 years ago with the concurrence of the Privy Council at that time. When those severance arrangements were developed, none of the current commissioners was in office.

Oral Questions

This year, in consultation with the Privy Council Office, I have made arrangements to modernize those severance arrangements, to bring them into line with other requirements.

The hon. gentleman can point no finger of blame at the current commissioners of the Canadian Wheat Board because they were not in office at the time when the severance arrangements were put in place.

Mr. Jake E. Hoepfner (Lisgar—Marquette, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the last time I asked for information in the House, the RCMP were accused of using improper procedures. I wonder which cowboy in the agriculture ministry threw the lariat the wrong way. It was the Liberal government which 15 years ago allowed these excessive perks and privileges to infiltrate the Canadian Wheat Board.

Why does the minister not make these perks and privileges retroactively disappear, like the government did with the Pearson airport deal?

Hon. Ralph E. Goodale (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the arrangements under which the current commissioners came into office were legally in effect at the time when their services were engaged by the Government of Canada.

* * *

THE ECONOMY

Mr. Gary Pillitteri (Niagara Falls, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance.

The Standing Committee on Finance, of which I am a member, has been listening to Canadians' suggestions for the 1996 budget.

When will the minister appear before the committee to provide us with his views on the deficit problem and other economic issues? What message will he bring?

Hon. Douglas Peters (Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that the Minister of Finance will appear before the Standing Committee on Finance the afternoon of Wednesday, December 6.

In his appearance last year the minister requested the help of the committee in suggesting appropriate actions to hit the 1995 deficit target. This year, however, we are firmly on track for our target. Last year the minister laid out the principles of deficit reduction and this year he will confirm his commitment to those principles. The committee will be asked to focus on reflecting the priorities of Canadians as the 1996 budget is prepared.

* * *

EMPLOYMENT

Mr. Simon de Jong (Regina—Qu'Appelle, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my question is also addressed to the Minister of Human Resource Development.

Routine Proceedings

In 1990, 87 per cent of unemployed Canadians were eligible for unemployment insurance. Two years ago the Liberals drove it down to 50 per cent. The CLC predicts that the latest announcement means that two-thirds of out of work Canadians will no longer be eligible for unemployment insurance, around the same level that exists in Mississippi.

How can the minister claim that this will benefit working Canadians? Surely they are trying to balance the deficit on the backs of out of work Canadians.

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the one thing I sincerely wish the president of the CLC for Christmas is a pocket calculator so he can get his figures right.

Quite clearly the economist who made those statements is a prime candidate for the remedial training programs that we are prepared to offer under the new employment package. He simply does not know what he is talking about.

* * *

• (1500)

[Translation]

HUMAN RIGHTS

Mrs. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister or to the parliamentary secretary.

Last Monday night, a Radio-Canada documentary on the television program *Enjeux* showed us the terrible fate met by infant girls in government operated nurseries in China. One million baby girls are literally left to die of neglect in institutions.

Will the Deputy Prime Minister tell us whether the Prime Minister intends to voice his condemnation of these unacceptable acts instead of settling for addressing human rights behind closed doors, thus condoning this shameful practice?

[English]

Hon. Raymond Chan (Secretary of State (Asia-Pacific), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the human rights situation in China has always been a priority with the Canadian government. As a matter of fact recently at the APEC summit meeting our Prime Minister had the opportunity to have bilateral talks with the president of the Chinese government, Mr. Jiang. He raised the human rights issue with him. We raise those issues not only in the bilateral forum but also in the multilateral forum, such as the UN High Commission on Human Rights.

We want to assure every member of the House that the Canadian government has put human rights on an equal priority with trade. We will continue to press those issues with the Chinese government.

* * *

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the Reform Party and every member of this House would like to congratulate the performance of the captain and crew of the HMCS *Calgary* and the captain and crew of the Sea King helicopter in the rescue operation this past weekend.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Hart: I would like to ask the Minister of National Defence: When can Canadians expect to hear about the bidding process to commence on the new shipborne helicopters?

Hon. David M. Collenette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is indeed heartening to have the hon. member at last congratulate the armed forces on one of its particular exploits. It was of heroic proportions and all Canadians should be proud of those members of the crew of HMCS *Calgary*.

With respect to the question of maritime helicopters, this is a matter, as I have said publicly before, that will be decided before the end of the fiscal year.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table in both official languages the government's response to six petitions.

* * *

CANADIAN TRANSPORTATION ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION AND SAFETY BOARD

Mr. John English (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in accordance with Standing Order 32(2), I have the honour to present, in the two official languages, the report of the auditor of the Canadian Transportation Accident Investigation and Safety Board.

This report deals with the financial year ending March 31, 1995. The report stands referred to the Standing Committee on Transport.

PETITIONS

TAXATION

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have three petitions today. I wish to present a petition which has been circulating all across Canada. This particular petition has been signed by a number of Canadians from Fenelon Falls, Ontario.

The petitioners draw to the attention of the House that managing the family home and caring for preschool children is an honourable profession which has not been recognized for its value to our society.

The petitioners also state that the Income Tax Act discriminates against families who make the choice to provide care in the home to preschool children, the chronically ill, the disabled or the aged. The petitioners therefore pray and call upon Parliament to pursue initiatives to eliminate tax discrimination against families who decide to provide care in the home for preschool children, the disabled, the chronically ill or the aged.

FETAL ALCOHOL SYNDROME

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): The second petition has to do with fetal alcohol syndrome. The petitioners would like to draw to the attention of the House that consumption of alcoholic beverages may cause health problems or impair one's ability. Specifically fetal alcohol syndrome and other alcohol related birth defects are 100 per cent preventable by avoiding alcohol consumption during pregnancy.

• (1505)

The petitioners therefore pray and call upon Parliament to enact legislation to require health warning labels to be placed on the containers of all alcoholic beverages to caution expectant mothers and others of the risk associated with alcohol consumption.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the final petition was submitted to me by Mrs. Betty Pellier. It has to do with section 43 of the Criminal Code.

The petitioners would like to bring to the attention of the House that section 43 of the Criminal Code allows school teachers, parents and those standing in the place of the parent to use reasonable force for the correction of pupils or children under their care, and that the reasonable force has been interpreted by the courts to include spanking, slapping, strapping, kicking, et cetera.

The petitioners therefore pray and call upon Parliament to end legal approval of this harmful and discriminatory practice by repealing section 43 of the Criminal Code.

Routine Proceedings

RIGHTS OF THE UNBORN

Mr. David Iftody (Provencher, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I have two petitions to present on behalf of people in the riding of Provencher.

The first petition concerns abortion. It was signed by a number of constituents from Niverville and Morris. These constituents respectfully pray that Parliament act immediately to extend protection to the unborn child by amending the Criminal Code to extend the same protection enjoyed by born human beings to unborn human beings.

ASSISTED SUICIDE

Mr. David Iftody (Provencher, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the second petition I have is with respect to assisted suicide and euthanasia. It has been signed by constituents from Rosenfeld, Rosenort, Niverville and St-Malo.

They too respectfully pray that Parliament ensure that the present provisions of the Criminal Code of Canada prohibiting assisted suicide be enforced vigorously and that Parliament make no change in the law which would sanction or allow in any way the aiding or abetting of suicide or active or passive euthanasia.

[Translation]

MINING INDUSTRY

Mr. Bernard Deshaies (Abitibi, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present a petition collected during the recent tour of the mining photography exhibit *Les galeries de mines*. The petitioners wish to draw the attention of the House to the fact that the Canadian and Quebec mining industry is the main employer in over 150 communities, a significant contributor to the gross national product and to Canadian exports, and a cornerstone of the Canadian economy. The petitioners therefore pray and call upon the House to take the necessary steps to support our mining industry.

[English]

DANGEROUS OFFENDERS

Ms. Shaughnessy Cohen (Windsor—St. Clair, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, today I have two petitions primarily from the riding of Windsor West.

The first petition refers to the steps the petitioners wish to be taken with respect to the apprehension, investigation, punishment and release of dangerous sex offenders and pedophiles.

ASSISTED SUICIDE

Ms. Shaughnessy Cohen (Windsor—St. Clair, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the second petition relates to the issue of doctor assisted suicides.

RIGHTS OF THE UNBORN

Mr. Paul Steckle (Huron—Bruce, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, a number of petitioners from my riding have asked me to present their petition. It draws the attention of the House to the following. The majority of Canadians respect the sanctity of human life and human life at the

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pre-born stage is not protected in Canadian society. The petitioners pray that Parliament act immediately to extend protection to the unborn child by amending the Criminal Code to extend the same protection enjoyed by born human beings to unborn human beings.

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QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the following questions will be answered today: Nos. 192 and 205.

[Text]

Question No. 192—Mr. Hanger:

Through which mechanism and in pursuance of which specific powers, either statutory or regulatory, is the federal government able to determine, for the benefit of the provinces, who among all individuals receiving welfare in Canada are sponsored immigrants?

Hon. Sergio Marchi (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.): Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) uses memoranda of understanding (MOU) to facilitate the exchange of information on sponsored immigrants with provinces, and where applicable with municipalities, for the purpose of administering social assistance programs and for the department's own sponsorship initiatives. Privacy is a concern and the MOUs must respect federal and provincial privacy legislation. At this time CIC has MOUs with the municipalities of metropolitan Toronto, Peel, Windsor, London, York, and the Ontario ministries of community and social services and health. Negotiations are under way to sign MOUs with other provinces and municipalities that require them. In Ontario some municipalities require their own MOU because the provincial data base does not hold all municipal data.

The MOUs allow CIC to confirm with welfare authorities that an applicant is a sponsored immigrant and how long the sponsorship is for. They also allow welfare authorities to advise CIC when a sponsor has defaulted on his or her sponsorship agreement and to confirm that the sponsor has paid back the provincial funds paid out to the sponsored immigrant.

Question No. 205—Mr. Gilmour:

What was the total dollar amount, direct and indirect, and source of government funding per annum from 1990 to the present, including the 1995-96 estimates, to the Valhalla Society?

Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): I am informed as follows. In so far as the Department of the Environment is concerned,

1994-95, \$58,325, environmental partners funds;
1995-96, \$21,045, environmental partners funds.

In so far as Human Resources Development Canada is concerned,
1990-91, \$1,671, Canadian jobs strategy summer employment placement;
1993-94, \$2,624, Canadian strategy workplace based training placement.

The following departments and agencies have reported no information:

Canadian International Development Agency,
Department of Canadian Heritage,
National Capital Commission and
Natural Resources Canada.

[English]

The Deputy Speaker: The questions as enumerated by the parliamentary secretary have been answered.

* * *

[Translation]

QUESTIONS PASSED AS ORDERS FOR RETURNS

Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if Question No. 144 could be made an order for return, that return would be tabled immediately.

The Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House that Question No. 144 be deemed to have been made an order for return?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

[Text]

Question No. 144—Mr. Stinson:

For each of the fiscal years 1992-93 and 1993-94, which groups received the ten largest amounts in federal grants for multiculturalism, and what were the amounts?

Return tabled.

[Translation]

Mr. Milliken: Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all remaining questions be allowed to stand.

The Deputy Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1510)

[Translation]

THE BALKANS

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

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Mr. Jean-Marc Jacob (Charlesbourg, BQ): Mr. Speaker, just before question period, the parliamentary secretary to the defence minister had just completed his speech. I noted that, as in the speech of the Minister of Defence, the government is not providing any details about Canada's intervention in the upcoming peace mission in Bosnia.

From the speeches we have heard in here since this morning, it is clear that, like the Bloc Québécois, the Reform Party, which is to some extent in favour of participating in this mission, wants to know what the government intends to do.

This morning, we asked for details on how aid will be provided, the size of the contingent, the costs, the time frame involved and Canada's commitments if it were to once again take part in this mission. We had a fine description of Canada's entire in and of how proud everyone is of it, but now we would like the parliamentary secretary to tell us what the direct implications are, as they have yet to be disclosed.

[English]

Mr. Mifflin: Mr. Speaker, I am delighted the hon. member gave me an opportunity to comment on some of the things he said.

I really have a problem with this. The opposition parties say there must be a debate in order for them to have input and say what it is they believe the government should be doing. I have heard three speakers and they have sat on the fence saying: "I wish the government would tell us what it is going to do".

In my presentation I went through the roles and missions of the NATO force and what it is supposed to be doing, as did the minister. I listed the participating countries. I mentioned precisely some of the things we may be doing. Last week opposition members had a briefing for over an hour and received a 19-page document with maps, options, command and controls and rules of engagement.

I have some idea of what I would like to do, but I am not permitted to do it. We have to wait for a debate and we want to wait for a debate. The opposition parties are cajoling us. Now that we are having a debate they are criticizing us because we have not told them what it is the government wants to do. If they want us to do that, I imagine the government could accommodate them. We have a lot of good decision makers here, so we could decide.

I thought the purpose of the debate was to allow the opposition parties to have input with respect to roughly how much money they thought would be reasonable and what roles we should continue in peacekeeping. Should they be military roles or would they like the preponderance to be in the human rights area? Should they be quasi-military or quasi-civilian roles? Would they prefer us to put all our eggs in the special commission basket? That is what I want to hear from them. If they want us to tell them, we can do that. Which is it? Do they want to participate or do they not?

[Translation]

The Deputy Speaker: The time for comments and questions has now expired. Resuming debate. The hon. member for Verchères.

Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity today to speak in this debate on Canada's contribution to the NATO forces as part of the Dayton peace plan.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, on November 21 the three main belligerents agreed to end a conflict that has been raging for more than three years in the former Yugoslavia. The agreement which, for the time being, exists only on paper, was signed in Dayton, Ohio under the auspices of the Americans.

As part of this peace plan, a peace implementation force is to be deployed in the former Yugoslavia, mainly in Bosnia. The implementation force will consist of nearly 60,000 troops. This military force will be under NATO command. Most members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, with the exception of Canada, Denmark and Iceland which has no armed forces, have agreed to send troops for the military operation to take place under the Dayton agreements. In fact, Canada has yet formally to advise its allies whether it intends to participate in these operations and, if so, what its contribution will be.

That is why we are having a debate today in this House. The Liberal government claims it wishes to consult Parliament before making a decision on Canada's participation in this operation.

● (1515)

In the past few weeks it has been clear that the Liberal government does not play by the rules. In fact, we have a distinct impression of déjà vu.

The government has already made up its mind. This was obvious from a report in the *Citizen* on Friday, December 1, quoting National Defence spokesman Stéphane Corbin as saying that no decision had been made on the Canadian contribution. However, Canada's commitment is clear.

The Prime Minister already made it perfectly clear that Canada would send troops. On November 23, the Prime Minister said: "Of course, we will send troops, but the size of our contribution will depend on what we are able to do and what we are asked to do". In this statement, the leader of the government showed how little respect he has for this House, whose prerogatives he should be the first to defend, but he seems quite incapable of doing so.

This becomes even more obvious when we realize that the Prime Minister already agreed with UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali on the duration of Canada's participation in this NATO mission. They apparently agreed that any country taking part in the implementation force would be

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committed until peace was restored in the former Yugoslavia, whether it took six months or three years.

Making such a commitment without consulting Parliament, despite the changeable situation and the possible consequences, is very alarming for the future and shows a flagrant lack of consideration for the role of Parliament.

Despite condemning this kind of behaviour, the official opposition has a duty to fulfil its role in this House and to act in accordance with its principles and ideals. Not only because of our responsibility to our fellow citizens, but also because of our responsibility to the international community.

For these reasons and despite the partisan politics that can divide us in this House, the Bloc Québécois supports the government's commitment to send troops to the former Yugoslavia so that the Dayton peace agreement can be implemented.

Despite its flaws, this agreement may be our last chance to end the conflict that has been raging for years in that region of the Balkans. Even if Canada's participation appears to lack public support and involves risks for our soldiers, we must not remain insensitive to what is occurring outside our borders.

For several years now, Bosnia-Herzegovina has been ravaged by a war to which we too often remain indifferent, because television often shows us only nameless faces that resemble millions of others. Yet, each person living in this region torn apart by this deadly conflict enjoyed an apparently normal life before all this started. Men, women and children have seen their lives turned upside down by this protracted, seemingly endless conflict. We have a moral obligation to them, because our responsibility is not restricted to the national territory of Quebec and Canada.

For most of their histories, Quebec and Canada have been spared from violent conflicts. Although we have long enjoyed a very enviable standard of living, we should not forget that others outside our borders are suffering and need our help. Given its status as an affluent nation, Canada has a responsibility to help those who are the innocent victims of war.

In response to our Reform colleagues, I must point out that we should stop looking at outside conflicts or problems as having nothing to do with our domestic problems. In this world of increasing globalization and integration, we must realize that international problems are also our domestic problems, and that our domestic problems are also international problems.

International developments have a direct impact on Canada and Quebec. When dealing, for example, with population movements, missed business opportunities, etc., we must realize that developments abroad have an impact on our domestic policies.

Our goal is not to interfere in another country's internal affairs. We will not be deciding for them what is good or bad.

• (1520)

Our responsibility is limited to preventing those who did not ask for this conflict in the first place from suffering and being killed. So far, this responsibility has been carried out through the UNPROFOR, as part of a peacekeeping operation. However, measures taken to date were unsuccessful in putting an end to the conflict and its disastrous consequences.

Two weeks ago, the three main belligerents unexpectedly agreed to stop fighting. But for the peace plan to work, they need our help. The help they need from us does, however, involve risks much higher than those faced by Canadian troops who took part in UNPROFOR peacekeeping operations in the past three and a half years, no matter what our defence minister says; he who would have us believe that the type of military intervention contemplated is no riskier than the peacekeeping mission started in 1991.

In fact, the risks associated with the military operation arising from the Dayton agreements are higher because the nature of the operation to be carried out by NATO is completely different from the one carried out by the UNPROFOR. The operations lead by the UN in the former Yugoslavia since 1991 were conducted under Chapter VI of the UN Charter, which allows only for the pacific settlement of disputes between parties concerned.

Article 33 is quite clear on this matter. It reads as follows: "1. The parties to any dispute, the continuance of which is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security, shall, first of all, seek a solution by negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements, or other peaceful means of their own choice".

Then: "2. The Security Council shall, when it deems necessary, call upon the parties to settle their dispute by such means". This is what articles 33.1 and 33.2 say.

But what we are debating today is not a simple peacekeeping operation, in which acts of aggression, while always possible, are unlikely. We are talking about a major military operation designed to force peace on belligerents. To implement the Dayton agreements, our troops will be mobilized in accordance with Chapter VII of the UN Charter.

Under the provisions of this chapter, armed forces under UN command, or the delegated command of NATO in this case, are allowed to use all necessary means to restore peace and fulfil their mission. This kind of mission exposes our troops to much higher risks, as they are more likely to see fire. Of course, they will be able to retaliate, but they would definitely be exposed to much more brutal attacks.

It is the first time that such an operation is led by NATO since the Korean war, more than 40 years ago. Therefore, we must ensure that our participation is not tainted by an aggression that could jeopardize Canada's credibility regarding peacekeeping operations. The government must inform Quebecers and Canadians of the possible consequences of such a mission. We have the right to know what dangers may lie ahead for our troops.

For that reason, the Canadian government must immediately tell us what its policy will be in the months to come in this regard. Unlike what occurred when our troops were sent to the former Yugoslavia as part of UNPROFOR, the Bloc Québécois feels that, this time, Ottawa must take its place and stop being meek. As you know, throughout our participation in UNPROFOR, the number of Canadian troops remained around 2,000, one of the largest contingents after those of France and the United Kingdom.

Yet, the federal government was not able to ensure Canada's active involvement in the political decision making process to manage the conflict. In spite of its strong participation in UNPROFOR, our country was not included in the international contact group set up in April 1994 to find a solution to the conflict in the former Yugoslavia. That group included the United States, France, the United Kingdom and Germany. Given its implication, Canada fully deserved to be a member of that group.

Considering the large number of Canadian troops in the former Yugoslavia, we expected the federal government to take initiatives and propose solutions as to how to solve the conflict and end it. However, as we know, no such initiatives were taken.

• (1525)

Once it was decided to send humanitarian assistance and troops to maintain peace in the former Yugoslavia, Canadian diplomacy was content to let things happen. For these reasons, although we support Canada's contribution to helping implement the Dayton peace plan, we must be careful not to repeat past mistakes.

Therefore, we must immediately take a close look at all the issues relating to Canada's participation in the peace process in the former Yugoslavia. First, it is obvious to the Bloc Québécois that Canada's participation in this NATO mission ought not to exceed the size of its UNPROFOR contingent, about 2,000 at its highest point.

Canada must make its intention of continuing to be actively involved in the peace process clear to the various stakeholders. I would like to take this opportunity to point out the regrettably low contribution of our European allies, with the exception of France, Great Britain and Germany, to this military force to be set up as part of the Dayton agreements. As for our own

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participation, it ought to be substantial enough to enable our diplomacy to play an active role in coming months.

The Bloc has difficulty seeing how Canada could send any more soldiers to Bosnia-Herzegovina. Over the past three years, Canada has spent \$517 million on its UNPROFOR participation and on humanitarian aid for the former Yugoslavia, or nearly \$172 million a year. According to the Minister of Defence, the annual cost of sending between 50 and 3,500 Canadian soldiers to Bosnia-Herzegovina, however, would range between \$2 million and \$75 million.

In the same breath, the Minister of Defence admits that the cost of taking part in a NATO mission is twice as high as for an equivalent UN mission. The Bloc's extreme scepticism about the Minister of Defence's figures is therefore understandable. That is why I am demanding, on behalf of Quebec's and Canada's taxpayers, that the federal government provide a clear figure for the expenses that would be incurred in sending troops to Bosnia-Herzegovina, and do so even before they leave this country.

Moreover, Ottawa must provide Canadians and Quebecers with answers on the composition of the Canadian task force. The public wants to know, not only how many troops will be deployed, but whether only combat troops will be deployed or logistics and support troops as well.

There is no doubt in the minds of Bloc members that, judging from our past experience in peacekeeping operations, Canada ought to assume tasks more closely related to monitoring and communications, both being areas in which we have recognized expertise. In other words, only a small proportion of our force should be combat troops.

The public also has the right to know how long our troops will be in Bosnia-Herzegovina. According to the Department of National Defence, allied chiefs of staff have agreed on rules for troop deployment for a period of 12 months. What if the government wants to extend the mandate of our troops? Will Parliament be asked to do so two days before their mandate expires, as was the case last April, when it was asked to renew the mandate of our peacekeepers with UNPROFOR? And will the Canadian government once again have made up its mind, as it did today, before the matter is tabled in Parliament? Will it show the same lack of consideration for the people of Quebec and Canada?

Will Canada have a political say in how our soldiers are used? This matter is an important one for the Bloc Québécois. We realize that Canada has a moral obligation to participate in the implementation of the Dayton agreements. However, this obligation should not obscure the fact that we also have a responsibility to the public and to the soldiers who will be deployed over there. The Bloc Québécois feels that the Canadian government should at all times have the right to withdraw its troops from this

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mission. Ottawa should provide assurances to that end as well as a plan for emergency withdrawal.

According to the latest news, France, Belgium and Canada wanted a say in operations in case of incidents on the ground, but the United States objected.

• (1530)

It seems the matter has been resolved, but no one knows what transpired. The Canadian government must answer these questions before sending a single soldier to Bosnia.

Today, the public does not know how many of our troops will be sent over there, what role they will play or to which international division they will belong. Although these questions are important and deserve clear answers, the public is even more concerned about the risks to which our soldiers will be exposed.

There are also a number of other aspects involved in the implementation of the Dayton peace agreements, and I am referring to the trial of war criminals. As far as the Bloc Québécois is concerned, the war crimes tribunal set up by the United Nations must pursue its mission fully and independently. According to my party, amnesty is out of the question for those who are accused of war crimes, including Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic and General Ratko Mladic.

The Dayton agreements indicate that these two individuals are to be excluded from political life, and rumour has it that these "warlords" may benefit from some kind of amnesty. Can the Government of Canada tell us whether it intends to insist that our allies and the international community respect the mandate of the international criminal court? Anything else would be unacceptable to us.

If the Dayton accords can be implemented without too much problem, we will have a moral obligation to help the people of the former Yugoslavia rebuild their country. We will have to see what we can do, from an economic point of view. So the federal government should take a clear stand immediately on the role it intends to play at the meeting of the World Bank in Brussels on finding funds for Bosnia-Herzegovina. Similarly, we might ask ourselves whether Canada can help in the expunging of Bosnia-Herzegovina's foreign debt, given the lamentable state of its own public finances. These are the questions that warrant our attention, and the position of the Canadian government should be clarified as quickly as possible.

