



CANADA

# House of Commons Debates

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OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

**Tuesday, April 27, 1999**

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**Speaker: The Honourable Gilbert Parent**

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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, April 27, 1999

The House met at 10 a.m.

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*Prayers*

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## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1000)

[*Translation*]

### GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

**Mr. Peter Adams (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 15 petitions.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

### PETITIONS

#### CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

**Mr. Eric Lowther (Calgary Centre, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present to the House today a petition from Canadians right across the country. This is the single largest petition received by this House during the 36th parliament. The member for Scarborough Southwest and I received these petitions this morning.

These petitions relate directly to the call by Canadians right across this country to take all measures necessary to ensure that the possession of child pornography remains a serious criminal offence and that federal police forces be directed to give priority to enforcing this law for the protection of children.

• (1005)

In presenting this petition I will close by reading the prayer that these petitioners are putting forward today. Your petitioners pray that parliament take all measures necessary to ensure that possession of child pornography remains a serious criminal offence and

that the federal police forces be directed to give priority to enforcing this law for the protection of children.

#### HUMAN RIGHTS

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition signed by a number of Canadians, including from my own riding of Mississauga South on the subject matter of human rights.

The petitioners would like to draw to the attention of the House that human rights abuses continue to be rampant around the world, including in countries such as Indonesia and in Kosovo. The petitioners also acknowledge that Canada continues to be recognized internationally as a champion of internationally recognized human rights.

The petitioners therefore call upon parliament to continue to speak out against human rights abuses and also to seek to bring to justice those responsible for such abuses.

#### NUCLEAR TESTING

**Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present a petition which is signed by residents of British Columbia, including from my own constituency of Burnaby—Douglas, as well as residents of Halifax, Nova Scotia on the other coast.

This is a petition opposing the presence of nuclear powered and nuclear armed vessels in the Strait of Georgia. The petitioners note that the agreement allowing the U.S. use of the Canadian Forces Maritime Experimental and Test Ranges, CF METR, in Nanoose Bay expired in June 1996, that the cold war is over and that this is a cold war facility, that this nuclear emergency response plan acknowledges the potential for a nuclear emergency at CF METR and that CF METR occupies land and water that are part of the sovereign claims of the Nanoose first nation.

They call therefore for cancellation of the CF METR agreement with the U.S. and an immediate ban on all nuclear powered and or nuclear weapons capable vessels from B.C. waters and harbours. They also ask that resolving the land claims of the Nanoose first nation be a priority issue and that CF METR be converted to peaceful uses.

*Routine proceedings*

[Translation]

## HOUSING IN NUNAVIK

**Mr. Guy St-Julien (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I would like to table a petition from the Inuit community of Quaqtqaq, in Nunavik.

The petitioners state that, at the present time, there are 16 to 20 people in three bedroom dwellings. The Inuit find the housing conditions in Nunavik extremely distressing. They consider the situation totally intolerable. It contributes to the high incidence of tuberculosis, infectious diseases and social problems.

The federal government must assume its obligations under the James Bay and Northern Quebec agreement as far as housing in Nunavik is concerned.

[English]

## RIGHTS OF GRANDPARENTS

**Mr. Jack Ramsay (Crowfoot, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order No. 36, I am pleased to present two petitions to the House today.

First, over 200 petitioners appeal to the House to amend the Divorce Act and protect the access and custody rights of grandparents who are in danger of being denied their grandchildren because of divorce.

## TAXATION

**Mr. Jack Ramsay (Crowfoot, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, in addition, I present today the concerns of a number of my Crowfoot constituents who petition parliament to reduce all taxation by at least 20% and abolish the GST.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

## QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

**Mr. Peter Adams (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the following questions will be answered today: Questions Nos. 219, 220 and 223.

[Text]

Question No. 219—**Mr. Rick Borotsik:**

What is the total estimated financial cost of the Canadian Wheat Board's 49 public forum meetings that are currently being held on Justice Willard Estey's grain handling and transportation review recommendations?

**Hon. Ralph E. Goodale (Minister of Natural Resources and Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, Lib.):** A total of 61 meetings were held across the prairies to provide an

opportunity for the Canadian Wheat Board to consult with farmers on grain transportation issues. The total costs of holding these meetings have not been finalized. Expenses for hall rentals and advertising will amount to about \$40,000, and there will be additional costs related to travel.

Question No. 220—**Mr. Rick Borotsik:**

What is the monetary compensation each individual Canadian Wheat Board permit book holder will receive from the level of service complaint settlement with both CN and CP railway after accounting for legal costs incurred by the Canadian Wheat Board?

**Hon. Ralph E. Goodale (Minister of Natural Resources and Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, Lib.):** The proceeds from the Canadian National, CN, settlement were distributed through the Canadian Wheat Board, CWB, accounts. The total costs of bringing the complaint was \$2.7 million. A portion of this was legal fees. The settlement also included rate related benefits accruing to farmers in 1997-1998 and for the life of the agreement. Due to the confidential nature of the agreement, the value of the CN settlement was not publicly disclosed. The amount per permit book will vary depending on participation in the pool accounts.

The Canadian Pacific, CP, settlement is valued at \$15 million. The proceeds will be paid to the CWB in 1999 and 2000 and then distributed to farmers through the pool accounts. The legal fees for the court case with CP were taken into account in arriving at the settlement amount. The amount per permit book will vary depending on participation in the pool accounts.

Question No. 223—**Mr. Paul Forseth:**

For each of the years 1994 through 1998, could the Department of Justice provide exact numbers of how many divorces in Canada were handled without the intervention of the courts?

**Ms. Eleni Bakopanos (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** The Department of Justice's central registry of divorce proceedings has existed since the implementation of the Divorce Act in 1968. This registry was set up as a mechanism to detect and to inform courts and the parties of two divorce applications in different provinces with respect to the same couple.

This registry will ensure a court's jurisdiction in deciding on divorce cases as contained in subsections 3(2) and 3(3) of the Divorce Act.

The records of the registry indicate that the following number of divorces were granted without hearing by the court, by the calendar year are: 1994, 66,197; 1995, 66,200; 1996, 58,405; 1997, 56,258; and 1998, 57,335.

[Translation]

**Mr. Peter Adams:** Mr. Speaker, I ask that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

• (1010)

[*English*]

### SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY—KOSOVO

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP)** moved:

That this House calls on the government to intensify and accelerate efforts to find a diplomatic solution to the crisis in Kosovo through the involvement of Russia and the United Nations, and to urge NATO not to take actions that expand the conflict and stand in the way of a diplomatic solution.

She said: Madam Speaker, in launching this debate this morning, I would like to explain why the New Democratic Party made the decision to use its opposition day, one of approximately three opposition days in the course of a year, to introduce this motion on Kosovo.

In the few minutes that are available to me, because I will be dividing my time with my colleague from Halifax West, the NDP defence critic, I want to say what this resolution means in relation to the critical point, the critical juncture we have reached in the desperate search for a speedy, peaceful diplomatic solution to the horrifying humanitarian crisis in Kosovo.

Since the Kosovo crisis began in March 1998, just one year ago, 700,000 to 800,000 Kosovars have been forced out of their homeland. Another 400,000, perhaps more than that, have been displaced within Kosovo. Massive damage has been done to the civilian infrastructure of Yugoslavia by the some 3,000 sorties flown by the NATO strike aircraft.

Canadians want to know, and they want to know now, that their government is doing everything humanly possible to bring the hostilities to an end, to bring an end to the atrocities being committed by the Yugoslavian government under Milosevic and to the military aggression. They want to be assured that the Kosovar Albanians are going to be able to return safely to live in their homeland in peace and comfort and security.

That is the goal. That is the objective that supposedly drew Canada into this conflict. It must remain our single-minded objective in the days ahead.

Frankly, we in the New Democratic Party along with a great many other Canadians are gravely disappointed with both the scope and the pace of the diplomatic efforts pursued by the Canadian government to date. Instead of bold and creative diplomacy, we

### *Supply*

have had boosterism, we have had followership for U.S. policies and for NATO tactics.

Lester Pearson would have used Canada's historic tradition and role as peace broker to seek a consensus for peaceful solutions. He would have done so even at the risk of offending great powers. Instead our Prime Minister has toed the NATO line and danced on cue. The past few weeks have been littered with missed opportunities where Canada could have exercised independently its influence to promote promising diplomatic initiatives, but it has not done so.

Today is not the day to dwell on failures, to dwell on omissions, to dwell on missed opportunities. Rather, it is the time, and this is the purpose today of this motion and this debate, to focus single-mindedly on what it is that Canada can now do, what it is that Canada must now do to provide leadership, to play a key role in bringing us to that diplomatic peaceful resolution of the Kosovo crisis.

[*Translation*]

Now, diplomacy needs to be given a helping hand. That is the objective of this motion, the objective of this debate. We must concentrate our efforts on what Canada can do, on the leadership Canada must show in working toward a diplomatic solution.

[*English*]

There is no question that there is a diplomatic window, a window that is open just so wide. It is not a big opportunity, it is not a guaranteed path, but it is an opening. It is opening because there have been countries that have taken initiatives. Italy, Germany, Russia and the United Nations have stepped forward. Heaven knows, we desperately need the involvement of the United Nations.

• (1015)

It is ironic that for months Canada has celebrated the fact that it has gained a temporary seat on the security council of the United Nations. Yet at the very first opportunity that it might have used that seat to further the cause of peace, Canada opted out. It said that one could not do anything with the security council. However, the potential for using that avenue still exists and we must use it. It is absolutely imperative that we get this issue back into the United Nations arena where it belongs.

In the last few days and over the last week there have been some promising developments. Early in the conflict the New Democratic Party pushed hard for Canada to take a leadership role in persuading NATO to accept the fact that only a genuinely international peacekeeping force would be acceptable in Yugoslavia and that NATO had to abandon its position that only a NATO dominated force would be acceptable to it as a condition for peace. Today NATO has finally moved to that position.

Early in the conflict it was clear that Milosevic was adamant that there be no international presence in Kosovo. Today he appears to

*Supply*

have accepted that there not only must be an international presence, but that there needs to be international troops to ensure the safety and the security of Albanian Kosovars returning home or remaining in their homes.