In closing, allow me to once again express my regret at the fact that the federal government had decided before holding this debate that it would send Canadian troops to former Yugoslavia. In so doing, as it did with the renewal of Canada's participation in UNPROFOR in May, the government is demonstrating a lack of respect for Canadians.

We would like the government to consult this House within a year on whether we should pursue our involvement, and we would hope that it would not do so within a couple of hours of renewing the mandate.

Finally, I would like to point out that, in view of the change in our soldiers' mandate in Bosnia-Herzegovina, it would appear vitally important that the government keep open the option of withdrawing our troops at any time. If the NATO mission is incident free, so much the better. However, should the situation worsen, the government should keep all its options open, including that of bringing our troops home.

The latter possibility should not be taken lightly, because just last Saturday, General Ratko Mladic, the leader of the Bosnian Serbs, said that the Dayton agreements on Sarajevo should be renegotiated and that the Serbs would never agree to being governed by what they call the "butchers". A short while ago, the American general, John Shalikashvili, said the following on the NATO mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina as well:

[English]

"The mission will be tough, there is no doubt about it, and we have to be prepared for casualties".

[Translation]

The federal government will soon be sending troops to Bosnia-Herzegovina as part of a mission to impose peace, which will not be fun and games. The federal government must therefore know what to expect and act accordingly, because the lives of our troops are at stake. Ottawa must also get busy about other aspects of this mission, including proceedings against those guilty of war crimes.

The government may rest assured that the Bloc will be watching carefully and will follow the situation closely to ensure that the interests of our troops and, of course, of the people of Bosnia are looked after.

• (1535)

[English]

Mr. Fred Mifflin (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my hon. colleague for a presentation that certainly relates to the debate. I want to make a couple of comments with respect to the more pointed nature of my feelings on what he had to say.

I certainly do understand his concern as a member of the opposition about the possibility of changing the structure, the participation, the withdrawal, or the future of any NATO force and the Canadian participation without a debate in the House. I would at the same time quickly remind him that his leader was a member of the government who not more than four years ago participated in committing a very large Canadian force to the Persian Gulf without as much as one word of debate in the

House. I will tell him that if that has to happen, I would ask him to be considerate because it is not without precedent.

The previous government, of which his leader was a cabinet minister, used the phrase that it was not expeditious and propitious to do that. It is not always propitious and expeditious, so I would ask him to have understanding for these kinds of things.

I was expecting to hear from the parties opposite some comment on the size and structure of the force. I will give the hon. member credit, he talked about the possibility of surveillance and communications troops. However he did not give any indication of the scope of money he or his party were prepared to support.

The opposition parties, both the main opposition and the third party, have been mouthing off to the press. They have been going through a great litany and lexicon of rhetoric about not having a debate. Now that the time has arrived, lo and behold, they do not want to tell us what is on their minds. I have not heard a member of the opposition, with the exception of the possibility of surveillance and communications troops, say anything about what they would like to have in the way of whether it should be military, quasi-military, should we be a member of the commission, what kind of rules of engagement we should have, what kind of a force we should have that is tailored to this kind of a mission, what kind of conditions we should have in place to withdraw.

The conditions are right for the members of the opposition to stand up and put their money where their mouths are and tell us what they want to do. Do not be afraid. We will consider it. We may not do it to the letter of the law, but give us some range. What do they have in mind? What are we good at doing? Should we continue doing what we were doing before or should we do something differently? What other areas of expertise would they like us to use? Mr. Speaker, ask them to tell us what they would like to do.

[Translation]

Mr. Bergeron: Mr. Speaker, I ask the parliamentary secretary, to read the remarks I made a few minutes ago, when they are available tomorrow.

The parliamentary secretary claims that we made no suggestions to the government. He really should read what I said, because we made many suggestions to the government, and it ought to consider them. None of the speeches by members on the government side this morning ever mentioned the number of troops it intends to send to Bosnia or the length of time they would have to stay there. None of the speeches made by government members mentioned the type of troops to be sent there. Should they be combat troops, communications troops, engineering troops, medical support troops?

The government has been absolutely silent on this issue since it called this debate. Today, we are asked to debate this issue. We readily admit that it is up to the government to make decisions on foreign policy, but we do not recognize in this debate the commitment made by this government to consult Parliament on

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foreign policy issues, since these are always hurried consultations. When Parliament is consulted, it is always in a hurry. On the one hand, members of Parliament cannot prepare adequately and, on the other, they know that the government has already made up its mind and decided what to do even before they were consulted. This whole consultation process in the House is nothing but a sham.

• (1540)

When the parliamentary secretary claims that we do not recognize this role of the government, stating that the present Leader of the Opposition was a member of the previous government, I simply remind him, because he does not seem to have noticed yet, that the Leader of the Opposition resigned from the Conservative government and is now the leader of the Bloc Québécois.

[English]

Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am absolutely astounded at the hon. member's suggestions. I know my colleagues in the Reform Party, who have been weak kneed today, agree with me at least in respect of the hon. member who just spoke, who has made these outrageous suggestions that somehow the government is at fault for not explaining its policies.

I sat here this morning and heard the Minister of National Defence make the most lucid remarks explaining the government's position and saying what he felt the government's obligation was. He laid it out for all members of the House to hear. The hon. parliamentary secretary made a speech that was a model of clarity and brilliance. Yet the opposition has sought to obfuscate on this matter.

The hon. member who just spoke will not tell us his party's views. As we said, the whole purpose of the debate is to hear the views of all hon. members so the government can reach a decision based on the views of members of the House.

[Translation]

The hon. member who just spoke did not explain the official opposition's views. I am surprised that he did not clearly explain them when he answered the question put to him by my colleague, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence. Instead, he attacked the hon. member who asked the question. I cannot understand this.

[English]

He said that the hon. member did not know what he was talking about, that the government was not coming clean with the House and the government had an obligation to lead and decide and make all the decisions. Yes, it does, and the government will make the decision on Wednesday. The Minister of National Defence indicated that ever so clearly in his remarks this morning. Obviously it has gone right over the heads of hon. members opposite.

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Mr. Bergeron: May I answer?

• (1545)

Mr. Milliken: The hon. member will get a chance to respond. I am looking forward to his response, but I would like him to answer some questions. Will he tell us how much money he thinks we should spend on this mission, how long we should stay, how many troops we should commit? Tell us the answers to those questions. The government will listen to the hon. member and make a decision accordingly.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bergeron: Mr. Speaker, it is amazing to see our government colleagues claim that they want a non-partisan debate while they turn it into a truly partisan debate with their speeches, questions and comments following our speeches.

In my speech, I clearly indicated how many troops—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Bergeron: If you listened, you might understand my answer. Pay attention to what I am telling you.

How many troops should we send. I mentioned that. How long should they stay. I mentioned that. How much it should cost. I mentioned that too.

I do not know if the member for Kingston and the Islands was peacefully resting on his desk during my speech, but, obviously, he did not listen to anything I said.

An hon. member: This is not the first time, it is always like that.

[*English*]

Mr. George Proud (Hillsborough, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I just arrived. Certainly it is a great way to start off one's debate on this very important matter.

I heard people across the way saying that the government should make a decision on this thing. I suppose if the government had made a decision on it, then we would have been doing the wrong thing and should have had the debate in the first place. As I understood, this was the object of the exercise, to have a debate. At the end of the day, with the feelings of the House of Commons made known, the government will make a decision as to our participation in the former Yugoslavia.

It is a pleasure for me to take part in this debate today because I am one of the people who believe that Parliament should take part in these debates and decisions that are being made in this type of operation to send our troops to foreign countries. This is something we have said in this place for the seven years I have been here, that these debates should take place. By and large that is what happened since our party came into power in 1993.

I have no doubt, and I do not think many have, in what should happen to our role in the peace process in the former Yugoslavia. Peace in the region has been a long time coming, but it has finally arrived. I am glad to say that with the participation of the implementation force with Canada peace will be maintained.

Some hon. members from across the floor, as well as some other Canadians, have questioned the role we have played in the former Yugoslavia to date and have even questioned if we should be there at all.

As I have said before, I believe we were needed then and, more important, we are needed now more than ever. The conflict that ended with the agreement reached in Dayton, Ohio contained many atrocities the global community should never have witnessed and hopefully will never witness again.

To ensure this Canada must continue its tradition of peacekeeping and participate in the implementation force. We must help maintain the fragile peace that has been maintained.

International involvement is a benefit to everyone. The world is a complex community. States are interrelated in many ways, economically, politically and socially.

Conflict breeds conflict and we must do all we can to prevent conflicts from occurring and end the ones that already exist. Better relations among nations carry a benefit shared by all. Peace operations are a major part of this philosophy.

All of us know Canada has a long distinguished tradition of peacekeeping. We all like to trot out the name of the Hon. Lester B. Pearson. He was the man who invented it.

Our forces are not strangers to international missions, and we all speak about that. We are all so proud of that. Only a select few such as Canada have taken a lead in peacekeeping. Since 1947 more than 100,000 Canadians have served abroad in over 30 peacekeeping and related operations.

This is unmatched by our allies. We have recently paid homage to the 103 Canadian soldiers who gave their lives in these missions. Unfortunately I doubt they will be the last, but this is a risk we must take.

We are acting for a greater goal. International peace and security do not come without a price. The end of the cold war was celebrated by many, but little did we realize that such a vacuum would bring about so many regional conflicts. The importance of joint intervention has increased tremendously over the last number of years.

As a result international organizations, primarily United Nations, have become more involved in state disputes, having to toil with human rights and humanitarian issues on a far greater scale than ever before.

The potential for peace is there and Canada must do its part to achieve it. Without international co-operation how can we expect world peace to become a reality? We are not magicians and we cannot pull a white dove out of a black hat. We, as a member of the industrialized world, must accept reality and participate in the fight for peace. Canada long ago accepted this fact.

Not only are we members of numerous international organizations, we have continually participated in every United Nations peacekeeping operation. It is our duty to continue to play our role in this way.

As everyone knows, the nature of peacekeeping missions has changed dramatically since they were first established. From unarmed observers of peace agreements in the early years of peacekeeping, they have since taken on stronger roles of armed enforcers of peace agreements. It was a slow transition until recently. Since the end of the cold war international missions have been given much tougher mandates. In some cases, such as Bosnia, they were not wanted, they were not respected and they were even used as human shields.

• (1550)

Yes, much has changed since 1947. Generally we speak of peacekeeping in general terms, but peacekeeping has not always been peacekeeping in the true sense of the word. Missions have been used to contain the conflict and maintain the surrounding peace, to actually make peace or to enforce the peace once it had been reached.

The signing of the peace agreement with the formal peace accord to be signed on December 14 has stopped the fighting and the conflict in the former Yugoslavia. Peace has been made. Canadian personnel were there and will be there to assist humanitarian operations.

We were not there to keep the peace earlier because there was no peace. Now that peace has been reached as part of IFOR, we will be there to keep the peace, hence that is where peacekeeping comes from.

Although the mission will be a NATO led enforcement mission and not a peacekeeping mission in the traditional sense, to me it is still very much a peacekeeping mission. There will be peace to be kept.

Already we have heard some members focus on the specific role our men and women should play in IFOR. Before I add my views on these matters I will talk about the process of determining our role. Let us have no doubt that the Canadian government will have the final say on all rules of engagement used by Canadian forces.

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To me there is little question that we should participate in IFOR, but how many, for how long and in what capacity is up for debate. The Minister of National Defence has consulted our allies on what is still needed for this force. What other countries have already committed will also determine what we will say.

There are many ways we can participate and contribute to the implementation force. There is a multitude of military tasks within the mission, all of which I will not dwell on given the amount of time I have, but I would like to mention a few.

Recently we heard the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands suggest we send an air squadron rather than land forces. All of the air power required is needed from other countries. We have always had troops on the ground to cover the front line. Our troops should be there. Our troops have much to offer in enforcing the ceasefire, enforcing the demilitarization zones to defend persons, property or areas designated as protected, and so on.

Do not get me wrong, that should not end our contribution. Besides having our infantry we should contribute in areas of logistical, medical and air support.

The parameters of the implementation force appear to be quite broad and they are not just to keep the peace but in co-operation with civilian assistance to help rebuild the region. War has devastating effects on people, their communities and countries.

The former Yugoslavia has much to rebuild. The capital city, Sarajevo, where just 10 short years ago the Olympic Games were held, is in ruin. Canada should participate in the non-military operations as well. Getting the region rebuilt quickly will diffuse many grudges held and allow countries to withdraw their forces sooner rather than later.

We all know Canada is proud of its troops, for they are among the best in the world. We should give them a symbol of that admiration. To my colleagues on all sides of the House I say yes to the implementation force, yes to sending our troops and yes to giving them the recognition they need when it is over.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean H. Leroux (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the member for Hillsborough for his speech describing what the Canadian Armed Forces have done over the years. It is true their peacekeeping activity has been quite extraordinary. However, the people of Canada and the people in my riding who elected me and who expect me to ask the appropriate questions here in this House when necessary, are wondering what to think now.

• (1555)

Can Canada still afford conducting the operations it is conducting all over the world, at a time when we are cutting welfare benefits, and asking all Canadians and all Quebecers to tighten their belts one more notch? That is the question we must ask ourselves.

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Can we still afford such measures? If our means are limited, why not be content with limited involvement, instead of always claiming that we are out to save the world?

Mr. Young: Take limited action, like the separatists.

Mr. Leroux (Shefford): This has nothing to do with separatism. The minister is just babbling away.

Why seek to do great things, at a great cost, when we know very well that we cannot afford them? Let us be modest. That is what Canadians and Quebecers will ask: that we be modest in the decisions we make now.

Yes, we must go, to honour our commitments to NATO. But let us participate according to our means. This really has to be said.

[English]

Mr. Proud: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for the lecture. It is tough when money is not available to do certain things but if we do not work to maintain peace in the world we will not have the luxury of social programs or anything else.

Conflict has the ability to spread throughout the world. That is why we are in the NATO alliance. That is why we are members of the United Nations. That is why we have participated actively over the last 50 years to ensure the world is a better place. Even with all the problems, Canada has played its role and should continue to play its role. I do not believe peace has a price.

Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, what we are dealing with is an escalation of the traditional peacekeeping, as the hon. member has pointed out, in which Canada has proudly participated since the Suez crisis of 1956.

This is a new level of readiness, a combat situation. NATO is clearly asking Canada for combat troops. The U.S. has said NATO wants land forces and the U.S. president has said it is willing to accept casualties in this higher level of participation.

The hon. member spoke about Canada always being there, always able to be there. In the 1960s we had a force of some 120,000. In just a few short years we will be down to a force of some 60,000 but the commitments have increased over time.

I quote from the defence minister's white paper of a few months ago: "Canada cannot and need not participate in every multilateral operation. Our resources are finite and we may not agree with the purpose or the organization of a given mission".

How many Canadian soldiers have to be sacrificed so that the Canadian government can continue on this course?

Mr. Proud: Mr. Speaker, I am sure the Canadian government does not want to sacrifice any Canadian soldiers. As I said, over a period of years our forces have become smaller but we have participated and I believe we have to participate.

We have talked many times about the situation in the former Yugoslavia. Last year and the year before we were told we could not do what we will be able to do this time. If our soldiers find themselves in troublesome situations they can use force to get out of them.

That is what we are saying. I am not suggesting for a minute we want to sacrifice our soldiers. I believe this will be as safe a mission as it can be. There is a chance of soldiers being injured in any mission. That is life. Every man and woman who joins the Canadian forces or any other force knows that.

We are not doing this to put Canadian soldiers at risk. We are doing it to maintain the peace accord which has been signed and to stop these terrible atrocities from continuing. I believe that Canada and all Canadians will be proud to participate in such a force.

• (1600)

[Translation]

Mr. Robert Bertrand (Pontiac—Gatineau—Labelle, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour and a privilege for me to rise in this House this afternoon.

Peacekeeping missions took a new turn in the 1990s. In order to meet the new challenges of global security in the next century, we need a United Nations Organization and other international organizations that are able to play a more efficient role in conflict resolution.

The extent and complexity of contemporary peacekeeping missions call for the UN to ask regional organizations to play a greater role in conflict resolution.

The role of NATO in this effort is an excellent example of the kind of co-operation that is possible between international organizations.

The UN is the ideal tool for giving legitimacy to an international peace mission and NATO is the organization best equipped for carrying out a mission in Europe, especially one that could call for the use of force. But the UN still needs to be changed.

Created in the 1940s, the organization must get the tools necessary for facing the challenges of global security in this century and those to come. The UN record since the end of the cold war is quite impressive for the most part. Missions in El Salvador, Cambodia, Mozambique and Haiti have produced sound results. But failures in Africa and the former Yugoslavia have raised some doubts.

Unfortunately, many member states put all the problems of the world on the UN's shoulders, which is very unfair. Member states must stop criticizing and start doing their bit. Canada is well aware of the UN's problems, but our government is determined to find solutions.

Given our experience and expertise in all aspects of peacekeeping and the new ideas we propose, we are in a unique position to help the UN. Canada helps to improve UN peacekeeping missions in different ways, such as offering expertise at UN headquarters in New York and establishing the Lester B. Pearson training centre for peacekeeping at Cornwallis, Nova Scotia.

As Canadians, we can offer pragmatic and feasible ideas to prepare the UN for the future. Last September, for example, Canada submitted to the General Assembly the results of a study to improve the UN's response capability to respond in times of crisis. Events in Rwanda showed that simple measures can settle a crisis before it sets completely out of hand.

[English]

The Canadian study recommends concrete changes at all levels of the UN system to ensure that such measures can be implemented quickly and effectively. These changes would be cost effective and their implementation would not require any reform to the present UN charter.

The study's clear recommendation is its proposal to create a multinational, multidisciplinary headquarters planning cell, comprised of military and civilian personnel from member states. This planning cell, which would operate under the authority of the security council and the strategic direction of the Secretary-General, would fill an enormous vacuum in the UN system.

It would be responsible for planning and preparing for rapid deployment of a multi-functional standby force of up to 5,000 military and civilian personnel. This force would be deployed for a brief period either to meet an immediate crisis or to anticipate the arrival of follow-on forces or a more traditional peacekeeping operation.

• (1605)

For this vanguard concept to work, this rapid reaction force, the UN standby arrangement system would need to be enhanced so that all the essential components of the force, either military or civilian, could be identified well in advance.

The authority to deploy personnel would still require a UN resolution as well as the consent of each participating government. So far the response to our study from other member states has been encouraging. We look forward to building on this initiative in the months ahead.

In conclusion, while the international environment is becoming even more complex, it is no surprise that peacekeeping has followed suit. As new security threats continue to emerge, Canada and other members of the international community must not let up their efforts to discover new and innovative approaches to peacekeeping.

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Whatever the challenges are, Canada's commitment to this useful conflict resolution tool should remain steadfast.

Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the Reform Party has been saying today that this debate is a lot of smoke and mirrors because we will not have the opportunity to vote on this issue.

The argument that we are putting forward is that the government has already made a decision and has committed to sending troops.

I was wondering if the hon. member could comment on the most recent Canadian Press report from just a few minutes ago. It states: "A NATO official has said that Canada has committed a headquarters brigade and a battalion to IFOR". This would mean a participation in the neighbourhood of anywhere between 1,200 and 1,500 people. What does the member have to say?

[Translation]

Mr. Bertrand: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member opposite for his question. What he just said, however, is not quite true. Absolutely nothing has been decided. Members of the third party have not yet revealed any of their views concerning the force to be deployed in the former Yugoslavia.

I have been here for nearly an hour, but I have still not heard any real suggestions from the third party. I will remain in the House a little longer to see if they offer any positive suggestions.

Mr. Jean H. Leroux (Shefford, BQ): Mr. Speaker, following the speech by the hon. member opposite, I would like to share some of my thoughts about what is going on.

The government is asking us to agree to send troops under NATO command, but it is being vague about it. This is what makes it difficult. It is difficult for us to take a position, because we do not know how much that will cost, how long the mission will last and what responsibilities will be given to our troops.

It is therefore very difficult for the opposition to decide. We, in the Bloc, are in agreement with the proposal in hand. We agree but, as I said earlier, restraint has to be used, and my hon. colleague just said something to this effect. So we agree on this. However, we will not know before this debate comes to an end how much all this will cost. In other words, the government is asking us to give it a blank cheque. I would like the hon. member to comment on that.

• (1610)

Mr. Bertrand: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Shefford for his question. We are here to listen to what the official opposition has to say.

Let me repeat what I told the member of the third party. I did not hear any suggestion from that party as to the size and the duration of our involvement. I will stay in the House for a while,

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and I look forward to hearing members in the official opposition provide us with at least that information.

[English]

Mr. Jack Ramsay (Crowfoot, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to get a very clear and definitive answer to the question that my colleague just asked the hon. member. Has Canada already committed troops to this UN initiative? Yes or no.

Mr. Bertrand: Mr. Speaker, what is clear is that there has been a commitment from Canada to participate. There has been no clear commitment on the number of forces and other things to be committed.

Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of the people of Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt to participate in the debate today on an issue of national importance, the NATO mandate to commit a peace implementation force to Bosnia.

The Reform Party supports international peacekeeping commitments and takes pride in the work that our armed forces have done worldwide. They have a reputation of being the best peacekeepers in the world and this reputation is well deserved.

From Korea, Cambodia, the Golan Heights, Bosnia, Somalia and Rwanda Canadians have been there and have done the job asked of them with honour, dignity and determination. They have performed above and even beyond the call of duty.

Nothing serves to show the dedication and bravery of our troops better than the rescue mission of a Romanian freighter sinking in a storm off the Atlantic coast this past weekend. A master corporal with the support of his colleagues rescued the crew in a 30-year-old helicopter despite the odds and the shortcomings of this antiquated vehicle. This helicopter lacks sufficient range, forcing the frigate to close in tightly to the distressed ship and the master corporal and his colleagues are true Canadian heroes.

Since the end of the cold war peacekeeping has changed dramatically. We have left the era of classic peacekeeping to a new era of active peace enforcing. In response to this change the Liberal government has increased Canada's peacekeeping commitments.

However, the Liberals have done this without a coherent policy. They have increased our commitment while decreasing significantly the resources they are willing to allocate to the Department of National Defence and military personnel.

This must be considered before we can determine what kind of force Canada is able to contribute to IFOR. We must also have a clear set of conditions before we commit our armed forces to a task such as this.

Reform Party members have developed such a clear set of conditions that we would like followed before committing our troops on peacekeeping and peace enforcing missions. The Reform Party's conditions are: one, all peacekeeping missions must be approved in advance by Parliament, including a proposed budget; two, the belligerents must signify their genuine willingness to settle their conflict peacefully; three, the mandate, duration and rules of engagement must be specified and adequate command and control must be in place, sufficient resources must be available to do the job; four, Canada must be included in any diplomatic negotiations; five, rules governing troop rotation must be established and adhered to.

As it stands right now the Liberal government has not been forthcoming with information to determine whether these conditions are being met.

• (1615)

Today we are debating the issue of contributing to the NATO peace enforcing mission in Bosnia. However, this is only a take note debate. Parliament will make no decisions here today. The government has already made the decision.

The United States has made it known that Canada is contributing between 1,200 and 1,500 troops. Twenty-two Canadians were sent to Bosnia on Saturday with other NATO forces to begin the preparations for the main NATO force. The Canadian people had no voice in this decision.

Canadians will not know whether the belligerents are genuine about peace until they sign a formal agreement scheduled for December 14. This is not a done deal. The leader of the Bosnian Serbs has already served notice that he is not happy with the accord and he has warned of bloodshed over Sarajevo.

While supporting all peace efforts in Bosnia, I have a number of military concerns this government must take into consideration before sending our troops to Bosnia. Before we make a commitment to IFOR we must first assess whether our land forces have the personnel, the equipment and the resources necessary to contribute to the IFOR mission; second, whether our land forces are facing a morale problem; and third, whether questions on leadership raised by the Somalia inquiry should be addressed prior to a deployment of this nature.

For the past 25 years the Canadian Armed Forces have been abused politically and financially by governments to the point where our forces are in disarray. They are quickly becoming ineffective in taking on missions asked of them by the government. This is not an indictment of our military personnel who shoulder the burden of these commitments, but it is a condemnation of successive governments that have failed to provide effective leadership and resources to the Department of National Defence. Our armed forces are at the edge not of technology or effectiveness, but at the edge of survival as a fighting force.