Early in the conflict the New Democratic Party began urging that Canada persuade NATO to commit to a position that it would stop the bombing immediately if Milosevic would stop the atrocities and come to the table. We are not quite there yet, but we are getting there. We now have Russia taking diplomatic initiatives. There are signs of cracks in the Yugoslavian resolve to keep the atrocities going. There is a courageous deputy prime minister in Yugoslavia who is acknowledging that there must be some movement by Yugoslavia.

Now is the time for Canada to play a bold and decisive role in ensuring that we escalate, that we absolutely accelerate and intensify our search for diplomatic solutions and, conversely, that we do absolutely nothing to escalate the military action in Kosovo.

The government has finally recognized that the participation of Russia is key. Everybody who is following the situation in Kosovo knows that the participation of Russia in helping to find that diplomatic peaceful solution is key. What this means, if this government wants to be taken seriously as a peacekeeper in this country and around the world, is that this country must absolutely provide leadership in persuading NATO to abandon the madness of introducing an oil embargo and creating the spectre of military and naval blockades that would without a doubt preclude any possibility of Russia participating in finding a solution.

It is a time when we need the Government of Canada to show leadership and courage. This is not a time to expand the conflict in the air, at sea or on land. Canada must play no part in the ill-conceived naval blockade that can only serve to inflame tensions with the Russians and the Yugoslavs.

Finally, we ought to insist that Canada not send the additional CF-18 fighter planes which the government committed Canada to do. This is essential to indicate that we are serious about recognizing that any escalation of military effort is going to stand in the way of progress toward a diplomatic solution. This would give an important gesture, a concrete gesture that would underscore our commitment at this stage to secure a diplomatic solution to the Kosovo crisis. No less is required of us as Canadians and no less is required of us as citizens of the world.

• (1020)

**Mr. Gordon Earle (Halifax West, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak to this very, very important motion.

Last Thursday I had the occasion to visit Winnipeg to attend a funeral which was held for a very close relative who had passed away. Funerals have a way of bringing to light the stark reality of life and death, what it is all about to be here on earth and what we accomplish while we are here.

While I was in Winnipeg I also had the opportunity to visit with my son who is living there. My son is a fine young man. I am not saying that just because he is my son, he is a very fine young man. He is a very peace loving young man and I am very proud of him.

We were sitting in a restaurant having a bite to eat and he said "Dad, I got in a fight not too long ago". I was very surprised. I said "You got in a fight?" He said "Yeah. I was walking home and I saw this fellow who was drenched in blood. He was covered with blood. Another person, quite a bit larger, was standing over this person, beating him. I went over to talk to the aggressor. I said "This is not necessary. Calm down. Relax. Go home. It is all over".

He was trying to bring peace to the situation. Then he turned to the fellow who had been beaten up and he told him there was no point in continuing with this, that he should just go on home. The person who had been beaten up listened and decided to go. Then my son turned around to leave because he thought the issue was over. However, the aggressor, accompanied by two other people, all charged him. One came at him from one side and one came at him from the other side, and the three of them were holding him. He looked at them and said "So it takes three of you". He must have touched a chord with their kind of macho image. One fellow said "Let him go and we will fight one on one". The aggressor who had beaten up the other fellow went after my son. My son, with his Judo instincts from his training days when he was younger, very quickly took over, pinned this fellow to the ground and held him so that he could not move. The others were quite surprised. They said "Let him get up and we will go", and they backed off.

I was torn with conflicting opinions on the situation. I said to him "Jamie, I am proud of you. You did something that was good. You stepped in to try to help someone who was obviously in distress". However, I also said "It was kind of an interesting situation. You were lucky because who knows what could have happened. Those people could have had weapons and they could have attacked you while you were down holding this fellow". There were a lot of risks involved.

The bottom line was that he had to make a choice. He made a choice to take some risk to try to help someone who was in distress, who was at a disadvantage, who was being bruised and beaten.

I tell that story because it has similarities to the conflict in Kosovo, where people have had to make hard choices which involve risk. That was done at the beginning of this conflict. I do not think anyone questions the motive for becoming involved in the conflict. We were trying to assist people who were being taken advantage of and we were trying to end the suffering and the bloodshed. That was the motivation for becoming involved and for remaining involved in this conflict.

However, we are at a point now where we have to very seriously look at what this motion proposes, and that is intensifying and accelerating our efforts to find a diplomatic solution—and I emphasize the word diplomatic—to the crisis in Kosovo.

*Supply*

We know that in diplomacy there is always give and take on all sides. We cannot have it so that someone can say "This is exactly what I want and unless I get that I will not give anything in return". Diplomacy always involves a matter of give and take. People involved in the labour movement know this. At the negotiating table there is give and take.

• (1025 )

There are certain principles beyond which we do not go. For example, in this case we know that there are certain principles at stake; the principle of self-determination and so forth. We re-affirm our support for that basic principle. However, in negotiations and in diplomacy there is always give and take.

We are urging very strongly that the government take the lead in finding a diplomatic solution, involving Russia and the United Nations, to this very serious crisis. None of us can doubt the seriousness of this crisis. All we have to do is look at our televisions to see the images of the people who are suffering on both sides of the conflict. We see the suffering that is taking place and we know that the bottom line is that the conflict must end.

As I said earlier, when we attend a funeral it comes home very quickly that after all is said and done we all end up in that same position, lying in a coffin with the life gone from us. What people remember afterwards are the good deeds that we have done, the way we have influenced someone's life as we passed through.

I am reminded of a spiritual phrase which says that if I have helped somebody as I pass this way then my living would not be in vain. That is the goal which we must all strive toward, to not have our living be in vain and to try to do what we can to help people.

In this case we must help to bring about a diplomatic solution to this problem, to make sure that no action is taken which expands the conflict and makes it worse because we see that sort of thing happening quite often. It could very well have happened in the situation involving my son. He could very well have become involved in a situation where the action he took could have escalated things. Fortunately, he was able to take action to calm the situation and to use the appropriate amount of force necessary to bring an end to it.

It is because of our concern that nothing be done to expand or prolong this conflict that I move:

That the motion be amended by replacing the words "to take actions" with the following:

"to impose a naval blockade or take any other actions"

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jean-Paul Marchand (Québec East, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for his speech.

The member expressed his sympathy for the devastation going on in Kosovo. The NDP clearly thinks this crisis could be settled without violence. However, does the member not acknowledge that Mr. Milosevic has violated every possible human principle and value and is one of the worst tyrants imaginable?

• (1030)

Does he also not recognize that extremely strong measures are needed to fight this head of state, who has no respect for people and denies their rights and is emptying Kosovo? Do they not understand that strong measures such as ground troops are needed in Kosovo to repulse the armies?

So long as the strongest measures are not taken against Milosevic and the Serbian government, this unfortunate conflict will remain unresolved.

**Mr. Gordon Earle:** Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his comments.

[*English*]

The example of my son being involved in a conflict addresses that issue. He came upon a very serious and dangerous situation where the human rights of a person were being violated. He diplomatically used every effort to bring that particular conflict to a conclusion, to the point where one of the parties actually left the conflict through his persuasion.

Strength comes in many ways and through various means. There is nothing weak about diplomacy if it is used properly. There is nothing weak about exploring all those diplomatic avenues. I feel that we have not explored all of them to their fullest. There is no harm in doing that in order to bring an end to this very serious situation.

**Mr. Ted McWhinney (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the hon. member for Halifax West, and indeed the hon. member for Halifax, referred to diplomatic efforts.

I wonder if the hon. member would be in a position to advise us if he has considered the latest peace plan, the Simitis peace plan launched by the Prime Minister of Greece and communicated yesterday.

**Mr. Gordon Earle:** Madam Speaker, I must admit that I do not have all the details of that particular effort, but we certainly feel that any and all efforts should be considered. It is also very important to get as much information as possible on all these efforts.

Certainly from my own perspective I would be more than pleased to offer any assistance in terms of discussing any of these issues directly with our ministers who are involved in trying to

*Supply*

promote these plans. It is an important issue and all of us must contribute as much as possible to bring this kind of peace about.

**Mr. Ted White (North Vancouver, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, I listened to the member very closely. I wondered if he was receiving the sorts of letters from constituents that I am.

This is a letter from Ken Timewell in my riding, who writes "I beg you to work for a peaceful solution. The humanitarian solution being used by NATO is leaving behind too much destruction and too many dead". He goes on to encourage us to use every possible tool that we can to encourage some sort of diplomatic resolution.

Is the member receiving many letters like this, the way I certainly am at the moment?

**Mr. Gordon Earle:** Madam Speaker, yes, I am receiving, as I am sure many of our colleagues are, countless letters from people across Canada who are concerned about the situation and who are urging that peace be our main goal in this particular conflict.

People are expressing concern about the environmental damage that is taking place, the destruction of schools, the destruction of historic buildings and all those casualties that go along with the kind of conflict we see taking place. I am receiving lots of letter in that regard.

**Mr. Ted McWhinney (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the motion launched today reminds us that, with the end of the cold war, peace based on the status quo, which lasted for almost half a century, has ended and we are having an historical step backward, an historical anachronism, the revival of ethnic conflicts of the sort we had at the end of the 19th century and up to the war of 1914. It is one of the paradoxes that the cold war ends and a new period of ethnic strife which simply revives quarrels that existed before begins.

• (1035)

Getting to the substance of the debate, we are a member of a military alliance, for better or for worse, which was designed to end the cold war and which worked very well, so much so that after the Korean war there were no direct clashes between the two super-powers or their rival blocs. The alliance is there. The alliance called for this particular action. As a member of the alliance, we accepted the obligations.

However, that does not mean that our continuing foreign policy has been put to one side. The emphasis of Canada has always been on quiet diplomacy rather than headline diplomacy. It remains our effort to operate through international authority, through the United Nations to which all regional security organizations are subjected and legally subordinate.

The efforts are continuing. They are continuing through quiet diplomacy. We must move in the first instance through the security council while the possibility remains of getting unanimous action there. These efforts are being pursued. The foreign minister is going to Moscow later this week.

If the security council should be blocked, then the opportunity remains on the uniting for peace precedent, referred to in the House by the hon. member for Halifax West and others, to proceed through the general assembly. It is worth going that extra mile and going to Moscow. That step is being taken. The foreign minister on his return from Moscow will call in on Athens.

In the last 25 years, and more particularly in the last several years, Canada has had a special interest in promoting peaceful solutions in the Balkans. We have been in continuing negotiations with sometimes a breakthrough or a window of opportunity seeming to emerge and then, no doubt for temporary reasons, disappearing.