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The 1995 budget of the Liberal government has cut the defence budget to the point of calling into question whether our land forces are capable of sustaining any combat role. To the Minister of Finance I say that there is a point at which armed forces must be funded to remain viable. We have hit that point. Yet the Department of National Defence is bracing itself for more cuts at a time when our government finally is calling on them to do a job they should have been equipped to do in the first place.

No other country has neglected its armed forces as much as Canada. In the early 1960s our armed forces totalled over 120,000. Today the Liberal government is reducing that number to some 60,000. Yet the demand on our armed forces has remained the same. And the demand on our military personnel will only increase as the new world order unfolds.

Our whole army is approximately 23,000 people, which is smaller than the metropolitan Toronto police force. In fact we could take the whole army and march it into B.C. Place Stadium to watch a football game and there would still be room for thousands of additional spectators.

In addition, our armed forces have been almost demilitarized. The government has trained and equipped our land forces for classical peacekeeping based on lightly armed troops. Leaders are being taught the wrong lessons, which could result in a disaster when faced with a serious combat situation. This is at a time when classical peacekeeping is required less and less.

Peacekeeping missions are now peace enforcing missions, requiring the skills and equipment our government has neglected. The Liberals have based their security policy on peacekeeping alone, at the expense of our combat readiness and conventional capabilities.

Being trained and equipped to act as a peacekeeping force is a far cry from stepping into a conventional combat role. This is what the Liberals are asking of our land forces today. Due to the Liberal government's procrastination, our 30-year old armoured personnel carriers will not be replaced until 1997. The land forces lack critical support infrastructure such as logistics and medical.

• (1620)

I would like to quote from a recent study by the Conference of Defence Associations. They state:

—the Armed Forces are in fact a facade, or a three-dimensional chess board, in which many pieces are missing from the main board, and almost none exist at all on the lower supporting boards.

If the Liberals send our land forces on this IFOR combat mission to Bosnia, we may be asking our land forces to pay the price for the lack of government leadership they have had. No wonder morale in the Canadian Armed Forces is at its all time low. The Minister of National Defence in his rhetoric blames the low morale on the Reform Party. However, the attack on our

armed forces by the Liberal government is responsible for the low morale. This in turn has its own cost on operational ability in our land forces. For the past three years they have been forced to rotate 3,000 personnel on UN missions every six months. To many, this may not sound like very much. Many states can field such a force without difficulty. Because of the size of our modest land forces, successive rotations of 3,000 troops is a significant burden.

In fact it is a burden that normal training, which is imperative before any mission, has ground to a halt. Our land forces have been forced to scramble to be able to put together the personnel and the units to fulfil the commitments the government has obliged them to do.

Sadly, the Minister of National Defence blames again, of course, the Reform Party, the only party that is looking out for the interests of our troops, for the problems of his own making. The minister is responsible for the morale problems and should not pass the buck in this cowardly manner.

The morale problem is well documented. For example, an August 1995 chaplains' report states that we are seriously taxing the morale necessary to remain a competent force. It states that rapid successions of deployments requiring the members to continually be away from their families must be balanced with adequate time at home. Stress levels are at an all time high, resulting in breakdown of the family and other serious problems.

I am gravely concerned that the government will commit a significant number of our land forces personnel to Bosnia without taking the morale issue of the rotation of our troops into consideration. We cannot rely on land forces reserves to take up the slack. We need them to help the regulars maintain operational strength during their UN tours. While this was occurring, the Minister of National Defence announced the number of militia reserves was being cut by some 6,000.

The rapid succession of deployments is not the only factor that is reducing morale and operational effectiveness. The Somalia inquiry has raised a number of questions regarding the leadership of our forces as well. The leadership problems have been documented extensively by senior officers in the Canadian forces. For example, one report last March states that there is a grave lack of confidence in the senior defence hierarchy among the rank and file. The report states that there is a widespread belief in the Canadian Armed Forces that political agendas and careerism have replaced leadership in the defence hierarchy. The report discusses the perception among soldiers that the loyalty and focus of senior officers is directed upwards, and not downwards to the rank and file. It criticizes how leaders appear hypersensitive to human rights and political correctness at the expense of building the warrior ethic in soldiers. The report states that soldiers perceive that their interests and welfare are

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being sacrificed so that senior leaders can be successful in delivering the same bang for the buck.

It is ill-advised for the government to consider sending combat troops to Bosnia, given the seriousness of this problem and the fact that the Somalia inquiry investigating the chain of command will not issue a report and recommendations until June 1996.

The government should seriously consider the current state of land forces before committing them to this combat mission. I stress this is not the classical peacekeeping to which Canadians have become accustomed, nor are our land forces trained and equipped. Our whole land force has spent the last three years training for peacekeeping deployments. They lack the equipment and the resources. Morale is low and there are questions about leadership that must be addressed. This is not the time to send them on a mission for which they are ill-prepared.

• (1625)

Mr. Jesse Flis (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am really disappointed that the third party had a golden opportunity to really put its policies forward and boost the morale of our forces at all three service levels, really make an input, really make a significant contribution nationally and internationally, and what do they do? They talk about Somalia. They talk about all other issues except the motion that is on the table. The official opposition at least gave us some figures. They said our commitment should be up to 2,000 troops, et cetera. I wish they would have gone on more specifically, what kind and so on. The third party has not given the government one constructive suggestion.

On one hand, they complain that the government has already made up its mind. It has not. Cabinet is not meeting until Wednesday. They read something in the newspapers. It is like the budget: someone reads something in the newspapers and they call it a budget leak. That is what they are comparing this to. Forget about what is in the newspapers. Give the government constructive suggestions and concrete ideas. This is their golden opportunity, and they are blowing it.

They praise our peacekeepers and then in all their debates what do they do? They bring the morale right down as low as they can get it. If I were out there fighting, I certainly would not listen to what they were saying. That really would depress me.

I have always respected the hon. member for having good ideas. I am wondering if in the time left he would share them with us. What is it he would like cabinet to consider? What are the options? Do we participate at all? If so, how many troops? Two thousand troops? What kind? Should we forget about that altogether and go on the human rights side on other issues?

Let us hear it. This is their golden opportunity and they are blowing it.

Mr. Hart: Thank you very much for that disjointed odd question.

Mr. Hill (Prince George—Peace River): Babblelogue.

Mr. Hart: Babblelogue, yes, that is a good comment.

The opposition parties have a deep concern for what the government will do. It is very clear, and let us not pull any punches on this. What NATO has been asking for and what the U.S. has been asking for are combat troops to participate in IFOR.

This is not the same kind of mission Canada has participated in before, in peacekeeping missions. Let us look at the problems. The cornerstone of a peacekeeping mission depends on the fact that our troops are trained in compromise and negotiation, two cornerstones of peacekeeping operations. Canadians have done that job very well, but now we are moving to a new level. We are moving to the level of combat troops, peace enforcement. Get it out of your head that this is the same somehow as a peacekeeper, because it is not. There are no blue helmets any more. We are talking about a demilitarized zone that has been partitioned through the country of Bosnia. That partition is going through towns, cities, villages, farmlands, and there will be some action there. There will be some firing. Anybody on that side of the House who says there will not be is not being honest with the Canadian public. There will be. The U.S. President has stated that there will be and casualties are expected.

• (1630)

Canadians have to look at what we have been doing in peacekeeping operations since 1956, since the Suez crisis. We have let the equipment and the numbers of our Canadian Armed Forces decline.

I served in the Canadian Armed Forces twice in my adult time. I know the results of what a Liberal government can do to the Canadian Armed Forces when it is in charge. I have lived through it. I am surprised by the hon. parliamentary secretary's attitude. He knows that the hands of a Liberal government ran our equipment and our armed forces into severe decline. We do not have the equipment to get involved in this peace enforcement mission. There are also serious problems in the land forces command which simply have to be addressed.

Members opposite continually blame the Reform Party for the terrible morale in the Canadian Armed Forces. Members of the Reform Party support the armed forces and many in this caucus have served in the Canadian Armed Forces. No, we are not to blame for the morale problem. It is the decline in numbers, the decline in support. On the other side of the coin there is the

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increase in demands being placed on our military while the resources are shrinking.

The white paper says very clearly that Canada does not have finite resources. We have to pick and choose which missions to participate in. Canadians have participated honourably and valiantly for three and a half years in the former Yugoslavia. No, we are not turning our backs, but for God's sake, we will not send our troops ill-equipped and with a serious morale problem into a combat situation. It is a recipe for disaster and this government will pay the price for it if it decides to take that decision.

Mr. Fred Mifflin (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, do I understand from the hon. member that the druthers of the third party is not to send any troops to participate in this operation?

Mr. Hart: Mr. Speaker, I have been very clear in my comments. I am saying it is the intention of the government to send combat troops, and the indication is that NATO is asking for combat ground force troops according to information made available to me as a parliamentarian, received through Access to Information and conversations with senior officers.

Many frustrated people in Canada are banging down my door saying to do something about this. I do not think I can make it much more clear to the hon. parliamentary secretary. I am representing the constituents of my riding and other people across the country who have phoned my office saying: "Do not send combat troops". Can I make it any more plain?

Mr. Mifflin: Mr. Speaker, I do not know who is banging on the member's door. The member spoke of the HMCS *Calgary* and the brave actions of an outfit that he claims has difficulty with morale. Has he considered the awards that have been made, and I hope he attended some of the presentations by the Right hon. Roméo LeBlanc at Rideau Hall, for some outstanding acts of heroism? Has he considered this action of an outfit that is plagued by bad morale?

Mr. Hart: Mr. Speaker, the hon. parliamentary secretary is pointing out and I have acknowledged in the House today the courageous activities of the crew of the HMCS *Calgary* and the courageous activities of those people on the Sea King helicopter who literally plucked survivors out of a very dangerous situation. We are not talking about the activities of our naval forces; we are talking about land force command. We are talking about soldiers on the ground with boots and rifles and they do not have the equipment. I say again that if the government is talking about those types of troops, absolutely no.

• (1635)

[*Translation*]

The Deputy Speaker: It is my duty, pursuant to our Standing Orders, to inform the House that the question to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment is as follows: the hon. member for Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing—Social Programs.

[*English*]

Mr. Janko Peric (Cambridge, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak to the motion concerning Canada's participation in the peace implementation force to be deployed within Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The Dayton peace agreement has given the world a great deal of hope; hope that the situation in the former Yugoslavia will once and for all improve, and hope that innocent people will no longer have to suffer the violence of war.

Having come from that region of the world, this peace agreement touches me more personally than it does most other Canadians. I would like nothing more than to see a lasting peace which would ensure safety and security for all people in the former Yugoslavia.

I have had the honour to debate the issue of Canadian involvement in the former Yugoslavia many times in the House. Each time I have stated very clearly that I support Canadian involvement as long as the lives of our men and women are not placed in danger.

There were many times when I felt that Canadian peacekeepers were not being given adequate tools to do the job which they had been sent to do or adequate tools to protect themselves. When I speak of adequate tools I am not only referring to weapons, I am also referring to the mandate of UNPROFOR which often tied their hands. In spite of these obstacles, Canadian peacekeepers managed to make a valuable contribution to the fragile peace in Croatia and to perform a valuable humanitarian role in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Although not always evident, Canadian peacekeepers are well respected in the region. They have established a rapport with locals in the areas to which they were assigned. That is fundamental to the success of any peace mission.

The mission in which Canada is now being asked to participate is different from that of UNPROFOR. The peace implementation force will consist of approximately 60,000 military personnel. It will be responsible for overseeing the military aspects of the peace agreement recently reached in Dayton, Ohio. The force will be organized into three divisions: one American, one British and one French. Britain, France and the United States are collectively contributing the bulk of the forces necessary for this mission. They will send a combined total of 49,500 troops.

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NATO will assume command of the mission once IFOR is deployed. However, it will operate under the authority of the United Nations Security Council resolution which permits the use of all necessary means to fulfil the mission.

● (1640)

Given that the formal peace agreement will not be signed until December 14 of this year in Paris, it is unlikely that any deployment of forces would take place prior to that date.

IFOR will not be a peacekeeping mission but rather a NATO led enforcement mission. Where UNPROFOR was mandated only to monitor the implementation of United Nations resolutions and to provide an escort for humanitarian operations, IFOR will be there to enforce the peace agreement.

Canadians and their allies have a great deal of work ahead of them. They will be required to co-ordinate arrangements to ensure freedom of movement and self-defence for IFOR troops within a given sector. They will be required to monitor and if necessary, enforce the withdrawal of parties to their respective territories. They will also co-ordinate and mark boundaries and lines of separation between parties and will establish, monitor and if necessary man lines of separation.

In addition to those responsibilities, IFOR troops will enforce the ceasefire provision of the peace agreement, defend persons, properties and areas designated as protected, monitor the clearing of minefields by parties to the agreement and provide a combat capability to reinforce IFOR troops as required.

In addition to this already lengthy list of responsibilities, IFOR will help to establish a joint military commission with civilians, military and non-governmental agencies in the area and will assist both the UNHCR and other civilian aid agencies in the conduct of their humanitarian missions. As well, IFOR will observe, secure and if necessary prevent interference in the movement of populations, refugees, displaced persons and their property.

Needless to say, what I have just outlined will be a challenge for all those participating in the IFOR mission. Canada has expertise in all of these areas simply because of our historic role in difficult peace missions around the globe.

As I stated earlier, our forces did an excellent job during the UNPROFOR mission and often without necessary means. Canada has already dedicated a great deal of time and effort to finding a peaceful resolution to the situation in the former Yugoslavia. To quit now when true peace is within reach would be a shame.

IFOR's mandate will give Canadian troops the tools needed to succeed in the implementation of the Dayton peace agreement. It will also give them the tools they need to protect themselves. To pull out now after we have done so much already would be

like throwing in the towel in the third period of the Stanley Cup final.

We cannot let our allies down at this stage of the game. It would be wrong to let down the hundreds of thousands of refugees and displaced persons who are counting on our help and who have trusted us for so long.

Not only would I encourage my government to contribute a modest force to IFOR so that we can finish what we started back in 1991, I would also encourage it to take a stronger leadership role in this region.

● (1645)

Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I share the sentiments the hon. member just gave about the refugees and how we are going to deal with them. However, we have not talked about what sort of a mandate we have, what sort of numbers. We have not talked about any of the details.

We are told to come up with all of these figures, that it is the opposition's job to come up with all of this. I thought the government would come forward with a proposal which we would then debate and discuss. The government does not have any ideas and it expects us to supply them.

We have listened to a lot of things. Just about an hour ago a CP reporter said that he had been told by a NATO official that Canada has committed a battalion of combat troops. We heard the Prime Minister say that Canadians could be there for up to three years. What does he know that we do not know? Why would he say something like that? We have heard Mr. Ouellet say that we are committed—

The Deputy Speaker: When referring to ministers the hon. member will please address them by their titles rather than their names.

Mr. Mills (Red Deer): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With all of this being commented on by the Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the defence minister and NATO officials, why do we not have the information so we can honestly debate it?

Mr. Peric: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the concern of our colleagues from the third party. We are at the doorstep of long lasting peace. I am confident that Canada is ready to contribute whatever is necessary.

I hope that this mission lasts only for six or twelve months. I would be very disappointed if it lasts for three years. I believe it will not last that long.

By pulling out right now we would betray not only our allies but the people who trusted us for so long in Bosnia-Herzegovina. We would betray the people in that area.

Mr. Mills (Red Deer): It's a different mandate.

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Mr. Peric: It might be a different mandate but I strongly believe that we are ready for that mandate, that our soldiers are highly qualified for that.

Mr. Ron MacDonald (Dartmouth, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the member for Cambridge for his remarks.

Sometimes in this place, although we are all equals, some remarks from some members perhaps carry a little more weight. Certainly the member for Cambridge knows of which he speaks with his heritage and culture from that area, from the former Yugoslavia. Also he has been extremely active in forming an association within Parliament for the Canada–Croatia–Bosnia society.

I commend the member for his work in this area and for his fostering an understanding among parliamentarians like myself of the complexities of the situation in Bosnia–Hercegovina, as well as all of the other states in the former Yugoslavia.

I would ask for his comments about the positive aspects of the Canadian presence in Bosnia–Hercegovina as well as in Croatia. What has been the impact of the presence of Canadians while the war was still going on with respect to the people of Bosnia–Hercegovina? Can he tell me what the impact has been and perhaps that will help explain why he is so adamant that the presence should continue?

Mr. Peric: Mr. Speaker, coming from that area and knowing the mentality over there I would like to answer my colleague as well as colleagues of the third party that the morale of Canadian peacekeepers is very high. They are highly respected. The morale on the other side is very low. I am not afraid that our soldiers will not do the proper job over there. I am very confident because all three sides highly respect Canadian soldiers.

• (1650)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Philippe Paré (Louis–Hébert, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I have been listening to the debate since this morning and there is an issue that has not been mentioned a lot if at all, and that is the impunity of those who have committed crimes against the civilian population.

It is the same story in Rwanda where almost one million people have been killed and the murderers are going scot-free. In Haiti, the military regime left without being punished and we have the feeling that the same thing will happen in the former Yugoslavia.

Could the hon. member for Cambridge tell us whether the Canadian government is concerned about this issue, and whether it might not foster similar civil wars in other countries?

[*English*]

Mr. Peric: Mr. Speaker, two things have to be separated, Somalia from Bosnia and Hercegovina. There was never civil

war in Bosnia and Hercegovina or Croatia. As we know, there was occupation. There were attacks starting with Slovenia by the former Yugoslav army. It was the same thing with Croatia and Bosnia. The two situations cannot be combined as one. They cannot be compared.

As far as I know from talking to Canadian soldiers in Croatia, there were no scandals. They were doing their job, as much as they could do. They are highly respected by all three sides. Canadians should be proud of that. They have continued and are keeping a long history, a tradition. We have to support them in that endeavour.

Ms. Beth Phinney (Hamilton Mountain, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to take part in this very important debate today.

Canada has a long and impressive history of peacekeeping around the world. As I am sure all members are aware, peacekeeping as it is known today was invented by a Canadian, former Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson. During the Suez crisis of 1956, Mr. Pearson proposed the formation of an emergency UN force to supervise the cessation of hostilities.

Since 1947 Canada has participated in every United Nations peacekeeping operation. We are one of the few countries that has done so. We are also one of the few countries that has paid all of its United Nations' dues, including our share of peacekeeping costs.

Canada has played a major role in the ongoing peacekeeping efforts in the former Yugoslavia. It has been involved in four separate but related operations in the region. It has been participating in the Sarajevo humanitarian airlift. The navy has one frigate operating with NATO's standing naval force Atlantic, in the Adriatic, monitoring and enforcing sanctions.

Canada has also provided two crew members for AWACS aircraft enforcing the no-fly zone over Bosnia. Canada has also provided a battalion to support the United Nations operation in Bosnia. That unit was based in Visoko, northwest of Sarajevo. About three-quarters of that unit's personnel were withdrawn in October of this year, with the remainder returning to Canada in late November.

Canadian troops have played a valuable role in Bosnia. They have delivered relief supplies, protected civilians and monitored ceasefires.

Over the past three years we have all become far too familiar with the scenes of violence and suffering on the nightly news reports from Bosnia. The war in Bosnia has been extremely brutal and vicious, despite the best efforts of the United Nations and Canadian troops to relieve the suffering of innocent civilians.

The previous United Nations' efforts were at best a band-aid solution. Therefore I welcome the agreement signed recently in Dayton, Ohio, ending the conflict in the former Yugoslavia. After more than three years of fighting, 250,000 dead and the

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creation of two million refugees, it is high time that the fighting end in Bosnia.

• (1655)

Although I hope that the Dayton agreement will bring peace to the region, I must admit that I share the doubts expressed by many. We have become familiar in the past few years with the short lifespan of Balkan truces and agreements. After several years of fighting, it will be extremely difficult for all sides to live together.

The peace agreement is extremely complex and will be very difficult to implement. For this reason I welcome the participation of NATO. As I am sure members are aware, NATO is planning to deploy 60,000 troops, including 20,000 American troops, to enforce the agreement.

Besides the United States, 11 other NATO countries have indicated that they will provide troops. As well, Russia and 19 other non-NATO countries have indicated that they will provide troops. Russia and many of the non-NATO countries are former members of the Warsaw pact and current members of the Partnership for Peace. This will be the first co-operative operation between NATO and the Partnership for Peace countries.

NATO has made clear that the implementation force will not be a traditional peacekeeping mission, but rather a NATO led enforcement mission. It will operate under chapter VII of the UN charter, which permits the use of all necessary means to fulfil a mission.

The implementation force will be required to monitor and enforce the withdrawal of each side's troops to their respective territories, establish and man lines of separation, enforce the ceasefire provisions of the agreement, defend protected areas and assist United Nations and civilian aid agencies.

It is quite likely that the implementation force will be involved in some fighting as it seeks to enforce the peace agreement. For this reason, NATO troops will be heavily armed and authorized to use force.

Despite their large numbers and heavy armaments, NATO troops are likely to have casualties. The terrain will make operations difficult. Snipers and land mines can be very difficult to deal with.

Despite all the difficulties, I am in favour of NATO participation and Canadian participation in this operation. We have been trying since the war began to find a solution. Canada should not abandon Bosnia just when a real solution is becoming a possibility.

This agreement is the only means to end the war and we have a duty to support it. Although I feel we must support the Dayton agreement and the NATO implementation force, there are limits

to what Canada can do. We must set clear limits on what role Canadian troops will fulfil.

I have the greatest respect for the professionalism and skill of Canadian soldiers. However, I am very concerned about the preparedness of the Canadian army to play a frontline role in a peace enforcement mission. I am concerned that the Canadian forces will not be properly equipped for the combat role they might be required to fulfil in Bosnia.

The defence review undertaken by the joint committee on Canada's defence policy clearly indicated the shortcomings in equipment of the Canadian military. Although the government has taken steps to correct many of the shortcomings, it will take time to fully modernize Canada's equipment.

I had a long talk recently with a constituent of mine who served in Bosnia and was gravely wounded. Although seriously wounded, he is very proud of the Canadian military and the job it has been doing in Bosnia. It is very satisfying to hear him talk about what he has personally gained through his military service. He feels the military is a great training ground for Canadian youth. He feels that the Canadian troops are the best trained troops in the world.

Despite this, he feels that Canada should maintain its role as peacekeepers and not become peacemakers. He is of this opinion as he is personally aware of some of the more glaring deficiencies in Canada's military equipment. For instance, the Cougar armed vehicles that Canada was using in Bosnia were purchased in 1980 as training vehicles. In his opinion, they do not provide adequate armour and the targeting system on the gun is not very effective. In his opinion also, the flak vests do not provide adequate protection and are inferior to modern vests.

Personally, Canada can best contribute by providing support troops and humanitarian relief. Canada should provide the support it is best equipped to provide and leave the provision of combat troops to countries best equipped for that role.

In previous peacekeeping missions, such as in Namibia, Canada provided logistics and support personnel.

• (1700)

In peacekeeping operations in the Middle East Canada provided communication troops and logistics support to United Nations peacekeeping operations. Another option would be to provide engineers and assistance in demining operations as Canada did in Cambodia. Another option would be to provide medical support to the implementation force in the form of field hospitals.

The resettlement of a large number of refugees will place an enormous strain on United Nations humanitarian agencies. Canada could provide support to resettlement and reconstruction efforts in Bosnia.

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I emphasize that the most valuable contribution Canada could make to the implementation force would be to provide support troops in the areas of communication, logistics and medicine. I also emphasize that I am in favour of supporting the implementation force. We have a moral duty to support the peace efforts in Bosnia, and our troops will be up to any job they may be asked to perform.

Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I listened quite attentively to the hon. member's comments. I appreciated the courage it took for her to make some of those statements obviously in contrast to the stated position of her party and the government.

Her comments are not all that far out of sync with the position of the Reform Party which has been very outspoken, as we know, against the commitment of Canadian combat troops when they are obviously ill-prepared, ill-led and poorly equipped, as the hon. member drew attention to.

It is not so much the troops who are the biggest problem. It is the people across the way making the decision involving their lives. It does not instil confidence or morale in our armed forces when the de facto commander in chief does not even know which way to put his helmet on.

If the hon. member feels the government is to commit combat troops when they are not prepared to take on that role, as she said, will she let her feelings be known to the Minister of National Defence and speak out as Reformers have been doing against the commitment of combat troops?

Ms. Phinney: Madam Speaker, I have no necessity to speak to the minister because he already knows how I feel because our party is free and open. We can say how we feel at any time.

I am sure no troops from Canada will ever be allowed to go in ill-prepared or ill-led. I have stated an opinion and we may hear from other members more familiar than I am about how much improvement has gone on with the equipment since the committee made those comments.

That is how I feel right now. I am quite willing to be proven wrong. I also know the Americans will be going in with plenty of equipment and our troops will be using their equipment if we do not have adequate equipment ourselves.

Mr. Fred Mifflin (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I congratulate the hon. member for a good presentation. This is the kind of debate we were hoping to get, not just the usual political rhetoric even if it has to be within our own party. There are some different ideas about the kind of troops, the numbers and that kind of thing.

I want to comment on a very important statement the hon. member made. I have to agree with her. When we were in ex-Yugoslavia, in Croatia and particularly Bosnia, we did receive from the troops a justified concern that equipment was not the best for what they had to do.

In military operations one is seldom equipped 100 per cent for what one has to do. Even then measures had been taken with respect to the armour of the APCs and the other vehicles. Corrections were being made. Every member in the House is aware we have gone forward with priority, as indicated and agreed in the special joint committee, that we would rectify the deficiencies in APCs. That is under way.

• (1705)

Another aspect was quite glaring to us. We were concerned as a committee with the number of rotations individual soldiers had. The recommendation was made by the joint committee and it was agreed, certainly by the third party if not by the official opposition, that we would increase the army size by 3,000 troops. We recommended 2,500 in the report but I believe it worked out to 3,000 ground troops instead of headquarters personnel. That adjustment has been made. It should greatly improve the rotation of combat soldiers and should also make it better for logistic soldiers. I wanted to set the record straight on that.

Mr. Jack Ramsay (Crowfoot, Ref.): Madam Speaker, there is no question the government has made a commitment to the UN initiative. However, I would feel much more comfortable about the decision if the concerns raised by my hon. colleague and by the hon. member who has just finished speaking, the questions of moral, leadership and, most important, equipment were put to rest. I would feel much more comfortable with our troops going into that situation if they were well equipped and had excellent leadership.

[Translation]

Mr. Jean H. Leroux (Shefford, BQ): Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my speaking time with the hon. member for Louis-Hébert.

I want to speak today on the participation of the Canadian Armed Forces in the implementation force in the former Yugoslavia. I agree with the principle but not with the way the government, particularly the Prime Minister and the defence minister, made commitments to our NATO allies.

First, on November 23, in a speech he gave following a meeting with the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the Prime Minister had already committed in principle Canadian funds and human resources, without first seeking the approval of this House.

Indeed, even before Parliament was asked to debate the issue, the decision had already been made. As far as I know, the government should be at the service of Parliament and not the

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other way around. What is the use of having a democratic institution like Parliament where parliamentarians give advice to the government and pass legislation, if this government ignores procedure and only asks Parliament to rubber stamp its decisions?

Indeed, on November 23, the Prime Minister said, and I quote: "Of course, we will send some troops, but the size of our contribution will depend on what we are able to do and what we are asked to do". The Prime Minister was referring to our NATO allies and particularly to our neighbours, the Americans. Therefore, the decision on Canada's contribution will depend on the decision of our neighbours to the South and not on what our Parliament would have decided first. That is how decisions are made in Canada.

While I support in principle the Canadian government's peace plan to participate in NATO's operations in the former Yugoslavia, I am still puzzled by the way the federal Liberals are proceeding. It is a question of attitude.

Even President Clinton did not formally make a commitment until the American Congress ratified the United States' contribution to the ceasefire monitoring group. In my opinion, the Prime Minister's statement is further proof that he attaches very little importance to parliamentarians' opinions, since he announced, even before today's debate, that he would send troops to Bosnia.

Undoubtedly, the Prime Minister has a double standard. Even last week, he proclaimed that the House was sovereign on the matter of his famous distinct society clause and that this clause had priority over everything else. Today, in the case of the Canadian Armed Forces's involvement in the multinational military implementation force under NATO command, the decision has already been made and the only thing the House can do is ratify it. That is what we are being asked to do today.

• (1710)

I would like to raise several other points which strike me as irreconcilable differences between what the Government is saying publicly and what is being said here in this House.

At an information session this past Thursday, an Armed Forces spokesperson indicated that Ottawa's contribution to date to the United Nations Protection Force in the former Yugoslavia has been more than half a billion dollars over three years, or approximately \$517 million, for a force ranging from 1,600 to 2,000 in size. That half billion, or some \$172 million yearly, represents the additional cost for National Defence to commit Canadian troops to UN peacekeeping in the former Yugoslavia. In other words, this figure represents what it cost

over and above the normal costs of keeping our troops here in Canada.

Keeping those figures in mind, we are now told that the present NATO commitment ought not to cost more than an additional \$75 million for a 12 month period involving some 2,000 to 3,000 Canadian soldiers—\$75 million for a mission that differs greatly from a peacekeeping mission. This is inconceivable, half as much money, yet twice as much will be demanded of our troops.

In an article in *Le Devoir* on November 24, headed "Canada to participate in implementation force", the Minister of Defence is quoted as referring to far greater costs for this type of intervention, much more than \$75 million.

I will read part of this article, and I quote: "Mr. Collenette also said that the logistics involved in combat operations of the kind organized by NATO are far more costly than in the case of UN peacekeeping missions. We will have to look at the financial aspects", concluded the Minister of National Defence.

There is a problem here. The Minister of National Defence tells us these combat operations may cost us a lot more than we are being told by the military, this in addition to the opinions of certain experts and officials who are saying that the cost of participating in a NATO mission is usually twice that of UN peacekeeping missions.

I am rather sceptical when people tell me it will cost only \$75 million for 12 months, which is \$75 million more than it normally costs, and people should realize that. Could the Minister of National Defence let the House know the real costs involved in these combat operations?

In another article published in *Le Devoir* on August 19, 1995, the Minister of Foreign Affairs responded to a report in *Le Soleil* estimating the cost of Ottawa's commitment within UNPROFOR in the former Yugoslavia at \$710 million over three years.

I have a very simple question: Who in this House could tell us the exact cost of such operations? There is a \$193 million difference from department to department. Who is right? I find it hard to believe that the House is being asked to give its consent without knowing the real cost of these combat operations, especially when they are supposed to cost half as much as previous commitments to peacekeeping operations.

Considering the current federal deficit, how can we afford to ignore these facts? This is very disturbing. And I am sure the vast majority of taxpayers in Quebec and Canada would like to know the real cost of these combat operations.

The principle involved in peacekeeping operations is a noble one, but I doubt we can afford to get involved without knowing the real cost of this gesture of human solidarity. When shown

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these figures, not a single banker in Quebec or in the rest of Canada would be willing to endorse such operations without at least knowing what he was getting into.

• (1715)

I support Canada's involvement in principle. The Bloc Québécois supports Canada's participation in NATO's implementation force. I cannot, however, give this government a blank cheque without knowing where and how this money will be spent. It is taxpayers' money we are spending. And given the cuts imposed by the federal government on the most vulnerable in our society, it would be unthinkable not to know how much money will be spent and how it will really be spent.

Finally, as far as the implementation force's mission is concerned, no one knows, of course, how long it will last or what the implications will be in the medium term. The Prime Minister told the Secretary-General of the UN that participating forces would have to stay the course until peace is really restored, whether it takes six months or three years.

Notwithstanding the Prime Minister's commitment, should the mandate extend beyond the expected 12 months, I think the government should be required to submit its decision to the approval of this House. I also think that the 12 month mandate should be clearly stated and that Canada should commit no more than 2,000 troops to the NATO forces, which is approximately the maximum level of Canada's participation in UNPROFOR.

In conclusion, given our current financial situation, I have major reservations about the defence department's threat assessment.

Mr. Bill Graham (Rosedale, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I find the hon. member's remarks ambiguous. I would like him to clarify this for us. His leader has always been in favour of a Canadian military presence in Europe for humanitarian reasons, as he so eloquently explained in our last debate on the matter. And he himself agrees in principle with this policy for the same reasons that I and other members of this House believe it is crucial that Canada participate in humanitarian and large-scale efforts to restore peace in that part of the world.

I myself support this government initiative. I think that the hon. member also supports this government initiative. I think that his party supports this initiative. Even so, he is looking for an excuse to criticize the Prime Minister, to criticize the government, to find small things to complain about here and there, claiming that our Prime Minister is wrong when he says that our level of participation depends on the American level of participation. This goes without saying, but at the same time it does not mean that the Americans are deciding for us, as the hon.

member is suggesting. What it means is that we will make our own decision based on what our allies are doing. It is perfectly logical, rational and appropriate.

I personally find that holding this debate in the House of Commons gives us, Canadian parliamentarians, the chance to have a say in this decision. This is undoubtedly a complex decision that depends on many other factors, but that is always how it is on the international scene, and to claim otherwise is, in my view, to distort the debate and only to look for excuses to criticize the government.

Mr. Leroux: Madam Speaker, where we disagree with the government is on the way it is going about this. We are always told that the House is its own master, that Parliament is a sovereign institution. In fact, that is not the case. The Prime Minister has already made a commitment. He now puts the issue before the House, in order to have his decision endorsed by the different parties, and this is what we object to.

We do agree with the decision. We know that Canada has made commitments to NATO. We know that it has always fulfilled its commitments. We have no problem with that. What we are saying is: fine, let us go, but according to our means.

• (1720)

As you know, we may be one of the most indebted countries in the world, per capita. Sure, we must continue to help others, but we should also take our situation into consideration when making that decision. The Bloc Québécois agrees that we should send troops to Bosnia-Herzegovina, along with our partners. However, the government should not always surprise us at the last minute. If the House is its own master, if it is sovereign, then it should be the one to decide. The government should come back and tell the House how many troops should be sent, and so on, because these are important issues.

In my speech, I mentioned that President Clinton waited for the approval of both Houses before taking action. That was not done here, in spite of the Prime Minister's promise.

In conclusion, it is important to fulfil our commitments, but we must also not lose sight of what is going on. This operation is very different from a peacekeeping mission. Lives may be lost. Our troops risk their lives, but the risk could or will be greater this time. If we send armed forces personnel over there, it does not have to be combat troops. We could send auxiliary forces, engineers, nurses, etc. We have all this expertise available in Canada. We would still be taking part. But I think we must be careful. We do not have to do more than others. We must do our share, but we do not have to do more than others.

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The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): Very briefly, the hon. member for Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt.

Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt, Ref.): Madam Speaker, the hon. member mentioned the length of time. As we all know, NATO has said this is a one-year mission, 12 months.

Has the member given any consideration to how optimistic that time frame is in this type of operation? One year seems very optimistic. We are moving some 60,000 troops in there.

During the briefing we received from the government—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): I am sorry, I did ask the member to be very brief.

[Translation]

Mr. Leroux (Shefford): Madam Speaker, it would be advisable that following a one year commitment, the government came back to the House and asked if we agree to extend Canada's participation.

Again, it is important to have the figures. People must know the cost of that participation. That is what is important.

Mr. Philippe Paré (Louis-Hébert, BQ): Mr. Speaker, we are today debating the recent Dayton peace agreement and Canada's contribution to the peace effort in the Balkans.

For over three years, discussions have gone on between the Bosnians, the Serbs and the Croats in the hope of reaching an agreement on establishing a real peace process. On November 21, an agreement, albeit an imperfect one, but an agreement nonetheless, was signed by the parties.

This peace agreement signed in Dayton, Ohio, provides, among other things, that refugees will be permitted to return home or will be compensated, if it is impossible for them to do so. The agreement also provides for the unrestricted movement of the entire population within Bosnian territory.

To implement the accord the international community is being invited to provide humanitarian aid or help in the reconstruction, with the objective of establishing an enduring peace in the former Yugoslavia.

Today, we are being asked to debate the form Canada's contribution to the peace process should take. We are, however, entitled to question the usefulness of this debate and whether the Government of Canada has not already made all the decisions, since, less than 48 hours after the Dayton agreement was signed, the Prime Minister of Canada was saying publicly that Canada would send a number of troops, according to its capabilities and NATO's request.

The Bloc Québécois questions the attitude of the Prime Minister, who is leaving no doubt that the decisions have already been made and that the opinions of the members of this House are of little import. His message is that Canada will send troops to Bosnia, regardless of today's parliamentary debate. However, the debate is relevant, and, in this regard the Minister of Foreign Affairs should have informed the Prime Minister that Canada could get involved in three ways, apart from simply sending troops.

• (1725)

Participation in the implementation force is one kind of intervention, of course, but taking part in the reconstruction and welcoming refugees unable to go back home are other kinds of assistance that Canada should consider.

I would like to elaborate on the latter, on Canada's opportunity to help Bosnian refugees. Canada can help out in two ways. The High Commissioner for Refugees made an appeal to welcome refugees from the former Yugoslavia. In this regard, a few weeks ago, the Canadian Minister of Citizenship and Immigration reached an agreement with NGOs and other organizations to implement an action plan to welcome these victims of war. The Quebec government is also involved in this special operation. The Bloc Québécois supports this initiative and urges the Canadian government to pursue its efforts in this regard.

Canada could also help refugees on the field in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The best estimates suggest that there are more than 1.3 million displaced people in Bosnia itself and 800,000 refugees in neighbouring republics and other European countries. Canada must facilitate the implementation of the Dayton agreement and help those who want to return to their homes.

The time has come to recognize that Canada's previous interventions in the former Yugoslavia have been less than successful. So far, Canada's participation in UNPROFOR has cost taxpayers over half a billion dollars. Despite the enormous resources invested by Canada, the results have been on the whole rather disappointing.

Canada has been excluded from major decisions, as demonstrated by its April 1995 exclusion from the contact group composed of the U.S., Russia, France, Great Britain, and Germany. Canada has maintained a large UNPROFOR contingent, even though our troops had little guidance and no clear, original, well-defined policy regarding the outcome of the conflict and how to resolve it.

The Canadian government did not show any international leadership or take any major policy initiative that would have allowed it to exert some influence. Before making a further commitment to participating in the implementation of the Bosnian peace and reconstruction plan, the official opposition believes that several questions ought to be answered. Canadian

taxpayers have a right to know whether or not Canada will have a say in operations involving Canadian troops.

Also, given that Bosnia is faced with severe economic problems, we must ask ourselves if the Canadian government intends to provide financial assistance as well or if, given our own debt problem, we could not find a more responsible and practical form of assistance. For instance, Canada could very well provide technical assistance for future elections in Bosnia, given its expertise in that area.

We also want to be apprised of the risks to our troops. We know that the ceasefire monitoring force will consist of combat troops as opposed to peacekeepers. This new task will therefore be conducted under Chapter VII of the UN charter instead of Chapter VI. And we know that Chapter VII allows the use of a broader range of means, including the use of force, to fulfil these missions. In other words, every means available will be used to implement the agreement.

Finally, the Bloc Quebecois has three more concerns in relation to the timing, nature and cost of this operation. As far as duration is concerned, the UN secretary general and the Prime Minister jointly stated that this mandate could be for up to three years. If that were the case, the Bloc Quebecois demands that the government seek the House of Commons' approval of its decision to extend the mission beyond the currently planned 12 month term.

As for the mandate of Canadian troops deployed in Bosnia, we hope that the Canadian government has learned from its mistake and that, this time, it will develop a clear mandate. While troops may have to perform a variety of tasks, Canadian troops could specialize in communications and more traditional aspects of peacekeeping. Out of concern for Canada's image as a peace-minded country, we Bloc members think that only a very small percentage of the troops we assign to NATO should take part in combat missions, and only if necessary.

• (1730)

Finally, the Bloc Quebecois feels that Canada's participation must be more or less the same as in UNPROFOR, that is about 2,000 soldiers. That seems to compare with the level of participation of our European allies, except for France, Great Britain and Germany. The cost of such an operation is high. The defence department estimates that, over a 12 month period, it could be anywhere from 2 to 75 million dollars, depending on the number of soldiers involved. The various scenarios provide for sending from 50 to 3,500 troops.

We have our doubts about these figures, considering that Canada's participation in UNPROFOR cost about \$172 million annually. The defence department has admitted that a NATO operation would cost about twice as much as a UN peacekeeping

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mission. The Canadian government must show more rigour and give the real costs of that operation, before getting involved any further.

In short, the Bloc Quebecois is asking the Canadian government to show greater discretion, rigour and, particularly, transparency. There is no doubt that Canada must contribute to the peace process in Bosnia. The way to do it must be thoroughly debated in this House.

[English]

Mr. Leonard Hopkins (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, Lib.): Madam Speaker, today we are having a very serious debate in the House on the Dayton peace agreement. A number of nations got together to hammer out a peace agreement for the combatants in the former Yugoslavia. This conflict has been ongoing for a number of years and Canada has made a tremendous contribution during the past four years to the humanitarian needs in that area.

There has been a wide sweeping debate in the House this afternoon and therefore I would like to read the motion before the House:

That this House take note and welcome the recent Dayton peace agreement and the international community's continued efforts to bring enduring peace and security to the Balkans, and Canadian support of these efforts by participation in a multinational military implementation force (IFOR) under NATO command.

The implementation force will not be a peacekeeping mission in the traditional sense but rather a NATO led enforcement mission which will operate under the authority of the United Nations security council resolution pursuant to chapter VII of the United Nations charter which permits the use of all necessary means to fulfil a mission.

Since this would be an operation not in the traditional sense of peacekeeping and because NATO and many other countries are involved, it should not be surprising that we have been requested to send combat troops.

Given the nature of the world today there are many hot spots. Some can become hotter. This is one big issue which we have today. What will it be six months, a year or five years from now? No one can predict. The world is a very unpredictable place in this era of our history.

The implementation force is the only way to handle this matter. There is a peace agreement which must be implemented. The basic way of life must be restored to the area. The people in that region must live without fear of what will happen to them.

This is not the time for Canada or for any other responsible country to fold up its tents and walk away. This is a time when the international community must come together, shoulder to shoulder, in the best interests of mankind.

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• (1735)

The winners of such operations are those who will suddenly find themselves living in security and peace. The winners are the free countries of the world accepting their responsibility in what is otherwise a cruel world.

The winners are people like the Russians and those in the eastern European countries who a short time ago belonged to the communist bloc and who today are moving with their friends in the western world to implement this peace agreement in the former Yugoslavia.

If that is not a fantastic happening in this era of our history, I do not know what is. Who would have thought eight or ten years ago that we would see this happening on this date in history or that we would see it unfold in the days ahead?

The other winners of this of course will be those still alive in that country, the children and the women, who will finally have some peace. They will remember as they walk through their cemeteries young children from infants up, women, grandparents, old and young, whose names are on that flood of tombstones in cemeteries throughout the former Yugoslavia. It is a slaughter which neither this country nor any other responsible country could turn a blind eye to and walk away from. Without proper supervision it could happen again. Graveyards will be the reminders of this horrible period in the history of the former Yugoslavia.

The winners will be the NATO countries and the eastern bloc countries that have bridged the gap over recent times and are now putting their total efforts toward this humanitarian cause in a truly wonderful display of international unity for peace.

There is monitoring to be done and there are mines to be disassembled. If they are not, the country will live a further hell in days ahead.

Humanitarian aid has been provided very responsibly and generously by Canadians over the last four years. You bet our Canadian soldiers are well trained. They can build schools, hospitals, roads and bridges. They can do it well.

I do not appreciate the logic put forward in the House today when members of the Reform Party say our forces are becoming ineffective. I do not buy that for one minute. It is a terrible thing to say about our Canadian forces whom we expect to go on missions around the world. Are they capable of doing anything? You bet they are capable of doing anything and they will do their work over there along with the best in the world.

It is time Parliament and all members stood together united and thanked those people because regardless of a few problems they have carried the Canadian flag with dignity and with pride around the world. We owe them a great debt.

People in the former Yugoslavia want peace and security. Sure, some rebels are not happy and nothing will ever satisfy

them, except when they get everything their own way. Hence the reason for the supervision and the necessity for it.

There are some in this world who lock their minds and throw away the key and do not want anyone questioning the mean streak they have in them. All the good things in life, the everyday necessities of life, must be brought back into action and rebuilt.

• (1740)

Government institutions are needed in the former Yugoslavia. Infrastructure faces a mass improvement because of the destructiveness that has gone on there for a number of years. Canada's participation has been a responsible one over a period of time.

Our forces have done a great job for us in the international community. We must look after them while they are on these missions, which means more than good equipment. It means a commitment in money and a commitment to giving them the equipment to go forward in the days ahead. We have done a lot of that already.

However, it means another thing quite often forgotten in a debate such as this. It means making certain their families back home are well looked after. I talk about the story of a young person involved in a conversation with me in the former Yugoslavia, in Bosnia. He said: "I do not mind being over here serving at all because I feel I am doing a job that has to be done. I do not mind it as long as I know my family is all right back home".

We cannot keep peacekeeping alive and do things the same way we did with the blue berets when circumstances require a different scenario.

From an historical point of view we can ask how much money it will cost. We can ask how many troops are needed. However, we do not get the answers for all these solutions in the future. The danger of doing nothing is far worse than the danger in the implementation of this peace arrangement.

We belong to the UN as a responsible partner. We have been a member of NATO for years. Today we hear about the Right Hon. Lester B. Pearson who brought about the first peacekeeping mission in Egypt. Let us remember one thing: Canada has done more than its share in comparison with any nation in the world in keeping up that policy.

Now as we try to take the steam out of heated debates and difficult situations in the world it becomes very important for Canada to be part of the solution and not part of an isolationist attitude.

Mr. Ted McWhinney (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to ask my distinguished colleague, known for his lifetime of study of military affairs, Canada's role in them and the constructive contributions he has made, whether in his discussions with the minister concerned he might find it useful to remind people that NATO, as a regional security organization, is subject under chapter VIII of the United Nations charter to the charter. Specifically by reference back to

articles 34 and 35 in article 52 of the charter, the security council's role in peacekeeping arrangements under chapter VI extends to operations of NATO and other regional military organizations.

Would it be appropriate perhaps in his discussions with the minister to remind the minister of that fact and perhaps bring forward in any adhesion by Canada to the new Bosnian force that it would remain subject to the United Nations charter, and subject to international law as established under the charter, whatever the nature of the military command, whether it be direct UN command, as in the past, or a particular general from one of the member countries of NATO?

Mr. Hopkins: Madam Speaker, history would have taken quite a different turn without an organization such as NATO, which came to birth during the cold war years and served a very useful purpose during all those years.

Today as we come into an era in world history where we have some 80 hot spots around the world, we may well have more Yugoslavias to look after as the years go by. I suppose it is a case of managing them. It is very important that NATO and the UN be partners in these conflicts. NATO is needed because of its expertise and the UN needs NATO because it is a cohesive body of 16 countries.

• (1745)

I would also point out to my hon. friend that in no way inhibits all the other UN countries of the world from coming in to support them and to work with them. Some 40 countries may well be involved in this. We will find out whether Canada is directly involved by a formal decision of cabinet. That is the way things are done in a democratic country.

In the world today, it becomes absolutely necessary that organizations such as NATO, organizations that used to be the communist bloc, organizations such as the UN at large, all come together in a co-operative spirit to manage some of those meanspirited operations that are out there in the world which have to be managed as the days go by.

In answering my honourable friend I look on it that all these are necessary. I am sure the minister is quite sure they are necessary, but we must always look toward putting them together as a massive international body for the good of mankind. If we do not we are wasting our energies.

Mr. Ian McClelland (Edmonton Southwest, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I am sure that most civilized people would like to see an end put to all of the rivalries and tribal wars and the genocide that accompanies them, not just in the Balkans but everywhere in the world. Particularly fearsome is Africa.

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Because there is a time limit and this NATO effort would go absolutely nowhere without the Americans, what will happen if the battle moves into Macedonia and the Americans are out of there in a year?

Mr. Hopkins: Madam Speaker, I would like to think we do things with the best of intentions and the greatest efficiency that we can, with the knowledge we have at hand at the moment.

We want all the answers in advance of what will happen. If Napoleon had had all the answers he needed in advance, he would never have gone to Waterloo. There are always questions that have to be answered, but only time will answer them.

If we sit back and do nothing at this time, then we will only add to the problem. We know through world history that as problems become bigger and bigger eventually everybody is dragged into them.

As I said earlier today—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): The hon. member's time has expired.

Mrs. Eleni Bakopanos (Saint-Denis, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to have this opportunity to lend my support to the motion we are debating today. It is the second time I have risen in the House on this issue. Although nearly two years have passed since that time, my position remains the same.

We must continue to lend our support to the international community's efforts to bring enduring peace and security to the Balkans. It was these efforts after all that brought about the Dayton peace agreement and we must do our part to show our continued commitment.