We have been negotiating an end to the Cyprus conflict on a basis of one country and perhaps two regional parliaments or otherwise within it. Nevertheless, we have been negotiating for a solution. It is in that context that the foreign minister will be discussing with the Greek prime minister the ambitious plan that Mr. Simitis has launched.

There are merits in the Simitis plan that were not present in the German or other plans. It takes note of what perhaps only a member of the Balkan community can really be fully aware of, that there are very rarely absolute rights and wrongs, and that the capacity to demonize an opposition are not as readily present in the Balkans at the end of the 20th century as it may have been in the 19th century or in some other period.

In January, Mr. Pangalos, the Greek foreign minister at the time, referred to an initiative that had been taken by the Balkan neighbour countries to solve the then crisis in Albania, the near civil war situation. It was solved by two Balkan countries, Greece and Italy, Italy being a neighbour to the Balkan countries, but regional countries going into Albania at the invitation of the Albanian government and bringing peace and a consensus under which that country now operates.

It is a precedent that can be expanded. If one operates within the United Nations there is nothing to prevent the United Nations from designating NATO as a peacekeeping force in Kosovo if and when hostilities have ceased, but it would be under the authority of the United Nations. There is nothing to prevent a designation of a larger group which would include the addition to NATO of Russia or other countries, but it could also be an all-Balkan force and limited, conceivably—and this suggestion has been made—to non-combatant countries in the present situation. There are members of the NATO alliance that have not been engaged in combatant activity.



*Supply*

I know the hon. members for Halifax and Halifax West would join with me in saying that these are valuable initiatives, that each new proposal should be considered and that they can be pursued through the United Nations.

• (1040)

Reference has been made to international law. At certain periods I wondered whether the legal advisor had been fully consulted. In my professional career, I have often cited the example of President Kennedy and the Cuban missile crisis when law and power operated together. When the president, as commander in chief, consulted the legal advisor and said "Can we do it", he had been advised to bomb the Russian missiles in Cuba. However, he rejected it on the advice of the legal advisor. The solution, as we know, was a masterpiece of peaceful diplomacy in resolving a dispute which eventually the adversaries on both sides accepted gracefully.

Reference has been made to the naval blockade. I would remind members that this is an example of policies in evolution. The advice under international law, which was given to President Kennedy in the Cuban missile crisis, is that a pacific blockade can only be used to interdict access of the country that is being blockaded. Third parties cannot be reached. President Kennedy accepted that advice.

If members have been following the statements of our Minister of National Defence which have been communicated to NATO, and the opinion that President Chirac has expressed, which is in line with the advice given to President Kennedy, in a pacific blockade we cannot exclude third countries by forceful means. This advice seems to have been taken.

This is an occasion in which a debate in the House has been presented constructively without the desire to make newspaper headlines. Let us solve this problem. Let us get on track and in line with Canadian initiatives through the United Nations. Let us go the extra mile, talk to the Russians and persuade our allies and associates that this is the right way to go. This process is in operation now. It has not been trumpeted in national headlines but it is going on.

I would like to assure the House that we are trying to work through the United Nations. We will explore all opportunities for peace. After a peaceful solution it should be international.

I will put to rest the fears of many Serbian Canadians. It is not part of Canadian foreign policy or internal policy to demonize any members of our community. It is very clear that reconstruction in the Balkans after the present operations must also include Yugoslavia. We do not want to create a power vacuum which was the situation in Germany after the hostilities ended in 1945. If we

create a vacuum any sort of dangerous forces move in. Peace and stability demand an inclusive and co-operative effort through the United Nations.

**Mr. Ted White (North Vancouver, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, I wonder if the member could respond to the types of letters I mentioned in my earlier intervention.

I have another letter from Ken Timewell who is very interested in this particular issue. Mr. Timewell does not support the aggressive military action by NATO nor does he see how it can possibly bring anything but added instability to the region. He goes on to say that it is a tragedy that the Serbian military has killed thousands of ethnic Albanians and forced hundreds of thousands more to flee their homes. He also finds it tragic how western governments have escalated the crisis with their support of NATO while shunning the United Nations, having multiplied the number of refugees and produced civilian casualties of their own. Mr. Timewell asks us how we can justify supporting the illegal bombing by NATO forces.

How would the hon. member respond to one of his constituents who wrote that sort of letter to him?

**Mr. Ted McWhinney:** Madam Speaker, I am receiving hundreds of well written and thoughtful letters from my constituents. There are deep, emotional wounds on all sides in this situation. People are writing and asking what to do.

• (1045)

If we go on to the positive side, I think all parties within parliament are trying to internationalize the effort, to revive the United Nations role and to make sure that the reconstruction which will follow, whether it is a completely diplomatic solution or something less than that, will be in a spirit of comprehension and understanding. I certainly think it is never a part of Canadian policy to devastate a defeated enemy, if it is a defeated enemy. There has to be a place for reconciliation. This will be done.

We also recognize that the refugee situation, which is what started it, was the prime argument for NATO's involvement and it remains as part of the solution.

**Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, the motion before us today is a good one. I commend the hon. member for Halifax for introducing it. Her motion forces us to consider a number of important issues that are now orbiting around the conflict in the southern Balkans.