As the vice-president of the Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association, I have followed NATO's involvement in the Balkan crisis very closely. Through my participation I learned firsthand of the important role Canada plays in NATO.

[*Translation*]

For 45 years now Canada has been one of the key supporters of NATO because it was, and still is, in our national interest to do so. NATO membership has been beneficial for Canada in a number of ways: it has prevented world conflicts; it has helped us economically, by enabling us to maintain reduced armed forces, knowing that we could call for help if necessary; and, most important of all, perhaps, it has given us a voice in one of the key fora in the western world on issues of Euro-Atlantic and world security.

• (1750)

[*English*]

The greatest value of these benefits can only be achieved if Canada has credibility with its allies and continues to be an active member of NATO. It is therefore essential that Canada participate in IFOR.

*Government Orders**[Translation]*

We must not turn our backs on NATO, as if it were turning into a partner we could no longer trust to produce Euro-Atlantic and world security arrangements. It would not be in our interests to do so, particularly since the creation of IFOR is a key element in the changing structures and operations of NATO.

NATO's integrated command structure has always been one of its strong points. The Alliance is the only organization that has created an effective military force from the contributions of its various member states. During the cold war, however, this was a static structure spread out as widely as possible throughout its member states, with its eyes resolutely glued to the eastern bloc. This is not what we need now to ensure our security or that of our allies.

[English]

We need a NATO which is cheaper, which is flexible, which can act in any direction from which a threat can emerge and which can assemble forces organized, trained and tailored to a range of possible uses from classical peacekeeping to humanitarian intervention to collective defence.

As well, the NATO for the modern era must also be able to work with others, be they multilateral institutions like the UN or SCE which need organized military muscle or other countries, big and small, which see an interest in what concerns NATO.

In January 1994 such a concept for the evolution of NATO was endorsed by the North Atlantic Council under the concept of combined joint task forces. However, since then the concept has been stalled in spite of Canada's best efforts to move it along.

Necessity being the mother of invention, the need for NATO to get its act together to enforce the peace in Bosnia has resulted in the alliance's first combined joint task force, the IFOR. There must be no going back for NATO and Canada's voice will only be heard in making these lessons stick if it is part of this latest great step forward in the adaptation of NATO.

Now would be perhaps the worst of times to turn our back on NATO and our allies but the value of participating in IFOR to maintain allied solidarity is at most only half the story. For the past three years, Canada and Canadians have seen participation in multilateral military operations in the former Yugoslavia as being in our national interest.

[Translation]

It was in our national interest because we consider European security part and parcel of our own. We have trade, historical, military and emotional ties with Europe. We have learned from experience that European conflicts can spread to our allies, and

even to our own country. In the past, Balkan conflicts have had a particularly strong tendency to spread with a ripple effect, as far as Canada even.

If we wish to be able to continue to depend on the protection of an effective system of international security for ourselves, we must make a significant contribution to it when the system is being used to protect others.

Many Canadians originally come from these areas and an even larger number come from neighbouring countries whose stability is at risk.

Canadians cannot stand aside while others suffer. Many people in Bosnia today owe their lives to the presence of Canadians.

The signing of a peace agreement has not obscured this aspect of our national interest, and we will not be satisfied until Bosnia and the surrounding region once again enjoy stability, peace and security. This will require the full implementation of the Dayton peace agreement. This, after what has happened in the past, will require the presence on the ground of a multinational military force under the command of NATO.

[English]

We have struggled and bled through the worst of times in Bosnia. What do the effort, money and lives that have been spent to date mean if the job is not carried through to its conclusion? It is for these reasons that I support the motion and Canadian participation in IFOR.

My support and what I hope will be the support of this House does not give the government, the military planners or NATO carte blanche to send Canadian troops on the mission. Canadian participation in IFOR should conform with the principles for multilateral missions laid out in the 1994 white paper, including a clear and enforceable mandate, an effective consultation process among mission partners, a defined concept of operations and clear rules of engagement.

• (1755)

[Translation]

The Dayton agreement provides the foundation for a clear and binding mandate. NATO's participation guarantees the presence of a separate agency to monitor the situation. It also provides guarantees for an effective consultation process, until now often lacking in UN operations in Bosnia.

The membership of IFOR, which includes nearly all NATO member countries, Russia and up to 19 other countries, should be sufficiently diverse to be acceptable to all parties. There is

every indication that principles fairly similar to ours formed the basis for planning operations.

[*English*]

Clearly Canada's participation in implementing the peace plan cannot be open ended. The seemingly never ending peace-keeping mission in Cyprus must not be repeated. While the UN operation in Cyprus was an example of classical peacekeeping, different from the peace enforcement initiatives being put forward by IFOR, it is imperative that a definitive timetable be put forward.

The UN security council has repeatedly called for the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Cyprus, the voluntary return of refugees to their homes, the cessation of all interference in the internal affairs of Cyprus and respect for its sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and unity. Now more than 20 years later, the situation on the ground is no different with more than 30,000 heavily armed Turkish troops continuing to illegally occupy nearly 40 per cent of the territory of Cyprus. The UN mission in Cyprus has been hampered time and time again by the intransigence of Turkey.

The proposal for the complete demilitarization of the Republic of Cyprus put forward by the president of Cyprus, Mr. Glafcos Clerides, is the concrete solution to this longstanding problem. Similar resolutions have been supported in the United States congress and most recently the Australian Parliament unanimously adopted a resolution in support of the demilitarization of Cyprus. Canada must also put forward a resolution in support of this to indicate that the status quo is no longer acceptable and negotiated settlements must be brought forward.

Time and time again it has been seen that only a united effort will bring about the resolution of the most complex disputes. Today's debate will lend Canada's voice to the united effort that is being put forward in helping to bring peace to the Balkans.

At this point I wish to refer to the continued response of Canada to the humanitarian issues in the former Yugoslavia. As chair of the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration I applaud the initiatives of the government through the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. Under the special measures program nearly 7,000 citizens of the former Yugoslavia have been landed in Canada since 1992. As well, the joint sponsorship program has seen more 270 persons in need of resettlement sponsored to date.

The government will continue these programs for as long as a need for humanitarian aid continues. It is part of our commitment to the United Nations and our responsibility to the international community to ease the suffering of citizens in the former Yugoslavia.

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[*Translation*]

The people of Canada will not rest until peace and security have been restored in Bosnia. As parliamentarians we have a duty to support them and to force the government to report on the progress of this mission.

[*English*]

In conclusion, I believe that Canada should participate under NATO command first because it is in our national interest to take our three years of efforts to bring peace and succour to Bosnia to a logical and positive conclusion and second, because it is a demonstration of our commitment to NATO which is a vital component of our national security.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): I am sorry, but the hon. member's time has expired.

Mr. Lee Morrison (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I will be dividing my time with the member for Athabasca.

Like my colleagues who preceded me, I am considerably disappointed in the fact that this is just a take note debate. There is no great honour in participating in a charade. We are here to give an aura of respectability to decisions made by cabinet and DND bureaucrats, life and death decisions affecting our Canadian forces.

This is a matter which should not have been about partisan politics, a family matter if you will, but a matter in which we could put our ideological differences aside, sit down and reason together, make the best decisions possible and vote freely without the lash of the party whips. However, that will not happen.

• (1800)

The Prime Minister and I are about the same age. Neither of us will ever be asked to pick up an Armalite or step into a minefield. If, as usual, old men—and we are mostly men in this place—are to be asked to decide to send young people to die in a foreign land, they should be able to make informed decisions, which is a condition this government is denying those of us on this side of the House.

The briefing we received on November 30 was not very informative. That is putting it rather gently. The unfortunate officer who had to deliver it was not in a position to tell us even approximately how large a force cabinet has decided to commit. He did not know what sorts of troops Canada would be sending, what their function would be or what the long term objectives would be. Under those circumstances it hardly seemed worthwhile to ask him how they would be equipped or where our impoverished military would be able to scrounge effective weaponry on short notice.

In spite of my objections to giving a blank cheque to cabinet on this matter I am not an isolationist. I believe that for the sake of international political stability as well as for the sake of common humanity we must at times be our brothers' keepers.

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For more than a year before the UN finally stopped temporizing and bluffing I strongly advocated tactical air strikes against the Bosnian Serbs to protect the so-called safe havens. The tiny under armed peacekeeping forces were incapable of serious intervention, but the use of superior air power was something that was doable. And it did work, albeit too late for thousands and thousands of civilians.

With the hostilities more or less on hold and with most of the exhausted combatants ready to sign a peace agreement on December 14, I can see some merit in deploying significant well equipped ground forces to in effect keep reminding the three parties that the war is over. The two divisions proposed by NATO should be adequate to do the job, although that is by no means certain.

I believe Canada should participate in something, but what? Canada faces a moral and practical dilemma. We must never again send inadequately equipped troops into harm's way. Our peacekeepers performed magnificently in Bosnia with limited supplies and equipment, some of it obsolete. However, under the more severe rules of engagement proposed for the NATO force, Canadians could end up being cannon fodder. That is not an idle fear. Aside from the fact that Canada cannot properly equip a significant fighting force on short notice, there is no indication that Canada will be significantly involved in the military and political decision making process beyond helping to define the rules of engagement.

If the mission turns out badly, neither the Minister of National Defence nor the Minister of Foreign Affairs can assure Canadians that our soldiers will not be put at undue risk because of decisions made by other nations. We are no longer a big kid on the block and we are unlikely to be treated like one within NATO councils. With our deteriorating economy and feeble military capability we cannot expect to be taken very seriously, notwithstanding our past contributions to UN endeavours.

NATO has indicated this will be a quick and dirty operation that will only last about 12 months. That sounds reassuring, but what exactly is proposed if when the magic deadline approaches the troops are actively engaging one or more of the belligerent parties? If DND or the Department of Foreign Affairs have the slightest idea, they are not telling anyone. There is no such thing as a timetable for war. Even if DND could cobble together an adequately equipped and militarily significant force right now, we would not have the resources to sustain it for a prolonged and indefinite period.

• (1805)

In summary, Canada's participation in whatever cabinet is proposing to do might save lives and help to maintain world political stability. However, with our military gutted by this and

preceding governments, with our top heavy military bureaucracy and our thinly stretched and overused cadre of combat troops, we simply lack the capability to make an effective effort. In military parlance, the tail of the Canadian forces is overdeveloped and the teeth have been neglected. Our plethora of generals and colonels cannot throw their desks at the Serbs.

To suggest that we can continue to be the world's 911 number is false and misleading puffery. My advice to the government is that it be guided by its white paper of December 1994. Sit this one out. Do not get us in over our heads. Do not start something we cannot finish.

Mr. Andrew Telegdi (Waterloo, Lib.): Madam Speaker, first let me say that I believe we have to be involved in the peacekeeping effort. As the hon. member mentioned, political stability is very important. In spite of the misgivings of the hon. member, if Canada were not involved, seeing as it has been an architect of peacekeeping, then there would be many other countries that would not get involved.

The hon. member mentioned that we lack the capability of making a credible effort in this regard. I wonder if he and his party would like to come forward to give us the number of soldiers that should be sent and what kind of equipment they should have, instead of undermining the efforts of the government to fulfil a very useful role, a role we have been instrumental in pioneering.

Mr. Morrison: Madam Speaker, as I said, it appears the government wants to give an aura of respectability to the decisions it has already made.

The hon. member asked how many soldiers we would send and how we would equip them. I would rather the hon. member tell us how many soldiers the government has decided to send and how it hopes to equip them when we simply do not have the equipment. We did not even have adequate equipment for our poor little peacekeeping forces with their light armour and obsolete personnel carriers. How on earth will we equip a genuine fighting force?

Mr. John Cannis (Scarborough Centre, Lib.): Madam Speaker, if I was confused earlier this morning, I am even more confused now.

Earlier the Reform member stated that he supported air strikes. When our peacekeepers were in the region last year the Prime Minister had to put a halt to it. We had ground troops in there. The United States of America did not have ground troops and of course the U.S. was advocating air strikes. The hon. member says we do not want our soldiers to be injured; we do not want to bring them back in bags. I am really confused. They are saying send in the planes and bombard these people. Can they clarify their position?

If they wanted more information, they could have come to the briefing. They could have provided input. But they did not bother to show up. All they do is sit there and criticize. To me this is a blatant flip-flop: one day one way, the next day the other.

• (1810)

Mr. Morrison: Madam Speaker, I do not believe I saw the hon. member at the non-briefing we attended.

With respect to the question of air strikes, I would remind the hon. member that when air strikes were first mentioned we had almost unanimous agreement in the House on that particular matter. This is nothing new. At that time it was clearly stated by members from all parties this did bring in the possibility that our forces would suffer casualties.

Nobody over here is saying that our soldiers are not capable of fighting and that they cannot take casualties. What we are saying is they have nothing to fight with. The Liberals want to send them over there to fight the Serbs with their teeth, and they cannot do it.

Mr. Fred Mifflin (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am not sure what the hon. member just said. I think he said the Reform Party's position was not that we not send troops to fight. That certainly was not the position the third party defence critic concluded. After 30 minutes I finally got it out of him.

I want to ask the third party members if they believe we should have Canadian forces that are not able to participate in armed conflict. What do we have an armed forces for, to sit at home and stick their tongues out at people?

Mr. Morrison: What I would like to know is what do we have a Minister of National Defence for? These are the forces that have had no decent support from the politicians and the bureaucrats behind them. They do not have the equipment. The Liberals want to send them over there to take their lumps. I would suggest that some hon. members opposite, if they are so bloody brave, should pick up their Armalites and head for Bosnia.

Some hon. members: Right on.

Mr. David Chatters (Athabasca, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I am delighted to participate in the debate because I have somewhat of a unique position on the whole issue, having a son in the Canadian Armed Forces who could end up as part of this mission and possibly be one of those who could come back in a body bag if this thing turns into a disaster.

Mr. Collenette: Great optimism. A great thing to say.

Mr. Chatters: Well, the minister does not give one great cause for optimism. I will put it that way.

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Mr. Collenette: I am glad I am not your son, hearing that from his father.

Mr. Chatters: Well, I am sure he would not choose you to be his Minister of National Defence, as well.

Mr. Hoepfner: How many sons do you have over there? Let us hear an answer.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): May I remind the hon. members that comments should be addressed through the Chair.

Mr. Hill (Prince George—Peace River): Remind the minister of that.

Mr. Chatters: Madam Speaker, I have looked forward to this debate for some weeks, having heard the Prime Minister say that he promised a full debate in the House of Commons before any decision was made in regard to this matter. I can only say that I was extremely disappointed to find out in the last couple of days that the whole debate was to be a fraud, a sham, that the decisions have already been made, not only to commit soldiers but how many soldiers would be committed.

I suppose five years from now the auditor general will be able to tell us what the operation will cost, because the Minister of National Defence, the finance department and the government have no idea what it will cost, or at least they are not willing to share it with us.

The government knows what the command structure will be for the Russian forces there and who will be in charge of those forces, but they do not know yet who will be in command of the Canadian Armed Forces and what the command structure will be. That does not give one great confidence. In addition, there is the unmitigated arrogance of members across the way to taunt us on this very serious matter, this insult to democracy we have witnessed all day.

I can say that the Reform Party has every bit as much concern as anybody on that side of the House for the suffering and the atrocities that are taking place in the former Yugoslavia. However, our primary concern must be for our Canadian sons and daughters. My concern is that the government would send my son and his colleagues into the theatre of war without properly equipping them and without proper command. I think that is truly atrocious.

• (1815)

We have simply asked from the beginning of this whole debate that the government and the ministers lay before Parliament a proposal that would clearly lay out the Canadian criteria, the mandate for the mission. We have also asked that the government lay out the command structure and how our Canadian soldiers and commanders would fit into that structure.

As we have heard before in previous debates on this issue, there were great concerns that we were one of the major forces in the peacekeeping effort in the former Yugoslavia and that we had absolutely no input into the decisions made concerning

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those forces. We really do not want to be in that situation again. We want to be able to make decisions and be part of that command structure.

We also asked that the government lay before Parliament for debate the rules of engagement. What happens when some of these war criminals are arrested and taken into custody? What happens when our Canadian soldiers are face to face with those individuals and perhaps need to shoot somebody to enforce the mandate they have been given?

I do not think we have heard anything on any of these issues. We have questioned the business of the length of the commitment. We have heard 12 months yet we hear that at the end of 12 months this mandate is to be handed over to some fictitious organization, that our soldiers will be withdrawn and the authority transferred to others.

It is unbelievable that they can go into the situation that exists there now, then in 12 months democratic elections will produce some kind of a government structure to turn this whole situation over to.

We have heard again from our members the problems our peacekeepers have already faced in the former Yugoslavia such as our soldiers not having enough combat helmets. They certainly do know which way to wear them, front or back, but if they do not have them it is difficult to put them on either way.

We have also heard about the armoured personnel carriers, the rolling coffins our soldiers were riding around in and the efforts to armour them to provide safe transport for our soldiers. After that they were so heavy they did not have enough power to get to the top of a hill. There are all kinds of horror stories, and that was a peacekeeping role. Clearly the members opposite do not seem to understand the difference. This is not a peacekeeping role. This is a combat role.

I believe we have asked a lot of reasonable questions which the government would have brought forward. We had hoped Parliament might have a chance to have a free vote on the issues debated and that members could make a democratic decision on behalf of their constituents based on that vote.

An hon. member: We make democratic decisions and you do not agree with them anyway. You lose the vote and then you complain.

Mr. Chatters: Yes, we know all about your democratic decisions.

I am truly disappointed and concerned for the welfare of our young people whom the government is now sending into a combat situation. My family has a long tradition of very proud participation in Canada's military. It has served in the second world war and Korea. Now my son in the Canadian Armed Forces participates in the peacekeeping roles. My son and I are

truly embarrassed by what Liberal governments have done in the last 30 years to the Canadian military, once one of the proudest organizations in the world with much to be proud of.

• (1820)

We have expressed great concern with the ability of the government to put the kind of a combat battalion in the field that is equipped to do the job, to rotate it on a regular basis and to avoid the battle fatigue and the problems we faced in the peacekeeping role in Yugoslavia.

To begin again, after some of our soldiers have put in four tours of duty in the former Yugoslavia with all the problems that has caused for the families and children of those people, there are grave concerns as to our ability to do that and at the same time preserve some kind of family structure for those involved.

Again, I am truly disappointed. I wish the government would be honest and provide a chance for some democracy in this place.

Mr. Janko Peric (Cambridge, Lib.): Madam Speaker, tonight from all three parties in this discussion I have been hearing the expression the former Yugoslavia. Let me clarify this. The former Yugoslavia means a territory of newly formed countries, starting with Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and the former Republic of Macedonia.

It would be absurd to use the expression of Latvia as the former Soviet Union. I would appeal to members to use proper names. Those countries are members of the United Nations.

Mr. Chatters: Madam Speaker, I do not believe there was a question there.

Mr. Maurizio Bevilacqua (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.): Madam Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to address some of the key concerns that—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): We are still on questions and comments.

Mr. Bevilacqua: I am aware of that and you will get a seven-minute comment from me.

This debate is about two things: the recent Dayton peace agreement in light of the international community's continued effort to bring enduring peace and security to the Balkans, and to consider Canadian support for peace efforts by participation in a multinational military implementation force under NATO command.

Like Canadians everywhere, the residents of York North want to see this crisis resolved. They have watched civilians on both sides of the conflict suffer unnecessarily. They have seen fellow Canadians risk their lives participating in humanitarian missions. They view the Dayton peace agreement as a ray of hope

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and they support Canadian participation in an implementation force.

Canada has long been an active player on the world stage. In the spring of 1945 Canada and 49 other nations gathered together to draft and adopt the charter of the United Nations, an international body created to prevent military conflict.

Since that day Canada has played an important and influential role in the operation of the United Nations.

• (1825)

It was, after all, our own Right Hon. Lester B. Pearson who presented the concept of peacekeeping to the world in response to the Suez crisis of 1956. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts.

Canada has taken part in almost every single United Nations peacekeeping operation since 1956 and many other missions outside the organization. As of November 1 of this year more than 1,600 personnel are deployed in 13 missions, making Canada the sixth largest troop contributor.

My question is simple. Why would the Reform Party try to break down this very important Canadian tradition of helping a country during a very important crisis?

Mr. Chatters: Madam Speaker, certainly you will not find me or any of my colleagues disputing the past history of the Canadian Armed Forces. We distinguished ourselves many times on the battlefield and would continue to do that again.

The members of the armed forces are there because they are willing to do those things. They cannot do those things if the government does not provide them the tools.

It is truly disgraceful what the Liberal government has done to our Canadian Armed Forces since the end of the second world war. Do not imply that we think any less of our armed forces or are any less proud of our armed forces than you are.

It is time you put your money where your mouth is, put the money up and provide the equipment—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): I am sorry to have to remind the member once again to please address your comments through the Chair. We have time for a very brief comment by the member for Scarborough Centre.

Mr. John Cannis (Scarborough Centre, Lib.): Madam Speaker, this is what true democracy is all about, to be able to debate this important issue in the House.

I mentioned earlier about the flip-flop—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): I am sorry, there is a point of order.

Mr. Mills (Red Deer): Madam Speaker, to the parliamentary secretary, because time is about to expire I would like to ask the hon. member if he could ask for unanimous consent to extend—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): I am sorry, I thought you were asking a question of the parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Milliken: Madam Speaker, I am happy to answer the hon. member's question. There have been some consultations. I have spoken with the Minister of National Defence. We will be more than happy to extend the debate after the vote scheduled for 6.30 p.m.

We would be prepared to extend the debate for two hours to 9 p.m. on the understanding that during the extended hours of debate there would be no dilatory motions, no quorum calls and no other business called or motions put to the House except the item under discussion.

We would be more than happy to extend for that two-hour period if it would help the hon. member. I understand there are many hon. members who wish to participate in the debate.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): Is there unanimous consent to extend the debate until nine o'clock under the conditions stipulated by the parliamentary secretary?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): The remainder of the time is to the hon. member for Scarborough Centre.

Mr. Cannis: Madam Speaker, it is wonderful and this is democracy at its best to be able to debate this most important issue.

I mentioned flip-flopping. The reverse party—I mean the Reform Party—is stating here that our troops are not equipped and that they are not prepared. I do not know what impression it has. It thinks we will send our troops over there unequipped, unprepared. That is a false illusion. If the Reform Party thinks there is an expenditure needed, is it supporting the minister to spend the money? If he spends the money the Reform Party will come back and haunt him for spending money when we should cut. What is its position?

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): It being 6.30 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 45, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred division at the second reading stage of Bill C-110, an act respecting constitutional amendments.

* * *

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS ACT

The House resumed from December 1 consideration of the motion that Bill C-110, an act respecting constitutional amendments, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

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The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): Call in the members.

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(Division No. 388)

YEAS

Members

Adams	Alcock
Allmand	Anderson
Arseneault	Assad
Assadourian	Augustine
Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre/Sud-Centre)	Bakopanos
Barnes	Bélaïr
Bélanger	Bellemare
Bertrand	Bethel
Bevilacqua	Bhaduria
Blondin-Andrew	Bodnar
Bonin	Boudria
Brown (Oakville—Milton)	Brushett
Bryden	Caccia
Calder	Campbell
Cannis	Catterall
Chamberlain	Chan
Clancy	Cohen
Collenette	Collins
Cowling	De Villers
Dhaliwal	Discepola
Duhamel	Dupuy
Easter	Eggleton
English	Finestone
Finlay	Flis
Fontana	Fry
Gaffney	Gagnon (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine)
Galloway	Gerrard
Godfrey	Goodale
Graham	Gray (Windsor West/Ouest)
Grose	Guarnieri
Harb	Harper (Churchill)
Harvard	Hopkins
Hubbard	Ianno
Iftody	Irwin
Jordan	Keyes
Kirkby	Knutson
Kraft Sloan	Lastewka
LeBlanc (Cape/Cap-Breton Highlands—Canso)	Lee
Lincoln	Loney
MacDonald	MacLellan (Cape/Cap-Breton—The Sydneys)
Malhi	Maloney
Manley	Marchi
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)	Massé
McCormick	McGuire
McKinnon	McLellan (Edmonton Northwest/Nord-Ouest)
McTeague	McWhinney
Mifflin	Milliken
Mills (Broadview—Greenwood)	Minna
Mitchell	Murphy
Murray	Nault
O'Brien	O'Reilly
Pagtakhan	Parrish
Patry	Payne
Peric	Peters
Peterson	Phinney
Pickard (Essex—Kent)	Pillitteri
Proud	Reed
Richardson	Rideout
Ringuette-Maltais	Rock
Scott (Fredericton—York—Sunbury)	Serré
Shepherd	Sheridan
Simmons	Skoke
Speller	St. Denis
Steckle	Stewart (Brant)
Stewart (Northumberland)	Szabo
Telegdi	Terrana
Thalheimer	Torsney
Ur	Valeri
Vanclief	Verran
Volpe	Walker
Wells	Whelan
Wood	Young
Zed—145	

NAYS

Members

Ablonczy	Althouse
Asselin	Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing)
Bachand	Bélisle
Bellehumeur	Benoit
Bergeron	Bernier (Gaspé)
Blaikie	Breitkreuz (Yellowhead)
Brien	Brown (Calgary Southeast/Sud-Est)
Caron	Chatters
Chrétien (Frontenac)	Crête
Cummins	Dalphond-Guiral
de Jong	de Savoye
Deshaies	Dubé
Duceppe	Dumas
Duncan	Epp
Fillion	Gagnon (Québec)
Gauthier	Godin
Grey (Beaver River)	Grubel
Guay	Hanger
Harper (Calgary West/Ouest)	Harper (Simcoe Centre)
Hart	Hill (Prince George—Peace River)
Hoepfner	Jacob
Lalonde	Landry
Langlois	Laurin
Lavigne (Beauharnois—Salaberry)	Lefebvre
Leroux (Richmond—Wolfe)	Leroux (Shefford)
Loubier	Manning
Marchand	Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)
McClelland (Edmonton Southwest/Sud-Ouest)	Ménard
Mercier	Meredith
Mills (Red Deer)	Morrison
Nunez	Paré
Picard (Drummond)	Ramsay
Ringma	Rocheleau
Sauvageau	Schmidt
Solberg	Solomon
Speaker	St-Laurent
Stinson	Strahl
Taylor	White (Fraser Valley West/Ouest) —76

PAIRED MEMBERS

Bernier (Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead)	Bouchard
Canuel	Cauchon
Copps	Culbert
Daviault	Debien
Dingwall	Gagliano
Graham	Guimond
Hickey	Lavigne (Verdun—Saint-Paul)
Lebel	Leblanc (Longueuil)
MacAulay	Maclaren
Marleau	Pomerleau
Robichaud	Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata)
Tremblay (Rosemont)	Venne

● (1855)

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): I declare the motion carried. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs.

(Bill read the second time and referred to a committee.)

THE BALKANS

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): Pursuant to an order made earlier today, the House will now resume consideration of government business, Motion No. 27.

Mr. Maurizio Bevilacqua (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.): Madam Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to address the House on this very important issue.

I would like to reiterate some of the important issues that I raised earlier on. This debate is about two major things: first, the recent Dayton peace agreement in light of the international community's continued efforts to bring enduring peace and security to the Balkans; second, to consider Canadian support for these efforts by participation in a multinational military implementation force under NATO command.

The residents of York North, like Canadians everywhere, want to see this crisis resolved. They have watched civilians on both sides of the conflict suffer unnecessarily. They have seen fellow Canadians risk their lives participating in humanitarian missions. They view the Dayton peace agreement as a ray of hope. They support Canadian participation in the implementation force.

Canada has a long tradition on the world stage in relation to peacekeeping. We know that under the leadership of the Right Hon. Lester B. Pearson, who presented the concept of peacekeeping to the world in response to the 1956 Suez crisis, we are indeed world leaders.

Canada has taken part in almost every United Nations peacekeeping operation since 1956 and many other missions outside the organization. As of November 1 of this year more than 1,600 personnel are deployed in 13 missions making Canada the sixth largest troop contributor.

Since the end of the cold war, the nature of conflict has changed. It has become more regional and complex. The need for peacekeeping forces is increasing rather than decreasing. Peacekeeping forces, whose original missions were to monitor ceasefires, are now working on the maintenance and re-establishment of peace, delivering humanitarian aid, supervising elections and monitoring human rights abuses.

The parties to the conflict in the former Yugoslavia want peace. They have fought and suffered for several years. They are tired of the carnage and are prepared to pursue their goals through negotiations and political means. They have signed a complex agreement setting out the compromises and frameworks they are prepared to live with.

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After more than four years of bitter fighting, peace may finally be at hand in the former Yugoslavia. The people of the region have endured terrible hardships. There could be no accurate measure of their suffering or loss. The effects of this conflict will be seen for years to come. Citizens will bear the emotional scars of being witnesses to the atrocities of war, of having had loved ones die in their arms from causes so simple and so possible to prevent: starvation, hypothermia, dehydration.

The land is scarred from years of battle. Bombs, chemical spills, mines and neglect have taken their toll. The infrastructure has been eradicated. It was only recently that electricity was restored to Sarajevo. Roads, buildings, sewer systems, the fundamentals that we as Canadians take for granted must be rebuilt.

What is critical to any peace process involving the use of peacekeeping troops is that the military component must be accompanied by a strong, viable political process. In the former Yugoslavia we now have a strong peace process. The Dayton peace agreement points the way clearly to a new political reality designed to end the fighting and conflict in that region.

What is required militarily is a brief period of stability to allow the implementation of the political steps agreed upon. The international community has laid the foundation for a strong peace process. The Dayton peace agreement points the way clearly to a new political reality designed to end the fighting in that region.

● (1995)

The Dayton peace agreement calls for, among other things, country-wide elections to be held within nine months. Free elections would be a tremendous step forward in the former Yugoslavia. A truly democratic election process that produces a government and a leader supported and chosen by the population would go a long way to ensuring the cohesiveness of the country.

Free elections require stability, freedom of movement and freedom of information. We must counteract nearly four years of war and hate. The groundwork must be laid to ensure that elections are feasible. One way of ensuring a successful election is to provide residents with a commitment to personal security.

Canada's efforts to re-establish peace in the former Yugoslavia are extensive. Over the last four years Canada has played a significant role in the international community's efforts to deal with the war in the former Yugoslavia. These efforts have been carried out primarily through the United Nations and NATO. Not only have Canadian military personnel helped prevent the conflict from spreading to other parts of the region and from becoming more brutal, they have also saved countless lives by assisting and delivering humanitarian relief supplies and preventing more massive assaults on civilian populations.

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In September 1991, Canada led the call for the United Nations Security Council to deal with this situation. Since then Canada has contributed one of the largest contingents to UN forces in the former Yugoslavia. As the mandate of the UN forces evolved over the course of the conflict, so did the tasks performed by Canadian troops. Their duties have ranged from traditional peacekeeping functions such as monitoring ceasefires to more challenging roles such as establishing humanitarian airlifts, repairing schools and supporting hospital workers.

With the peace process now moving into a new phase, the Canadian forces are ready if necessary to serve with an implementation force. The peace implementation force plan calls for roughly 60,000 personnel. This plan covers the military aspects of the peace agreement negotiated in Dayton. It will be implemented after a UN Security Council resolution is passed authorizing the mission. The objectives of the implementation force are as follows:

The first objective is to ensure compliance with the military aspects of the peace agreement. This would include, in particular, the withdrawal of forces to their respective territories as set out in the agreement and the establishment of agreed lines of separation of those forces.

The second is to create secure conditions for the withdrawal of UN forces currently in place.

The third is to create secure conditions for the conduct of other non-military tasks associated with the peace agreement. The UN, the European Union and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe will be among the organizations carrying out civilian duties. All our NATO allies will be participating, with the exception of Iceland which has no armed forces. Among non-NATO nations, 19 including Russia, have indicated a willingness to contribute.

Finally, the plan calls for the replacement of the implementation force with non-NATO forces after 12 months. This transfer would occur regardless of whether the peace agreement has been fully implemented. Citizens of the former Yugoslavia view the Dayton peace agreement as a ray of hope. Canadian involvement in the implementation force would allow this ray of hope to shine.

• (1910)

Mr. Ron MacDonald (Dartmouth, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased the debate has been extended because if it had not been, I would not have been able to put my views on the record.

A lot of members are very interested in what is going on in Bosnia and Croatia and the other states of the former Yugoslavia. In my constituency there are many individuals whose families have served in a number of different support functions with the United Nations since this conflict started. In the Dartmouth-Halifax area because the east coast Canadian navy is there, there are many individuals who have served onboard the

ships which offered logistical support in the Adriatic. Many individuals from Atlantic Canada have served on a number of the missions in Bosnia.

The hon. member for Athabasca indicated earlier that perhaps he was in a unique situation because his son might be one of those called upon to serve. He may be unique in that regard but there are many of us, myself included, who have family members in the Canadian Armed Forces.

My brother Paul served in peacekeeping missions under the UN as a blue beret in Cambodia. Cambodia was a very difficult mission. There were no warring factions at that point in time, but it was a highly unstable political situation. It was difficult on family members. It was difficult on Paul's fiancée at the time but he served proudly wearing the blue beret of the United Nations. He served there proudly as a member of the Canadian Armed Forces.

My nephew, Neil Bernard MacKinnon, served two or three tours of duty in Bosnia. He was a young man in his early twenties. When he would visit, my dad, who served in the second world war, would say: "I think Neil Bernard has seen more slick trenches by his stories from Bosnia than I did in the Italian campaign during the second world war". That young man dedicated himself and his life to serve the Canadian Armed Forces. He served very proudly under very difficult circumstances in Bosnia. It is unfortunate because he lost his life in the spring of this year, not in Bosnia but here in Canada in a training exercise in Suffield. This is currently the subject of an inquiry.

Some of the best remembrances I and my family have of Neil Bernard are his stories about the service he gave in Bosnia, about the humanitarian tragedy that was unfolding in that particular state and about the important role played by Canadian peacekeepers serving under the UN banner in that little part of hell. That is how he described it to me one day.

Today it is important that as parliamentarians we not debate in isolation. I have heard a lot of isolated debate today. I have heard a little bit too much partisanship in the debate as well. We are talking about the soldiers, the men and women who have chosen to serve this country, Canada, through the Canadian Armed Forces. We sent these people over there in a time of war and conflict when there was no peace to keep. They provided humanitarian aid. Some were injured and some were killed. Some were scarred by what they saw, but nevertheless they did it because they believed in the Pearson commitment to humanitarian aid and peacekeeping through the United Nations.

I remember in the last Parliament we had another debate on the UN and UN resolutions with respect to the Persian Gulf crisis. I remember quite well having to speak in that debate. It was certainly not as focused as this debate is. The government at the time did not want us to speak specifically about whether or not our troops would be committed if a war did break out. It was a resolution on whether or not we supported UN resolutions. I remember I was waiting to speak on that bill. There was a long

list at the time. It was a motion. My interest in speaking was that I knew if a war did break out and the Canadian government committed troops there would be men and women who lived in my riding, some of whom lived in my neighbourhood and some of whom had children who went to school with my children, who would be committed.

• (1915)

As members of Parliament, I wanted everybody to be quite aware of the dangers of such a commitment of forces in the Persian Gulf. I supported at that time the government of the day doing what it did. I supported that Parliament and the Canadian government had to support members of the Canadian Armed Forces.

It is a little different this time around. We are being asked to debate the principle of whether we should continue, now that we have the Dayton peace accord, to provide troops for a one-year period as peace is implemented in Bosnia.

Clearly, the members of the Canadian Armed Forces have been truly tested over the years from budget cuts and lack of equipment they believe they need. But not once have I talked to a member of the Canadian Armed Forces who was not prepared to go and do the job they joined the armed forces to do. If that is in protection of the sovereignty of our country, they are there to do it. If it is to go and protect or preserve a peace or to try to bring about a peace in a foreign state, they are prepared to serve.

I am rising today to say that I support the Canadian government participating in the IFOR in Bosnia. I do not do it lightly. I do it knowing full well, as the member for Athabasca said, that when you get involved with an action like this there are inherent dangers. Members of this place have to understand that when they speak in support or not in support of motions such as this.

I also believe very strongly that we can no longer continue to ask the members of our Canadian Armed Forces to do more with less. During the Persian Gulf situation and since 1991 in the Bosnian situation, there is no question that what we have done is ask our men and women in the Canadian Armed Forces to stretch the resources further than the resources many times could be stretched.

I am one of those who believe that if we want the Canadian Armed Forces to continue to hold up the very credible reputation that Canada has worldwide for its peacekeeping and peacemaking efforts, then we must provide the resources to the armed forces to make sure they are the best equipped forces in the world.

I get worried about talk of continued budgetary cutbacks. I get worried when I know that perhaps some of the equipment our

armed forces has is not what it should be. But I get equally worried when I hear members opposite of the third party, the Reform Party, who want to have it both ways. Two or three times in debate they have criticized the government for allowing a debate to happen, which is outrageous, and have said that we cannot send troops over because they are not properly equipped.

I do not care what the Minister of National Defence says and I really do not care what the Minister of Finance says with respect to the need to get the deficit down when I know there are members of the Canadian Armed Forces who do not have the resources they require to do the job we ask of them.

I will say it in this place. I said it publicly and I will continue to say it, even though some in my party may not like me saying it. At least I am not hypocritical. I am consistent. I have been for the seven years I have been here.

What I would like to find out from the members opposite, from somebody in the Reform Party, is whether they are in favour of sending troops over. Please say so. If it is with the condition that there is more money allocated through the budgetary process to provide them with better helicopters to replace the Sea Kings, I will be the first one to jump up and say I agree with them. If it is with the assurance that the announced armoured personnel vehicle program be accelerated, which would cost a little more money, I would agree with them. If it is conditional on the purchase of new submarines to retire the aging class we have most of the time that do not work because they are so bloody old, I will agree with them.

I would like them to be clear and intellectually honest in a debate like this. The men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces deserve better than political rhetoric on the floor of the House of Commons when there are motions put forward debating whether or not they participate in international obligations, particularly when there is the threat of injury or even death.

• (1920)

I support the government's initiative, but I will also put it on the record that I want the government to ensure the troops we send have the resources they need to do the job we ask of them.

Mr. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Ref.): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to speak in the debate on Bosnia and Canada's role in this important geopolitical problem.

There have been four years of brutal war. Two million people have been displaced. Over 200,000 people have been killed. Now, thankfully, there is the Dayton peace plan. It is a welcome initiative. However, there is something we must understand: it is a fragile peace plan and it is only the beginning. The international community must realize the Dayton peace plan gives the

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world an opportunity to provide long lasting peace in Bosnia; however, it is not the end of the situation.

In the long term, history tells us that peace cannot be enforced at the end of an assault rifle. It has to come from peace building initiatives from people on the ground. Any time there is a civil war that tears apart a country, as the conflict in Bosnia has done, the seeds of ethnic discontent, hatred and future wars will be there. The only way to combat that is for us to contribute to peace building initiatives for the disparate ethnic groups in that land.

Let us look at the scenario that now faces us. The 12-month timeline that has been set up by the supreme allied command is a fantasy. The people of that region will be there for a longer period. We have to ensure that we will not be engaged in a Cyprus in the middle of Europe. We have to understand that the Bosnian Serb population is very tenuous, with Radovan Karadzic and General Mladic saying they will make certain parts of the former Yugoslavia bleed, namely Sarajevo. They are an element that has to be neutralized.

The Muslim-Croat alliance that exists now is tenuous at best. Many people tend to forget that two years ago these two groups were fighting a bloody war within Bosnia. Much has to be done to mend fences there. The Bosnian federation as it now exists with two federations under the umbrella of one country is also tenuous. It will fracture. Whether it fractures into two areas or three, with a Croat-Bosnian-Muslim and a Bosnian Serbian group or with the Croats and Muslims divided into two groups, is yet to be seen. In my estimation, Bosnia will fracture into at least two or three groups. It is important for us to ensure the fracturing is accomplished through diplomacy and not at the end of an assault rifle.

There is much that has to be done, and IFOR gives us the opportunity. Troops need to be deployed but they do not have to be Canadian troops. I believe there is a way around this situation. The European Union has a force of 50,000 troops that has never been tried. That force is well armed and well equipped. The European force can use Bosnia as a teething ground under the existing NATO command structures. A lot could be learned from this, which could be used in future peace building initiatives.

Canada has done its part. Our armed forces have done an admirable job in the former Yugoslavia. Our troops need a rest. They need to re-equip and take a bit of a break.

Bosnia will secede. As I said before, we want to ensure that it secedes peacefully.

I believe the effective contribution Canada can make, rather than sending over troops, is to ensure the peace building initiatives that take place on the ground continue. We can

contribute engineers for the rebuilding of infrastructure: hospitals, roads, bridges and the like. We can also utilize NGOs and civilian groups to contribute to the peace building and peace bridging that must happen with the civilian population in that region. This is something we are good at and something we can contribute to the peace building process in the former Yugoslavia without contributing troops.

• (1925)

Economic prosperity in any war situation is absolutely fundamental for the peace building process. Just because we are enforcing a peace with an international protection force now does not mean to say there will be peace in the future. Contributing to the infrastructure development and developing economies so the people in the area can stand on their own two feet is absolutely fundamental for peace building.

One of the things we can do to neutralize Radovan Karadzic and General Mladic is to take away their power base. The people in Sarajevo are scared, the Bosnian Serbs in particular. If we can contribute to making sure they will be secure in their environment, they will not provide a fertile ground for General Mladic and Mr. Karadzic to put a flame into the very volatile situation that is Bosnia as we know it.

I would also suggest that we continue with the arms embargo, and I would continue with the demilitarization process that has to occur in the former Yugoslavia, a very difficult situation to pursue.

I would say involvement of the European force is something that is long overdue, for the European community abrogated their responsibility in the first place in the former Yugoslavia. When they were given the mandate to try to defuse the situation, defuse the precursors to conflict that were there, they turned their back and stuck their head in the sand. It is high time they contribute to this initiative, contribute to IFOR by using the European force that is there.

Our contribution as a country to ensure that our commitment to European security is there and to ensure our allies in NATO realize we are also committed to security in Europe can be the involvement of our military through engineers, not combat troops, and can be the involvement of our civilian population NGOs through peace building initiatives on the ground. All we need to do is look at the Middle East to see that peace building must be done along economic lines as well.

On a broader scale, I would ask our Minister of Foreign Affairs to work with our Minister of National Defence at developing a long lasting, far-reaching Canadian foreign policy on how to prevent these conflicts from occurring in the first place. That involves identifying the precursors to conflict and working with international organizations to ensure there will be

a predictable, identifiable and concrete response to the precursors to conflict.

This conflict in the former Yugoslavia and many others around the world were entirely preventable. The writing on the wall in the former Yugoslavia was there in 1987, yet the world community chose to ignore it. If we had addressed that conflict then, we would not have seen the hundreds of thousands of people killed, the millions of people displaced and the profound human tragedy that none of us in this room can possibly comprehend.

We as a country can take a leadership role as one of the few countries in the world that has the international suasive power in the international community to encourage our neighbours to develop the broad peace building, peacemaking and conflict prevention framework that needs to be done.

Apart from using the United Nations, we can also use the international financial institutions as cheap non-military economic levers in conflict prevention, both as a form to dissuade potential groups from engaging in conflict and also to encourage groups to enter a road of peace rather than go down the road of war.

With the debate we have had today—and I thank the hon. members in the House for extending the debate—I hope we can make an effective contribution, not necessarily through our combat troops but toward the peace building initiatives we in Canada are so good at.

Mr. John Richardson (Perth—Wellington—Waterloo, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I sit in the House and listen and it reminds me of someone trying to walk down a razor blade afraid they will slip. I think that is what is happening with the party opposite. What does it understand by collective security? The person on the right is going to be there when they are called upon. There is a trust. There is a belief that one will deliver the goods. It is my belief the third party is really off its stick in this whole debate, trying to win friends on one side and trying to do something on the other side.

• (1930)

I want to know now, does the hon. member understand what the concept of collective security in NATO is?

Mr. Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca): Madam Speaker, we understand what collective security is. I made it very clear in my speech that peace in the former Yugoslavia must involve a number of routes. One is the use of combat troops.

As his colleague mentioned, our troops are having a difficult time because of a lack of equipment and the fact that they have been rotating quite frequently through the former Yugoslavia. They are very tired and they need a break.

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Be that as it may, Canada can make an effective contribution. One of the things I mentioned is through the use of military engineers we can contribute to the infrastructure development in Bosnia. If there is no infrastructure development in Bosnia, no economy to provide people with the means to get on their feet and provide themselves with their basic needs, they have all the seeds, the groundwork will remain for future conflicts to occur.

IFOR is just a stop gap measure. There is a pool of soldiers not being utilized right now, a pool of soldiers in the sphere of influence that Bosnia is in, the European Union force.

As I mentioned before, there are 50,000 troops. They are not being used anywhere and they are well equipped. What better place to have them teethe their techniques and drills than in the former Yugoslavia, in Bosnia right now? They can do it under a controlled setting under the guise and leadership of proven soldiers who are there right now, the Americans, the French and the British. They could learn the techniques and the tools to be an effective peacemaking, peace building and peacekeeping force.

In the future I hope the European Union force can take the leadership role in trying to ensure that IFOR maintains its mandate, that we can continue to ensure that Bosnia does not have short term peace but enjoys a long term peace and that it does not descend into the caldron of brutality it has been for the last five years.

We need to contribute to this. We can involve civilian populations in the peacemaking process in the former Yugoslavia. There are number of options there as I mentioned in my speech.

Mr. Ron MacDonald (Dartmouth, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I have engaged this member in debate in the past. He is usually rather unequivocal with his position.

I ask him to be unequivocal. The member heard me indicate my support and I could not make it any clearer. I am concerned about whether the Canadian Armed Forces generally has the resources given to it through the budgetary process to have the best equipment possible to do the job we ask of it.

I ask the member opposite a question concerning himself individually. Forget his party. He knows the comments I have made about his party and its position. Does he support the Canadian Armed Forces participating in IFOR? It is either yes or no.

Perhaps the member thinks this is the forum in which we debate exactly every detail the Canadian forces are to do over there. The member should know those details will be worked out with their colleagues who are putting together this collective force.

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With or without qualifications, does he support it? Yes or no.

Mr. Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca): Madam Speaker, if we had more details on Canadian troop requirements in the former Yugoslavia we would be able to make a more equivocal statement.

The contribution Canada can make toward the peace process in Bosnia is to use perhaps our military engineers toward infrastructure development but not use our combat troops in IFOR at the present time.

• (1935)

I hope that is very clear: do not use our combat troops under IFOR but contribute toward European security, contribute toward participating with our allies in building peace within Bosnia through non-military methods, through the use of our engineers, through peace building initiatives, through our non-combat troops in the military and also through non-military groups we have in Canada, NGOs, civilian groups and the like.

Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley East, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to share my thoughts about Canada's peacekeeping role in Bosnia this evening. I begin by giving a vote of thanks to our Canadian troops.

Despite the bad press they have received because of a few bad apples and a few incidents in the past few years with people who are not worthy to be called Canadian soldiers, despite the miserable state of the leadership at national defence and the wholly inadequate response to leadership deficiencies on the part of this government, and even though our forces have not always been properly backed up by this government, I commend the fortitude, the restraint and the professionalism shown by our military personnel in the field. The quality of our peacekeeping has never been more restrained or to be admired more than in Bosnia. We are recognized the world over for our contributions there to date.

Canadians have an unparalleled reputation for even handedness and compassion in other areas of the world as well. A Canadian working for World Vision in Rwanda and Somalia who had daily contact with our troops had nothing but praise for them. He told us that our personnel consistently went above and beyond the call of duty in service to other Canadians as well as to the people native to the area. That is a typical comment.

However, there are a number of defence reports circulating that show a serious morale problem in the forces because of the rapid and successive deployments in Croatia and Bosnia. Some soldiers have seen three or four tours of duty in a row and are becoming exhausted. Still, they are professionals and I expect they will return to the field once again without hesitation if they are asked to serve.

The question we address tonight is should they be asked in the first place? Nowhere is it more appropriate that the questions be asked than in the House. I remind the Canadian people that the Prime Minister and the minister of defence have already made the decision to send the troops, which renders the House of Commons almost irrelevant in this debate. All we as members can do is stand up here and voice our frustrations. It was obvious in that last exchange between members on government side and this side when they said "support us, we do not know if we have the troops or the supplies or the necessary equipment. Just support it". It is very frustrating.

Members of Parliament are denied any meaningful input which is contrary to the recommendation of the special joint committee's defence review last year which said: "The government should not commit our forces to service abroad without a full parliamentary debate and accounting for that decision. It is our expectation that, except in extraordinary circumstances, such a debate would always take place prior to any such deployment".