The first aspect of her motion is a call for a "diplomatic solution to the crisis in Kosovo". I fully endorse this position and have done

*Supply*

so from the very beginning of this latest crisis in the federal republic of Yugoslavia. In the House on April 12 I stated that the only durable solution for this conflict was a negotiated one. I have heard nothing that has changed my mind on this point.

The civil war in Kosovo is a confusing mixture of historical, ethnic and current political problems. To understand what we are confronting we must move beyond the rhetoric that comes so easily to public figures.

The fighting today is not solely the result of Slobodan Milosevic's policies. However, for 10 years his regime has done nothing but inflame longstanding ethnic distrusts. Nor does the answer lie, in my opinion, in the endorsement of an independent Kosovo.

A resolution of the current fighting must try to address the very real concerns for the security and safety of all people, both Serbs and Albanian Kosovars, who have traditionally called Kosovo their home. A dictated settlement that appears to favour one side over the other will do nothing but sow the seeds of yet another war some time in the future.

No war is ever inevitable. We can easily encourage future wars if we try to impose a peace that one or the other side finds unacceptable. That should not be the legacy of the current intervention. I have always regarded the demand that Belgrade accept the Rambouillet peace plan as an initial step toward a more conclusive negotiated peace. The best solution to me seems to be the substantial autonomy of Kosovo within the federal republic of Yugoslavia, along with ironclad guarantees for ethnic minorities. That autonomy must be understood as not challenging in any way the sovereignty of Yugoslavia in Kosovo.

We must ensure that NATO does not fight to advance the most radical Kosovar agenda. We cannot support the creation of an independent and militant Kosovo, which would be the source of instability to its neighbours for many years in the future. On the contrary, NATO's actions must create a long term peaceful settlement.

I am not involved in making policy for resolving the conflict of Kosovo. That is the government's responsibility. However we must make clear that the sole purpose of the current air campaign is and must be to create the conditions for a negotiated settlement. The idea of a war for war's sake is pointless. We must therefore repeatedly ask the government to reassure the House and the Canadian people that our participation in military operations in Yugoslavia is consistent with the achievement of the goal of a negotiated peace.

I am not convinced that the government is terribly concerned about giving such assurances. The Prime Minister's comments last week that we would simply follow along with whatever NATO decided to do is extremely unsettling. It raises questions about whether we even have an independent foreign policy. His refusal to permit a free vote on this issue shows a lack of interest in involving parliament in the prosecution of this war.

• (1050)

The second aspect of the motion today concerns the role of Russia. Everyone in the House will agree that we cannot build a new European security system without the active participation of Russia.

It is true that Russia can no longer project its military power with the same effectiveness that it did during the cold war. It is true that Russia is dependent upon western economic aid and that Moscow recognizes this dependence. However the conditions that prevail today will not always exist. Russia is never as strong as it wants to be, but we must remember it is never as weak as it looks. We must not act today in a fashion that would undermine Russia's willingness to help preserve European stability in the future. However, to some degree that is what we have already done.

For the past five years Moscow openly opposed NATO enlargement. Nevertheless we enlarged the alliance. That was not a mistake, but we must recognize that Moscow viewed our decision with concern.

For the past year Moscow has consistently advised NATO against intervention in Kosovo. It argued that the situation is more complicated than some western leaders would have us believe. Nevertheless we have intervened and it is possible that the war might still escalate.

For its part Russia has given every indication that it wants a peaceful resolution of the conflict. President Yeltsin has publicly stated that Russia will not get involved. He has refused Belgrade's request for weapons. He has ignored the more radical demands by radical members of the Duma. He has made no effort to alter the status of the two Russian battalions now serving with SFOR in Bosnia.

Some members might believe that Russia is not really relevant to the quest for a solution in Kosovo. I believe exactly the opposite. As a result of NATO's actions, Russia is the only remaining great European power that Belgrade can trust to protect its interests. We must therefore work with Moscow as much as possible. We must listen to what it says about Kosovo and the Balkans, a region it knows better than any of the rest of us.

Yesterday the Russian foreign minister stated that he would not be a relay station to transmit new demands from either NATO or Belgrade. He said that Russia was very willing to foster dialogue and encourage negotiations. I think we should take him up on that offer. The Chernomyrdin mission suggests that President Milosevic might be prepared to negotiate. We should not let this opportunity pass. Indeed we should encourage the Russians in their efforts.

Listening to Belgrade does not mean that we have to accept what is said. Nor does it require that we make unacceptable compromises. So long as we do not abandon the basic moral and political objectives of this war, we should always be prepared to listen. In

*Supply*

this light I hope the foreign minister is successful when he travels to Moscow later this week.

The third aspect of the motion is to “urge NATO not to take actions to expand the conflict”. I think we can also agree with this sentiment. Indeed I feel certain that NATO would agree with that, from looking at what happened this past weekend. However the fear that NATO’s actions might expand the conflict is misplaced.

It is curious that the hon. member for Burnaby—Douglas, a colleague of the mover of the motion, was the very first member to advocate the commitment of ground troops. Indeed he did so both stridently and aggressively. A few weeks ago in committee he loudly demanded a ground invasion of Kosovo now. I am afraid that type of action would inevitably lead to an expansion of the conflict. In fact, it might radically change the nature and purpose of the war. Therefore we must be very careful in using such rhetoric or in moving in that direction.