In other words, before the decision is made we should be debating it in advance. So much for the recommendations of that special joint committee.

Earlier this year the House considered my private member's Bill C-295, the peacekeeping bill, which would have placed reasonable limits on Canada's peacekeeping role. The bill would have required Parliament to approve participation in the mission, a mission such as we are discussing tonight. It would have required the government to offer the House an estimate of the mission's cost, its duration and the role of the Canadian troops before committing to it. These are the exact questions Canadians are asking today, and the government is not offering adequate answers. I am not going to sign a blank cheque or approve a blank cheque because those questions have not been answered.

I point out a few important things, especially to the people back home at CFB Chilliwack in my riding. The first is obvious. This is not a UN mission. This is a NATO mission and NATO is not intended to be a peacekeeping body. It is a joint force originally designed and meant to defend Europe in the face of aggression. We are a part of that. We understand that concept of collective security.

However, the quality of this mission is not a normal peacekeeping mission. We need to know that up front. It is a NATO led enforcement mission, not the kind that Canada usually participates in under the authority of the United Nations. The Minister of National Defence has already said this mission would be a fully armed, sharp point combat role in which NATO forces would be able to fire first and to respond to any attack with overwhelming force. Previous American leadership has said this force would be meaner than a junkyard dog. This is not a peacekeeping force.

• (1940)

Given also the warlike tone of some of the Bosnian leaders who have already repudiated the Dayton treaty signed in Ohio, I think we can expect some difficult combat action. Canadians are understandably uncomfortable with this role when they are not defending their own soil.

They ask questions such as are we willing to accept an escalation of our role in Bosnia? Do we have the equipment to equip our forces properly? Are we willing to raise the stakes even further with the risk of having our Canadian soldiers shot or blown up by land mines or humiliated and held hostage by people intent on destroying the peace? I have already attended one funeral in my riding of a Canadian soldier who served in Bosnia. I can understand their concern about this escalation in the role.

We hear that NATO may also be involved in rearming Bosnia. People ask if Canada should be a part of this where it takes sides and helps to arm different factions in a war, where it helps pick the winners and losers. In some people's minds this provokes rather than reduces hostilities. Canada has invested too much in its international reputation for peace to jeopardize its neutrality now by enmeshing itself in conflicts as one of the antagonists.

We also have no idea what the goal of this mission is. We do in broad terms but NATO says it hopes to stabilize the situation within a year, then throw the hot potato to somebody else, an unknown, unnamed entity with the power to keep the antagonists apart. Who would that be? No one knows for sure but it seems to me if history is any teacher we are likely to see NATO forces there indefinitely.

Because this upcoming year is an election year in the U.S. there will be intense pressure for the Americans to pull up stakes and return home after that year is up. Then someone will have to stay behind and keep the peace. Who? I talked to a senior member of the armed forces on the weekend back home. He said that when he went to Cyprus 30 years ago it was supposed to be a one-year mission. We all know what happened there. We were there for 30 years and we do not want to see that happen again.

Not only that but as part of the bigger picture Canada is also on record saying we want to give some of our forces to a standing permanent rapid reaction force, virtually a standing army, to the United Nations. I realize this is a separate issue but if that were to come about it would surrender more of our troops outside of Canadian led combat forces.

I wonder sometimes where the leadership of our country is taking us. I am not sure it understands that we do not have an infinite amount of troops to give to either the UN or to NATO

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while trying to keep our other jobs properly equipped and manned.

The cost of this mission? In the last three years we spent \$800 million in the former Yugoslavia. In the next year we would expect to spend another \$200 million, but that is just speculation because the government will not give us the figures. We have asked it to give us the figures, the cost, the role and so on, but it will not give us any of that. It is interesting that if we commit more troops to NATO we will have fewer troops to commit to any UN led force in years to come, and there are bound to be more demands on that as well.

I reiterate the idea of a colleague from the Reform Party. We could arguably and persuasively say Canada has some obligation to serve with NATO but Canada need not take an active combat role. We could have a support role either with the engineers, as was mentioned earlier, with providing field services, supply services, an intelligence network and so on. There are things we could do outside the combat role.

To be heavily involved in combat, to be rearming some portions of the population and not others, to be acting outside our traditional UN mandate is a huge step when I do not see the end result the government is trying to work toward. Without an effective national debate we are about to launch an armed forces, exhausted and low in morale for the reasons I mentioned earlier, into a dangerous high risk combat mission without goals, without timetables, without cost estimates and perhaps even without the proper equipment. Is this wise?

It is said that discretion is the better part of valour, and our national leaders will show their discretion in this situation by declining combat participation in this venture.

• (1945)

Mr. Ted McWhinney (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.): Madam Speaker, in a more cynical and uncaring age than our own, Bismarck once quipped that the Balkan conflicts were not worth the bones of a single Prussian Grenadier.

In depositions I gave to the committee on foreign affairs of the United States House of Representatives on August 12, 1992 and August 3, 1993—and these are entered and published in the congressional record of those two dates—I recommended that with the pending break-up of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, which was first put together as part of the World War I victors' peace settlement, it would be wise to go back to the original Versailles treaties of 1919 and specifically the treaty of St. Germain-en-Laye which created Yugoslavia to achieve a peaceful, orderly succession and avoid loss of life and hardship to the civilian population of the region.

Now, three years and 250,000 civilian deaths later, we seem to be reaching the same result as might have been obtained under the orderly international law processes envisaged by the Versailles treaties, including resort to the compulsory jurisdiction

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of the World Court afforded by the treaty in case of impasse on territorial frontiers.

Our foreign minister and later Prime Minister, Lester Pearson, fathered the concept of United Nations peacekeeping. We have since come of age in our experience with UN problem solving in the former Yugoslavia with the mission in the Bosnia-Herzegovina region being quickly transformed from classical UN peacekeeping, which is simply physically keeping apart warring rivals who have already accepted a military ceasefire, and this involving chapter VI of the charter, Pacific settlement of disputes, the transformation into the new concept of an activist peacekeeping role involving chapter VII of the charter.

Having gone so far, Canada has become part of the continuing post-communist succession problem in Yugoslavia and should stay the course.

There are, however, steps that can be taken to offset or reduce the dangers of our continuance in the new NATO based phase of the operation and to ensure that decisions taken are compatible with and protected by international law and also rational in the political and larger geopolitical sense.

First, it should be recognized that NATO as a regional security arrangement falling within chapter VIII of the United Nations charter, derives its international law authority from the United Nations charter and cannot go beyond that. Issues such as the right of self-defence and its present day practice can be updated or redefined in contemporary international law terms by the security council and also the general assembly as glosses on classical doctrine, and jurisprudence, as the 1992 decision of the International Court of Justice in the Lockerbie case confirmed.

NATO, however, has no power to dispense from existing international law norms, and NATO commanders and their political governors would act at legal peril if they did not refer back to the security council and general assembly when new political facts challenging the political-military settlement now reached might emerge.

One such potential problem obviously concerns future relations of the two main constituent parts of the new Bosnian entity: the Croat-Muslim Bosnian Republic and the Serbian-Bosnian Republic, their relations to their adjoining mother states, Croatia and rump Yugoslavia which is Serbia-Montenegro.

The current political military settlement has an element of historical transition inherent in it and irredentist pressures for ultimate junction with the adjoining mother states can be expected.

It would be an error for NATO to view such matters, if they should arise, as purely military in character and proper for a NATO military decision alone. Political common sense and

prudence counsel following what international law in any case enjoins, namely referring the high political issues back to the security council and general assembly for definitive ruling.

Likewise whatever dispositions the NATO high command might wish to make, the military decisions of NATO are referable back to the United Nations for their ultimate sanction and justification under international law.

In adhering to the new NATO force for Bosnia, the Canadian government might perhaps attach appropriate reservations confirming the primacy, as to Canadian forces, of the United Nations over its regional security organizations authorized under chapter VIII of the United Nations charter.

• (1950)

This being understood, we can and should support Canada's continued participation in the Bosnian peace process that after four long winters seems at last to be opening up the prospect of the rule of law and peace and elemental security for the inhabitants of that historically troubled region.

Mr. Bill Graham (Rosedale, Lib.): Madam Speaker, it is a privilege to rise in the House this evening to debate the issue of whether we should once again send troops into the Balkan theatre to aid that area in implementing the peace initiative which has recently been achieved at Dayton, Ohio.

The first question we have to ask ourselves is whether Canadian troops should go back. Should we be sending our troops back to this area where they have already performed with such skill, with such professionalism and have brought such pride to Canadians by the contribution they have made in the humanitarian rescue of unfortunate people in that region?

Our troops have made tremendous contributions in that area. Many members of the Reform Party have taken the position that they have done enough. Let us cease our contribution. Let us stop there.

As many other Canadians do, I might subscribe to that point of view myself if things had not changed. Things have changed enormously in the last couple of months. There has been a dramatic change in the conditions under which that whole region is presently evolving.

We have heard described in this House the conditions of the Dayton, Ohio peace agreement which has been achieved. There is no reason for me to go over the conditions and the parameters of that agreement.

It is not a perfect agreement, but the Serbian government of Mr. Milosevic is committed to it. There will be problems in Sarajevo. There will be problems in other areas but the Serbian government is committed to the agreement and various other governments in the area are committed to it. It is clear that without some form of active intervention from outside forces to

make that peace treaty work there will be no opportunity or no possibility of peace being established in the region.

We must ask ourselves the question, should we intervene at this time and give peace a chance? Should we listen to what Mr. Clinton said on television the other night when he laid out the reasons why for the first time he is prepared to commit United States' troops to this grand enterprise?

Should we recognize the tremendous contribution the United States has made and is making to this and the difference that will make? Should we then take these risks, for risks there will be? There are always risks in any enterprise worth the game.

It seems to me this is an enterprise in which we can balance the risks with the reasonable certainty of a better opportunity to ensure peace than we could have before. Take, for example, the position of the security of our troops, a matter referred to at great length by members from the third party.

It seems to me that the security of our troops in the present circumstances is far superior to what it was before. When we were debating this matter before, the members of the third party were constantly saying we should not be putting our troops in harm's way. They have no opportunity of defending themselves. They are in this awful position where they can be taken hostage, they cannot defend themselves, they have been put in an impossible position.

We are going to send them back equipped. We are sending them back with a force of the United States of America, 20,000 troops of the most important army in the world, with the most sophisticated weaponry in the world and with the authority to take defensive measures if they are attacked.

In my view, they are in a far better position than they ever were before. I am far more at ease as a parliamentarian to know that our troops will be going in those circumstances rather than where they were before.

If they were being asked to go back and produce in the conditions they were in before I would agree they should not go back but these are not the same conditions. They are not so inconsistent.

• (1955)

Look at what the local countries around are dealing with, the determination of Croatia and Serbia. There is a contribution from all countries in the area. We can now be assured the risk of this war spilling over can be eliminated.

It makes sense to send our troops back under these circumstances. This confirms our overall policy objectives in this area and all other areas, which are to provide effective humanitarian aid and to assure the evolution of multilateral peacekeeping which directly fulfils the need for security and peace in the

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world. The joint foreign policy review by the Senate and House of Commons laid great emphasis on the need for Canada's participation in multilateral peacekeeping because that is the future of the world. That is where Canada can make a contribution that is needed.

Finally, it corresponds to our commitment to the human rights of the people in these areas. There can be no human rights without peace, security and stability. Without that the talk about human rights is empty talk. This gives us an opportunity to contribute to the establishment of human rights in this area.

We have made these contributions before. We have not just contributed armed forces in this area. We have contributed mounted police who on a day to day policing mission gave stability and proper peace and security to small neighbourhoods to ensure that individuals could get some opportunity for justice and fair treatment.

Our non-governmental organizations have provided food aid, resettled people, provided an opportunity for people to try to get their lives back together. This can only be accomplished in an area where peace has been established and where there is some form of security guaranteed by troops. It is our troops that will be doing that.

I feel we must support this initiative. We must urge the government to be part of any comprehensive scheme in which our NATO allies are participating and in which we can make an important contribution. It corresponds to our interests in establishing peace in the region. It creates credibility for the multilateral peacekeeping process, an important contribution Canada can make to the world today.

[Translation]

In conclusion, I would like to say that this initiative is in keeping with Canadian interests and values. It is in our interest, because we have an interest in peace and in humanitarian aid, and we can be proud of what we have already done and what we will be doing in this area. It is in keeping with our values, because our values are those of a society that is fair, equitable and peaceful.

We want to contribute to a world where these values prevail in place of those of war and aggression. It is, moreover, our duty to take part in this initiative. Chances are good this initiative will succeed and that we will make a significant contribution to its success. I am very proud to speak in favour of this government initiative.

[English]

Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley East, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for his remarks. I know he is very well informed. As chair of the foreign affairs committee, he is in the loop. He knows all the inside stories.

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I know he thinks the third party is somehow not in favour of sending troops overseas or some such thing, but if he could just grab the nub of the argument. He says the troops will be in much better shape this time when we send them over because they will be so much better equipped to defend themselves in the case of aggression. I hope that is true. I have been calling for that since the last time I saw one of our guys chained to chain link fence. I wanted them to be better equipped and have the ability to defend themselves.

• (2000)

Can the member not understand that is the problem? He says, and maybe he knows because he is part of the inside circle, that we are going to have better equipment, a better opportunity to defend ourselves and so on. What we are asking is that we merely be told what we are going to do when we get there. What are we going to send? Are we going to send 20 F-18s? Are we going to send tanks? We do not have tanks so I guess it is not tanks. Are we going to strap Eaton's catalogues around our guts to try to keep them from being blown up? What are we going to do?

We are just asking for a list of what it is we are sending over there so we know that our troops will be well looked after. That is all we are asking. If the member knows something more than what is in this motion and he can tell us, then maybe we would vote in favour of it. Saying that we hope the guys get over there and tying a Canadian flag to the end of a World War II musket in the hopes they do not get their guts blown out is not good enough. We need some more assurance before we start sending our guys over there.

If the government wants to assure us, just tell us what equipment we are going to send over. It is not going to be tanks because we do not have tanks. Is it going to be submarines?

Mr. Hill (Prince George—Peace River): We don't have any of them.

Mr. Strahl: We do not have submarines. What is it going to be? Why is the government so assured that we are going to be able to look after ourselves? If the government could just tell us what we are sending. We are sending an unknown number of people over there for an unknown duration at an unknown cost with unknown equipment to do an uncertain role with an unknown resolution at the end of it and we are supposed to say it sounds good to us? I think not.

If the government could just tell us what we are doing then maybe we could vote with it.

Mr. Graham: Madam Speaker, it is easy to have a *reductio ad absurdum* on these sorts of arguments. Is the hon. member seriously suggesting that we are going to parachute our troops in

unarmed, that we are going to drop them in with absolutely no equipment? This is an absolutely ridiculous argument.

It reminds me of exactly what the Bloc Quebecois members were saying this afternoon. They were saying: "We agree we should be participating. We accept that we have an obligation to do this. We accept that we should be there, but we do not like the fact that the Prime Minister has not talked to Mr. Clinton first", or something like that. Reasons can always be found.

What are we talking about here? We are talking about participating in a NATO enterprise. It is going to be absolutely secured by a great deal of superior American firepower, troops and armour and we will be able to play an important supporting role.

I do not think it is up to us in this House to try and second guess the generals, to second guess exactly what is going to be on the ground. Are there going to be three tanks, two troop carriers, four submachine guns? That is not the role of members of Parliament.

Members of Parliament know we have armed services that are equipped to do the job they will be asked to do. We know they are not being sent over there with a bunch of Eaton's catalogues strapped around them. We know they are going there in an enormous, complicated enterprise with NATO troops and with allies who, all pulling together, will be able to achieve this extraordinary enterprise.

To suggest that they are somehow being dropped in there without proper equipment and preparation is irresponsible. In my view it totally ignores what we have been able to achieve so far. It totally ignores the quality of our armed services.

As a member of this House, I do not expect the government to give me a shopping list of every platoon and every weapon that is going. What I expect is a principled decision based on a common sense approach and an understanding of the strategic and military necessities. My understanding from listening to the Minister of Defence this morning in opening this debate and from listening to what the Prime Minister has said to date, is that we have that understanding. Let us go with it. Let us not quibble and constantly raise these quibbling concerns which are really just an excuse to try and get out of what our duty calls us to do.

Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I have a quick rebuttal to the earlier speaker. I do not think these are quibbling concerns. These are life and death concerns. We have been raising questions here all day and getting absolute nonsense for answers, when we get any answers at all.

I would like to thank hon. members of the House for agreeing to the extension of the debate. It allows those of us who did not have the opportunity earlier to speak on this issue this evening.

• (2005)

As we debate a renewed commitment of troops to Bosnia, I find myself with many more questions than answers. My colleagues have already raised this concern. How can we have a meaningful debate if the government cannot decide or will not tell us how many troops it will send, what their job will be and under what conditions we will bring them home? But what is new? The government has not had any criteria for three years. Why should I be surprised and expect it to change?

Apparently NATO is expecting at least 1,200 to 1,500 Canadian troops. According to reports, this is more than Germany or Turkey are each committing. The former Yugoslavia is almost on their doorstep yet Canada is supposed to commit more human and financial resources to this effort than they are. Why?

It is far more expensive to maintain our troops across the Atlantic than it would be for a neighbouring NATO ally, I would submit. Has Canada or more important, our soldiers, not already demonstrated a commitment to the peace process in the former Yugoslavia? Canadians spent three years and 10 lives in Bosnia. Unlike what the earlier speaker said, I do not believe it means that Reformers are saying we have already done enough. That is not what we are saying. I have not heard that here at all today. It is time some of our other NATO allies bore their share of the burden, however. As history has shown, achieving sustainable peace in the Balkans is critical to European security.

I commend the Canadian soldiers who already served in the former Yugoslavia. They performed professionally and beyond any reasonable expectation, given an unclear mandate and extremely adverse conditions. They were sent as peacekeepers before there was any peace to keep. They were sent into a war zone inadequately equipped and lightly armed. They protected civilian populations in so-called neutral zones when the parties to the conflict did not abide by the rules.

Despite questionable command structure, poor supplies, low morale and an indecisive government back home with no plan to get them out when the situation took a turn for the worse, despite all of this, they did their jobs. They delivered humanitarian supplies and kept thousands of women, children and non-combatants safe in the middle of a war.

The reason they were sent in the first place was not to keep the peace, for the belligerents were still at war. It was so the government of the day could tell the world that Canada was ready to participate anytime, anywhere, as long as it was called a peacekeeping mission.

There was good reason many NATO allies were not there before. There was no peace accord, but Canada was there. Sadly, it seems that political pride in our peacekeeping tradition takes precedence over the safety of our troops. If someone labels it a peacekeeping mission, they know we will come running. Our

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soldiers deserve more from us than this lapdog mentality. Let us make sure we are going back for the right reasons, for reasons that Canada defines.

We are justifiably proud of the Canadian men and women who have served as peacekeepers over the years. When they lay their lives on the line, they must know that political leadership has done everything in its power to ensure they are given the best chance for survival.

They have a right to expect some things from their government. We have a solemn responsibility to consider their safety above all else. If we make a political decision to participate, it is their duty to carry it out no matter what the military assessment. They cannot say no. They have to obey orders. Even the generals cannot object after a political decision has been made. It is our duty to ensure we have done everything politically possible to define the parameters and create the conditions for a safe peacekeeping mission before we commit Canadian lives to a war zone.

Make no mistake. Bosnia is still a war zone. Canadian blood should not be shed because our political leadership refuses to take reasonable precautions. Our soldiers are sworn to defend Canada, not to defend the vanity of politicians who want to preserve a reputation at the UN, no matter what the cost in Canadian lives.

I recognize there is a fine line here. The only way we could completely protect our troops is by never sending them anywhere. However, we have commitments to our NATO allies. We have international humanitarian commitments. We must balance these obligations against our troops' welfare. This decision is not about protecting Canada. It is an optional engagement.

The Prime Minister has committed us to the new NATO force before the peace accord has even been signed. Will this time be different from the last time? There is not even a pretence that the implementation force is on a humanitarian mission. There are other roles to fill in the former Yugoslavia. We can hold our heads high if we engage solely in humanitarian activities, as some of my colleagues have indicated.

• (2010)

Why are we having this debate if the decision has already been made? How can we have a meaningful debate when we are told that we might be sending 20 troops or we might be sending 2,500? The Department of National Defence is not sure.

Members opposite have been chastising Reformers throughout the day for not supporting our peacekeepers. We are not talking about supporting peacekeepers. We are being asked to buy a pig in a poke and we are not going to buy into it.

We may be there for 12 months. Maybe it will turn into another Cyprus. It looks like the government has written a blank cheque to NATO. This is a political decision for prestige within

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NATO and to show solidarity. It is nothing more and nothing less.

What of the soldiers? Before I could advocate sending Canadian troops back to Bosnia I would want more assurances that we have done our job to ensure their safety. Yes, they are soldiers and they would willingly lay down their lives in defence of Canada, but they should not be asked to do it for a political whim.

I have a few questions which the Prime Minister and his defence staff have not answered.

Is there a well defined Canadian mandate? NATO wants to stabilize the situation within 12 months and then pull out. However, the Prime Minister said that we should be prepared to stay there longer. That is unacceptable. If we are going in, it should be for a set period, after which we can assess the situation with a full debate. All the facts should be revealed to the Canadian public, for the army belongs to them, not to the current political party. It is their sons and daughters we are talking about. If we do not have a time frame for withdrawal, how do we know if we have achieved our objectives? Canada must establish its own criteria for participation, not just use NATO's.

Will the Prime Minister make a commitment to hold a comprehensive military and political review after 10 months so our troops will know what to expect by the end of the year? Uncertainty will only exacerbate morale problems. Over the past three years the government has unilaterally extended our commitment without listening to Parliament or consulting the Canadian people. Let us not do it again.

Can the Prime Minister assure us that our soldiers will be better equipped than the last time they went to Bosnia? They are the best trained troops in the world, but there is a limit to improvisation. If we are going to send them back into a potential war zone they deserve the best equipment we can afford. With cuts at DND and outdated personnel carriers, is this realistic?

Can the Prime Minister assure us that Canadian soldiers will be under Canadian command? No one seems to know the answer to that question. We cannot afford another Gallipoli or Dieppe. It should be a precondition for our participation.

Canadian peacekeepers are trained to clear up misunderstandings before they escalate into open conflict. I have grave concerns that the same cannot be said for everyone else in the 60,000 strong occupation force. If civilians are antagonized by inexperienced peacekeepers, will this increase the risk to our Canadian soldiers?

The parliamentary secretary asked for some recommendations. I have one for him. He noted that assistance to refugees and humanitarian assistance is a secondary priority. I believe it should be Canada's top priority. I believe we should focus our

involvement on technical, logistical and human support. Yes, we have commitments to our NATO allies, but we have an even greater moral obligation to our troops.

Mr. Bill Graham (Rosedale, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I commend the hon. member for Prince George—Peace River for beginning his remarks by stating that we have to achieve a proper balance between the need for the security of our troops and what we are trying to achieve. I regret that he then promptly descended into political rhetoric which suggested that all of this was being done for the sake of political vanity and the whims of politicians. Does the member not agree this is a changed situation? Will he not admit this is an extraordinary opportunity?

• (2015)

Three months ago in that theatre we looked at the possibility of that war extending itself outside those borders, of hundreds of thousands of displaced people, thousands of men, women and children losing their lives, with a terrible winter coming on with no prospect of success. Suddenly we have a prospect of peace, which requires to make it work the contribution of the world community to get in there, pull the parties apart and make it work. Surely that is worth some risk. Surely that is worth our participating in. Why is that a whim? Why is that some irresponsible craziness on behalf of people to want to see that?

Is Mr. Clinton being whimsical and foolish to commit 20,000 United States troops to this enterprise? Are the British and the French a bunch of whimsical idiots to be doing this? Why are we suddenly portrayed as people who have just vanity instead of people who are recognizing we have a global responsibility to peacekeeping and humanitarian aid, which we have been doing in this country for generations now? This is an opportunity to make an important contribution. To be pulling up all these objections at this time and to be accusing people of engaging troops because of some form of whimsical vanity strikes me as not only irresponsible, it is absolute foolishness. It is wind and wind and wind.

Mr. Hill (Prince George—Peace River): Madam Speaker, I will leave it up to the audience watching at home tonight on their televisions to decide who is full of wind and wind and wind after that outburst by the hon. member.

I would say that it is whimsical on the part of our government. Certainly Mr. Clinton is not. He is sending his troops over there with the best equipment in the world. What are we sending our troops with?

We have been raising these concerns on this side of the House for two years. The Reform Party has raised these issues time and time again about inadequately equipping our troops. We ask the same questions today. The hon. member was just asked that question and he evaded the answer again. We are asking because

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we are concerned about the safety of our troops, and we get absolute nonsense. I for one am sick and tired of it.

Mr. Leon E. Benoit (Vegreville, Ref.): Madam Speaker, today we are debating the merits of sending our troops back to Bosnia, not for another peacekeeping mission but for what can be called a peace enforcement mission. Should Canada send troops as part of a NATO mission in an attempt to stabilize the area referred to as the former Yugoslavia? That is the question.

Our first thought should be of the peacekeepers. All too often they become faceless, nameless individuals who are sent overseas to keep a fragile peace. Well they are not faceless and nameless people to me. I have met several of the peacekeepers and many of their families. I know the role of peacekeeper takes its toll on the individuals and their families. The amount of stress is something I can only imagine.

I admire the men and women who have represented Canada in peacekeeping missions and sometimes in peacemaking missions. We have some of the best peacekeepers in the world. They have done a superb job in the face of adversity. They have been forced to make do with less than adequate equipment. Canadian troops have a long tradition of improvising and making do with outdated and unsuitable equipment for the job that must be done. Our troops carry out this tradition with a considerable and justifiable pride. They successfully refit, modify and repair equipment others would abandon in despair. While our personnel take pride in making do with unsuitable equipment, it is also a source of stress and frustration for the peacekeepers and their families. Our troops should not be sent into tense situations like this without the best equipment available.

Our troops are also forced to endure less than adequate leadership at the top. The leadership crisis in DND negatively affects troops. The Somalia affair has clearly exposed this. I do not believe we should be deploying more troops until the leadership crisis is sorted out.

In addition, memos from DND tell us of a morale crisis. The memos explain that the burden of rapid and prolonged deployment is one of the primary causes. The succession of deployment of our military personnel has led to their exhaustion. Some soldiers have seen three or four tours of duty in Croatia or Bosnia. This contributes to low morale of forces and their families. Stress levels are at an all time high, resulting in family breakdowns, alcohol consumption, untimely depression, attempted suicide and even suicide.

• (2020)

Recommendations have been made to balance the tours with adequate time at home. Yet the government fails to take into account the well-being of Canadian troops when the interna-

tional peacekeeping agreements are made. The troops deserve better treatment from this government and from the upper layers of leadership within the forces.

It is important to ask why this is merely a take note debate. This mission to Bosnia involves Canadian lives. Why has the government refused to bring this issue before the House for a free vote? I do not mean a free vote as the Prime Minister envisions a free vote. The Prime Minister's idea of a free vote is to instruct Liberal MPs to vote any way they wish as long as they vote exactly the way he tells them to vote. I do not see that as a free vote, not in my interpretation of a free vote. Why not have a free vote where members vote according to the majority view of their constituents?

This debate is a sham, because I am sure the decision of whether or not to deploy troops has already been made. Therefore, expressing my misgivings or support for this venture is of little importance to this government. In fact our comments will have little or no impact on this mission and whether it goes ahead. However, I hope we can influence future troop deployments for peacekeeping or peace enforcement missions.

Regarding this mission, the timeframe for the NATO involvement has been given as 12 months. Following the expiry of the 12 months, NATO intends to withdraw from the area and transfer authority to another body. There are some obvious questions from this vague description of what might or will happen. What happens after 12 months? If authority is to be transferred to another body after 12 months, what body? If that body is not capable of doing the job, are the NATO troops to be kept there indefinitely?

The Prime Minister has said that if we truly want peace we should be prepared to stay as long as necessary. Is he willing to keep troops in Bosnia after the 12-month mandate? The answer seems to be yes. Then for how long?

We also know very little about the mission itself. How much will the mission cost? How many troops will be deployed? What roles are Canadians expected to fill? We do not know the answers to these questions because the government will not give us the information. How are we supposed to debate this issue without all the facts?

As far as the costs are concerned, the department has stated in a briefing that the incremental costs could be somewhere between \$2 million and \$75 million. That is unbelievable. A normal estimate may allow 10 per cent or 15 per cent of a range in giving the estimate. This Liberal estimate has a range of 3,800 per cent. That is the Liberal range. This figure, in addition to being vague, only refers to the defence department costs. What about incremental costs incurred by the Department of Foreign Affairs? Is there a ceiling to the cost? If so, what is the ceiling?

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The fact that we know very little about the details of this mission concerns me. Indeed, the media seem to know more than parliamentarians, as shown by the leaked document from the U.S. that indicates Canada's expected troop commitment lies between 1,200 and 1,500 troops. Why has the government chosen to keep information from parliamentarians and Canadians? Again it shows this debate is a complete sham.

• (2025)

Many of the problems I have outlined in my speech could be alleviated if our military had a clear mandate. First we need to define Canada's military role, and it should be up to Canadians to decide what this role should be. After appropriate debate through public meetings and through the media, Canadians should decide what functions they want DND to carry out. Then the decisions on how these functions can be performed should be made by the appropriate people within the forces with as little political interference as possible. If the military is splintered by playing too many roles, this diminishes the effectiveness with which it can accomplish its tasks.

I believe Canadians, if given all the facts, could and should make the decision as to what the mandate of our military should be. For example, should the military play a defensive role; that is, should it defend Canada against invasion? Should the military play a peacekeeping role? Should the number of military reserves be increased? Should it include a search and rescue function? Should it be used in situations of civil unrest—for example, native standoffs, organized crime revolts, or unilateral declaration of independence from one part of the country and possible disruptions resulting from such a secession?

We know the first option is not the most practical because we do not have the troops or the money to perform that role. Canada has come to depend on the United States and perhaps NATO for protection against invasion.

Whatever role Canadians decide they want our forces to play, two things are clear: our troops deserve the best training they can get, and our troops deserve to be the best equipped for the job they are to do.

In conclusion, we cannot afford to make decisions affecting Canadians' lives by the seat of our pants. I cannot support this deployment, given all the questions, the lack of information and the lack of answers.

The government is playing fast and loose with the facts. These facts affect Canadian peacekeepers and their lives. Reform refuses to—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): I am sorry, your time has expired.

Mr. John Maloney (Erie, Lib.): Madam Speaker, peacekeeping is one of the strongest and most enduring traditions of Canada's foreign and defence policy. Canada is justifiably proud of its distinctive record in preserving world peace and fostering global security. In fact we are the only country that can claim to have participated in almost every peacekeeping mission organized under auspices of the United Nations.

Canada's peacekeeping commitments command the respect and admiration of the world community, a commitment that we parliamentarians are examining once again under the issue of a renewed participation in the peacekeeping force in Bosnia, as we should and as is our responsibility.

Canada has taken a leading role in the efforts to bring about a peaceful end to the conflict in the Balkans. Canada was among the first countries to call for a concerted international action and Canadian forces have served with distinction since 1991. Let us not ignore that their participation was at considerable cost to Canada. Indeed, 10 Canadians were killed on this assignment. Let us examine this request for a further commitment very carefully.

Incredibly, the warring factions in Bosnia made a peace agreement a few short weeks ago. Requests for assistance to provide a stable forum for this peace initiative to mature and grow have been made. Our values of peace, freedom and democracy and our aversion to intolerance, terrorism and destruction cry out for our participation. Canadians do not simply stand for these ideals; they act on them and sacrifice for them.

Fifty years have elapsed since the end of the second world war, the war to end all wars. What have we learned? I wonder.

• (2030)

Over the last four years unthinkable horrors we thought were banished forever have been seared into our minds once again: the degradation of skeletal prisoners caged behind barbed wire fences; senseless murders of defenceless women and children; cowardly killings of men and boys in mass graves; ethnic cleansing; sickening destruction and obliteration of homes, of neighbourhoods, of entire communities where playgrounds and marketplaces became war zones; endless lines of refugees stumbling in misery and despair. The picture is not pleasant.

Our veterans of two world wars fought and too many gave their lives to guard against such atrocities. Can we now do nothing less?

The Muslims, Croats and Serbs have miraculously hammered out a peace settlement to put down their arms, to seek out and prosecute war criminals, to protect human rights, to build for the future peace and democracy.

They have asked for assistance, for our confidence and support to implement the Dayton peace agreement. Should we

participate in peacekeeping forces that will facilitate their efforts? The only conceivable response is yes.

Canada was a founding member of and a continuing major contributor to NATO. When a situation becomes difficult Canadians do not renege on their responsibilities. Canadians do not turn their backs on their allies. Canadians stand up and are counted.

Canadian forces are familiar with the geographical terrain of Bosnia. They know the people, their culture and their differences. Canadian forces are well trained and competent. They are not only well suited, they are ideally suited for this deployment.

It is also interesting to note that to date 19 non-NATO countries including Russia have also indicated a willingness to participate. These countries share our goals. We must also share their burden. These countries realize that peace and stability in Europe are essential for world security.

Bosnia lies nestled in the middle of a diverse European continent, in close proximity to some of the fragile democracies of the former iron curtain countries. Stability must come to this region to ensure the flames of war and all the devastation they bring do not lick beyond the Bosnian border. Let us not forget the spark from the Balkans that ignited the first world war. Let us not forget this lesson from history. We have seen Europe in flames. Never again.

The stability provided by the NATO presence will allow civilian agencies from around the world to commence programs of humanitarian relief and reconstruction, to provide food, shelter, clothing and medicine, to reconstruct roads, schools and hospitals, to reunite families, to heal the wounds of war, to allow the people of Bosnia to pull themselves from the past and to build for a future in peace.

There will be considerable cost and expenses associated with this military exercise; this in an era of necessary fiscal restraint and deficit reduction. Responsible Canadians are prepared to pay this price. They are aware of the quarter of a million men, women and children who have been shelled, shot and tortured to death and the campaigns of rape and ethnic cleansing. They are well aware of the price of failure of this peace accord.

Let there be no mistake, deployment of Canadian troops is not without risk and may very well involve casualties. Every effort will be made to minimize such risks but we must be prepared nonetheless.

One of the most difficult decisions the government has been called on to make is to place the volunteer men and women of our armed forces in situations of potential danger in far off lands when the values of our nation require it.

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I urge the government to join this partnership of peace. Let us stand and be counted in this period of crisis once again. Let us stand for peace and freedom. Very simply, it is the right thing to do.

Mr. Andrew Telegdi (Waterloo, Lib.): Madam Speaker, given the nature and the make-up of Canada, there are people living in Canada who come from all over the world. Any time there is strife somebody in Canada has ties to that locale. When there is strife and war there are Canadians who feel it very deeply. Perhaps that is one of the reasons why we have evolved to such an extent into a peacekeeping nation.

• (2035)

If we look at it in an historical context, over the last 50 years peacekeeping has emerged as one of the most important activities of the international community in promoting peace and stability. Peacekeepers have served in regions throughout the world laying the basis for peace and saving countless lives.

The classic peacekeeping role has been to help maintain a ceasefire or to prevent the outbreak or spread of hostilities so underlying disputes can be settled through negotiations. In this sense peacekeeping has been a practical device to assist peace-making.

Since the end of the cold war, however, the face of peacekeeping has undergone a remarkable transformation.

As the international environment has evolved over the last six or seven years, so too has peacekeeping. Witness, for example, the recent operations in Bosnia, Rwanda or Somalia. The dramatic changes are far from over and peacekeeping must continue to adapt to meet new challenges.

In tracking the evolution of peacekeeping over the last half century, it is critical that members of the House understand the full context of peacekeeping as they debate the possible deployment of Canadian forces personnel as part of a new mission to the former Yugoslavia.

I will briefly discuss some of the ways the international community and in particular Canada is responding to meet the new challenges of peacekeeping.

When international statesmen sat down to frame the charter of the United Nations in 1945, the harsh experiences of the second world war were still fresh in their minds. Peacekeeping began modestly. In the late 1940s the UN began deploying unarmed but clearly identified military personnel to observe peace agreements in some of the world's trouble spots.

Two of these early missions, the UN truce supervision organization in the Middle East and the UN military observer group in India and Pakistan, continue to this day.

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With the Suez crisis of 1956 peacekeeping moved beyond simple observing and took on a more ambitious role. Suez was the most serious crisis faced by the United Nations since the Korean war and called for an imaginative response.

Lester B. Pearson, Canada's secretary of state for external affairs at the time, argued the UN should not only establish ceasefire between the warring parties but it should also police it with military personnel and make arrangements for a political settlement.

UN members were initially unimpressed by Pearson's scheme, but his determination and skill ultimately paid off and the United Nations emergency force was born. For his efforts Pearson was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1957.

UNEF set the tone for most peacekeeping operations over the next 30 years. Peacekeeping forces, made up primarily of military personnel, supervised ceasefires, monitored troop withdrawals and provided a buffer between opposing local forces.

Some of the key peacekeeping principles, such as that the force be lightly armed, impartial and enjoy the consent of the warring parties, were also established in 1956.

Over the next three decades a select number of countries, including Canada, took the lead in peacekeeping. The great powers, because of ideological differences and colonial entanglements, kept a low profile.

Canadian peacekeepers served in many areas throughout the world, including the Congo, West New Guinea, Cyprus and the Golan Heights. Since 1947 more than 100,000 Canadians have participated in over 30 peacekeeping and related operations, a contribution which remains unmatched. Over 100 Canadians have lost their lives in the line of duty and many more have been wounded.

Looking at contemporary peacekeeping with the end of the cold war and the super power rivalry, we have seen a more active United Nations in the peacekeeping field. Between 1947 and 1988 the UN carried out 13 peacekeeping operations. In the last seven years alone there have been more than twenty.

The UN has also become more interventionist. The humanitarian impulse has on occasion challenged traditional notions of sovereignty. As a result the UN has become more involved in intra-state disputes and has grappled with human rights and humanitarian issues on a far greater scale than ever before. In short, modern peacekeeping operations demand a full range of military capabilities on the ground, in the air and at sea. Canada's own experience in the Balkans, Central America, the Middle East and Asia underscores this point.

• (2040)

In the former Yugoslavia Canadian ground troops have performed a wide range of humanitarian tasks. In Cambodia we currently have personnel on the ground serving with the Cambodian mine action centre, responsible for mine clearance operations.

At sea Canadian naval forces have participated in operations off the coast of Haiti and the former Yugoslavia, enforcing economic sanctions and arms embargoes. We have also had Canadian personnel involved in naval peacekeeping operations in Cambodia and Central America.

Modern operations sometimes take place in the absence of a viable agreement and without the consent of the warring parties. In some cases the warring parties to disputes have turned on UN forces. The result, as we have seen in Bosnia, is that our personnel have been exposed to considerable danger and have suffered casualties.

These experiences have reminded the Canadian government that fully trained soldiers are the best peacekeepers. They are equipped with the complete range of skills and level of professionalism needed to meet these new challenges.

At the same time, the government is aware that our personnel require specialized training. That is why they receive instruction in such areas as cultural sensitivity, international humanitarian law and dispute resolution. The government intends to enhance this type of training in the future.

In meeting the new challenges of peacekeeping, clearly peacekeeping in the 1990s has taken on a new look. If we are to meet the new security challenges of the next century we desperately need the UN and other international organizations to play a more effective role in resolving conflict.

Because of the scope and complexity of modern peacekeeping operations, the UN has had to call on regional organizations to play a greater role in conflict resolution. NATO's role in the proposed peace implementation force for Bosnia is an excellent example of how international organizations can work together.

The UN is the right instrument to confer legitimacy on an international peace operation, while the alliance is the organization best equipped to carry out a mission in Europe, especially one that may have an enforcement dimension to it.

As for the UN itself, reform can no longer be put off. Created in the 1940s, the organization must be equipped to handle the security challenges of the 1990s and beyond. The organization's record since the end of the cold war has been for the most part impressive. Missions in Namibia, El Salvador, Cambodia, Mozambique and Haiti have produced solid results.

However, setbacks in Africa and the Balkans, where many new concepts have been introduced, have raised concerns. Unfortunately many member states criticize the UN for all the world's current problems, which is hardly fair. Member states must stop shifting the blame and step forward to do their part.

Canada knows the UN has its share of problems but the government is determined to find solutions. Canada is in a unique position to help the UN. With our extensive experience and expertise in virtually all areas of peacekeeping, including many of the new concepts, we have much to offer.

Canada is helping strengthen UN peacekeeping in a variety of ways, from providing expert advice at headquarters in New York, to establishing the Lester B. Pearson International Peacekeeping Training Centre in Cornwallis, Nova Scotia.

In true Canadian fashion, we are putting forward practical and achievable proposals to help prepare the UN for the future. With the international environment becoming ever more complex, it is no surprise that peacekeeping has followed suit.

As new security threats continue to emerge, Canada and other members of the international community must not let up in their efforts to discover new and innovative approaches to peacekeeping.

Whatever the challenges, Canada's commitment to this useful conflict resolution tool should remain steadfast.

Mr. Jag Bhaduria (Markham—Whitchurch—Stouffville, Ind. Lib.): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to participate in the debate respecting the participation of Canadian forces in the peacekeeping mission in co-operation with other countries in the former Yugoslavia.

• (2045)

The peace agreement signed a few weeks ago brought a sigh of relief for all after the many years of bitter battle which had raged in that area of the world.

Canada has a long tradition of peacekeeping. Whenever the word peacekeeping is mentioned, Canada's name comes to the forefront. We have had experience in this area for almost 40 years.

Monitoring peace is a noble cause. It shows a willingness for fellow humans and governments to do something constructive to alleviate human suffering. It will bring stability to a region that has been torn up after many years of internal conflict and civil war. It is the first time in a spirit of co-operation, NATO forces along with the non-NATO forces, are participating in this peacekeeping effort.

It is not a military mission alone. It is a mission of hope for the people of the Balkans. It is a mission of ending misery for the people of Bosnia, Serbia and Croatia. It is a mission of ending

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ethnic cleansing which has cost the affected communities tens of thousands of innocent lives.

Actions speak louder than words. It is this principle that is guiding the government to share this collective responsibility of keeping peace in the former Yugoslavia.

My colleagues on this side of the House have mentioned lack of resources. That should not deter the government from taking firm action on this matter. It is our contribution in maintaining world peace.

I support the government's position to do its share of bringing peace to this central European region. A time period of 12 months for this peacekeeping initiative does not seem to be far fetched. There is speculation it could extend to more. We cannot work on speculation and other unreasonable suppositions.

As regard the competence and the ability of the Canadian defence forces, they are among the best in the world. As the saying goes, when the going gets tough, the tough get going. It will be a test of professionalism for our fine men and women of the Canadian forces once again under trying conditions. We cannot leave the question of keeping world peace to the regional countries and communities because the world has become a global community.

Events happening in one part of the world cannot be ignored as regional skirmishes not worthy of serious consideration by those who are not immediately affected by them either directly or indirectly like our country here.

World security is a collective responsibility of each and every member of the international community. It is more so for Canada because we are a respected and influential member of this community. I see no reason why we should take a back seat to any other country in bringing peace to the Balkan region by participating in this noble cause.

Finally, this is an important initiative that I am sure will have the support of all Canadians. We have to support this initiative without any hesitation.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to speak in this debate on peacekeeping. In case you had not noticed, this is the first time I rise in the House to speak in a debate on our armed forces. If I am not mistaken, it is the third such debate, and this is the first time I have decided to intervene.

I do so not as a member of the national defence committee or the foreign affairs committee but to pass on comments made by some of my constituents.

First of all, I want to congratulate all those who participated in the Dayton agreement and made it a success. I believe that all

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these people who came from far and near deserve to be congratulated by the whole world.

• (2050)

We also owe a vote of thanks to all the parties who signed the agreement. They showed they were at least willing to try to restore peace to a part of the world where it had disappeared and this only a few years ago.

[*English*]

Some friends were telling me that they had met people who came from the former Yugoslavia who had lived there prior to and during the war period. They had lived in a country that was as normal as one could find, perhaps not quite as wealthy as ours, but for a country that operated under the kind of regime it did, it was relatively prosperous. They had done rather well. They were living as we do, perhaps not as wealthily, as I said.

Virtually overnight the peace they had known was no longer there. The neighbours they had known as friends became their enemies. Families were broken up in the strife. All of a sudden people could no longer trust virtually anyone. People had reverted to that Hobbesian state of nature where it is every person for himself.

I suppose if it teaches us anything, it is the fragility of peace everywhere and that we should cherish peace if we happen to enjoy it at the present time, as we do. It has at least taught me that.

[*Translation*]

I also want to say that I am proud to be a Canadian and an heir to the legacy of Lester B. Pearson. As you know, I presented a motion in this House to have a statue erected in his honour. It is just next door to this building. It was erected a number of years ago, and I am pleased to have been the one to suggest this. I must say that every time, and especially recently, when I pass this statue of Mr. Pearson, I remember his particular contribution to peacekeeping throughout the world.

[*English*]

Some colleagues are perhaps a little more isolationist than others in this Chamber. I am not one of them. I happen to believe that we have an important role to play in the world. We do not live on a planet of our own. We share this planet with everyone else. It is time we remembered it. Some members across the way see it differently. They are indicating so by their heckling at the present time, which is their privilege.

I do not believe we are doing our job properly as MPs if we do not know members of Parliament from other countries, if we do not speak with them, if we do not find out what goes on in the world. Whether we realize it or not, whether we are by nature isolationists or not, the planet is shrinking all the time because

of communications, because of increased trade, because of all these reasons.

The problems of one country are the problems of the world, not just of that country. Even if they were problems of only that country, I still believe it would be our duty morally and otherwise to help where we could. However, they are not only the problems of those other countries, they are everyone's problems, particularly in the world in which we live.

I was here when we dealt with and voted on this issue when it involved the gulf war. Madam Speaker, you will remember that night. That night we all realized very suddenly how small the planet had become once those scud missiles left Iraq and were aimed at another country. In the space of a few minutes many members of the House became all too familiar with every spot on the globe where we were expecting a scud missile to land next. It did not take us long to learn the planet was smaller and that all of us in this world were closer to each other than we had previously thought. It is time we all remembered this.

[*Translation*]

This evening some members are saying: "We cannot vote for this kind of initiative; we cannot speak out in favour of this kind of initiative because we do not have enough information".

• (2055)

All of the parties were provided with documentation. The parliamentary secretary tells me that documentation was offered to all parties in this House. I trust that members of all parties have a little idea of what is going on in the world, what has happened in the past, what has happened in this war, and so on.

The members were indeed properly informed and I would add that those who do not have the information perhaps chose not to find out any more.

[*English*]

I would like to speak about our role as Canadians. Some people have said we should not go there because we have been there already. That is a rather unusual view. To me that means we have expertise. We have experience. We have been there and we know what we are doing.

Our military people are well trained. They are the best. Our military people, we know from previous roles we have had in that part of the world and elsewhere, are very qualified. They have done tremendous work. We have the expertise and the experience and we are highly respected. Yes, we should be there.

I have constituents who have been to the former Yugoslavia, either in Croatia or in Bosnia. Recently there was a meeting of young people in my riding and a young man came to address the meeting. He is a soldier who has just returned from Bosnia. His job was to deactivate land mines. He brought some material with him, along with his blue cap and blue beret which he wears for more formal occasions. He spoke about the job he did in Bosnia.

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It did not take long before hands rose to ask the soldier whether he would go back. He said yes. They asked him why. He said he thought they made a big difference and because they saved lives.

There was a time not that many months ago when Canadian soldiers were experiencing great difficulty in that part of the world. Canadian soldiers and soldiers from other countries were either being held as hostages or were being otherwise threatened. That was the time when all of us in the House should have supported those soldiers. We should have been united.

[*Translation*]

And what did some of the hon. members have to say? While some of our Canadian troops were being held hostage, they were telling us that it was time to announce our withdrawal from Yugoslavia.

[*English*]

That was not the Canadian way and we did not do it. That was not the right way and we did not do it. As far as I am concerned

we do have a role to play and we should be contributing as Canadians. I believe our military would support that. I believe the Canadian population would support it. I believe it is the right thing for us to do. Let us hope, contribute and pray that peace in the former Yugoslavia will last for a long time.

Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River, Ref.): Madam Speaker, I cannot let this opportunity go by without mentioning that the Reform Party is not isolationist.

The hon. member referred to the gulf war. The gulf war proved how poorly equipped our Canadian forces are. That has been our main concern in this debate all day long.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): It being nine o'clock, pursuant to an order made earlier today, the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 9 p.m.).

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