I must add that I believe at this point that NATO’s decision to impose a naval blockade on Yugoslavia is ill timed and we do not have enough information about that mission. I do not understand the reasoning behind a decision that will almost certainly antagonize Moscow.

It is no secret that I have many concerns about this war. I raised many of them in the House on the day the hostilities commenced. I repeated many of those concerns on April 12 and have done so again today.

• (1055)

I believe that NATO’s use of force to stop the ethnic cleansing in Kosovo is a legitimate policy. I also believe, as I have made clear today, that we must continue the quest for a negotiated peace settlement. This is not a case of wanting it both ways. This is simply the reality of the international system.

Diplomacy must often be backed up by the threat of military force. I hope the foreign minister has learned his lesson. Soft spoken words in the ears of foreign leaders do not yield influence. In simple terms, soft power without hard power is intellectually bankrupt and politically worthless.

In conclusion, I reiterate my support for the motion before us. On another day I might have quibbled about some of the anti-NATO sentiments. However, we must rise above these disputes for the greater purpose of seeking a swift and successful conclusion to the current military operations under way.

I join the hon. member in urging the government to seek the assistance of Russia in order to fashion a negotiated settlement that is consistent with our moral values and regional interests.

**Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I welcome the support of the member for Red Deer for the

motion, but I did not want to let this opportunity pass without correcting one very grave misrepresentation by the hon. member during the course of his comments this morning.

The hon. member indicated that I as a spokesperson for the New Democratic Party had called at a meeting of the foreign affairs committee on March 31 for immediate use of ground troops in Kosovo.

The hon. member knows that is absolute nonsense. In fact, the hon. member will be aware of the fact that the position taken by the New Democratic Party then is the position that we take today and that my leader enunciated very clearly today. We must use every possible opportunity to arrive at a negotiated peaceful solution to this tragic conflict. We must accelerate our efforts to do so within the United Nations, within the OSCE and elsewhere.

Of course it will be necessary for there to be a peacekeeping force on the ground with the ability to protect Kosovar Albanians who are returning to their villages, to their homes.

We indicated as well that should diplomatic efforts fail, and I emphasize that, should the kinds of efforts that have been suggested including the importance of the Russian peace proposal fail, should the ethnic cleansing and the atrocities on the ground continue, then and only then there is a possibility we might look at some form of safe haven.

I remind the member that was the position taken then but that our fundamental objective is to stop the bombing, to stop the atrocities on the ground, to get back to the negotiating table under the auspices of the United Nations, to arrive at a diplomatic solution and to arrive at a solution that will allow the fundamental objective to be achieved, which is the return of Kosovar Albanians to their homes, to their villages, to be able to live in dignity, peace and security.

**Mr. Bob Mills:** Madam Speaker, certainly I think all of us in committee and in the House have been disgusted, upset and have wanted to respond to what we have seen on television and have read in our newspapers about ethnic cleansing.

The initial response of let us bomb them to the negotiating table was the correct one. I believe all five parties supported it and said let us get on with it as soon as possible.

However, as that sunk in and as we thought about what it would be like to go to war in the former Yugoslavia, whether we look at the history from the Ottoman days or whether we talk about the second world war and what happened or the first world war, all of us realize now just how great it was.

Canada has not sent troops into a war for 46 years. That is a long time. None of us here were part of those decisions. Maybe a few members were who have been here a long time, but most of us were not. As it sunk in I believe we realized just how we needed to

*Supply*

examine the whole thing and how many questions we needed to ask.

We had to know about the mandate. We had to know about an exit strategy. We had to know about how many people we might lose and all those things.

• (1100)

I have felt that way from the beginning. I think the member has heard me speak about that. I thank him for his intervention. I felt he was strongly supporting and urging an end to ethnic cleansing by using ground troops, by air or by whatever it took. That is what I heard.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jean-Paul Marchand (Québec East, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I would like to propose to my colleague the position of the Bloc Québécois, which has always favoured a diplomatic solution in order to protect the Kosovars and to do all within our power to enable the Kosovars to return home as soon as possible.

Does he not think that, in view of the way it started, with Mr. Milosevic trying to get rid the Kosovar people, he will continue so long as there are diplomatic relations? In other words, does he not think that diplomacy encourages Mr. Milosevic in his efforts at ethnic cleansing?

[*English*]

**Mr. Bob Mills:** Madam Speaker, all of us are disgusted by the ethnic cleansing which has gone on. If we look at the history of that area, we will find that ethnic cleansing has been going on for an awful long time by one group or another.

I do not believe it is fair to demonize just one side in this case. There are many issues here and we do not have time to discuss all of them. We need to find out how to get those sides together. We have the same aims as everybody else, to get the Kosovars back to Kosovo and find some way of making that work.

Ethnic cleansing is not acceptable, but as I mentioned in a speech a few weeks ago, it is going on in 21 countries as far as I can determine.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Daniel Turp (Beauharnois—Salaberry, BQ):** Madam Speaker, first I must tell our NDP colleagues how much the Bloc Québécois appreciates this further opportunity they are giving the House to debate and discuss the Kosovo issue.

This House will not have too many opportunities to voice its opinion, allowing each party to give its point of view on this serious crisis, which is not only threatening peace and security in the Balkans, but is also threatening or could threaten even more international peace and security.

The Bloc Québécois and the New Democratic Party are of a same mind with regard to favouring a diplomatic approach, a diplomatic solution to the crisis which has been going on for too long in Kosovo and in this particularly hard hit area of the Balkans.

We should all want to see this conflict settled through diplomatic means, especially as we as a country and member of the United Nations are committed to settle conflicts through diplomatic means.

I would like to read for the record one of the purposes of the United Nations, the organization the New Democratic Party is referring to in today's motion. The first paragraph, article I of its charter states:

The purposes of the United Nations are:

1. To maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace, and to bring about by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace;

We should always keep in mind this important purpose, the fundamental goal of the United Nations, and its Charter, which should guide our collective actions in this area.

• (1105)

This is the reason why the Bloc Québécois must support this motion from the New Democratic Party. As the hon. member for Burnaby—Douglas often mentioned in the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and in this House, and as his leader pointed out, it is a diplomatic solution that will put an end to a conflict that has already cost too many lives, including civilian lives. Any war, including non-international armed conflicts, as the Minister of Foreign Affairs likes to point out, results in deaths, mostly among the civilian population.

The Bloc Québécois has always maintained that a diplomatic solution is to be favoured. We supported the negotiations and actions that took place within the contact group. We supported the Rambouillet negotiations. We asked this government on numerous occasions whether it was supportive of the will expressed by both sides to reach, through these negotiations, an agreement that would prevent the use of armed force.

We also insisted that the Government of Canada attach some importance to the peace plan proposed by the German Minister of Foreign Affairs, because for us, and for other parties and individuals, including many Quebecers and Canadians, the ultimate solution to achieve peace is a diplomatic solution.

Today, the Bloc Québécois is glad to see that efforts to negotiate a diplomatic solution are being stepped up. Today, American deputy secretary of state Strobe Talbott is negotiating with Russian

special envoy Mr. Chernomyrdin. These negotiations could pave the way to a diplomatic solution.

Members of the European Union and, in particular, representatives of the Federal Republic of Germany, who will be chairing the Union for the next six months, have also focused on a negotiated and diplomatic solution, an approach that has had our whole-hearted approval.

We are also fully aware of the important role that the Minister of Foreign Affairs could play in the discussions in which he will take part on Thursday with the Russian president's special envoy and his foreign affairs minister. We wish him all the best in this worthy endeavour. It deserves the support of this House. We believe that, coupled with the other negotiations taking place, it could culminate in a proposal that could be put before the UN security council, because that is the body where the issue of how to restore peace to Kosovo must again be debated.

The security council was always the forum where a solution to this international dispute should have been negotiated. It is unfortunate that the council had to be left out of the loop, and not consulted on important decisions regarding a peaceful resolution of the dispute in Kosovo.

In our view, the solution will lie in negotiations to bring about a settlement and give the Kosovars, who have suffered too much during this conflict, a say in their own future, which was what the Rambouillet agreement set out to do.

• (1110)

The Serbs and their representatives will see that a people's call for autonomy cannot be ignored, that these demands must be dealt with, and not be considered inappropriate.

This was the focus of the Rambouillet negotiations, and must be the focus of negotiations at this time as well.

Moreover, our party has always believed that the use of less peaceful means to reach a peaceful and negotiated solution ought not to be excluded. We have supported the air strikes, and continue to do so, for one reason and one alone, albeit a vital one. When it is a matter of putting an end to ethnic cleansing, of preventing genocide—and we may learn in the coming weeks that there was genocide in Kosovo, although we are not in a position to know that today—and of putting an end to such crimes against humanity, the use of force cannot be excluded.

Needless to say, this use of force is not the most appropriate means of settling differences, and I trust that all the negotiations currently under way will attain this much desired settlement.

I join with the hon. member for Burnaby—Douglas in supporting a motion focusing on this aspect and also inviting Russia to

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take part in an international military force to ensure peace in Kosovo.

I will close with a quote from Montesquieu. I like to quote great authors on peace, war and power. In *The Spirit of Laws*, Montesquieu speaks of power as “an eternal experiment, and one any man with power is tempted to abuse. Power will grow until such time as it is curbed. Even virtue needs limits. If power is not to be abused, the world must be so organized that power puts a stop to power”.

In this case, political power and persuasion must put a stop to Milosevic, and freedom must be restored to the Kosovars.

**Mr. Ted McWhinney (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the hon. member is well aware that the Minister of Foreign Affairs will go on a special mission to Moscow toward the end of the week and that he will later meet with the Prime Minister of Greece. The government wants the circle of concerned parties to be widened. That circle must definitely go beyond NATO.

I wonder if the hon. member had an opportunity to look at the Simitis plan, proposed yesterday by the Prime Minister of Greece. That proposal has the benefit of emphasizing the role of Kosovo's neighbouring countries. We all remember the Greek and Italian mission to Albania, last year.

Will the hon. member give his support and the support of his party to the Simitis plan?

**Mr. Daniel Turp:** Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Vancouver Quadra for his question.

I notice that several peace plans are pointing in the same direction. Under these proposals, the UN would play a determining role in Kosovo, during the post-crisis period. Our party supports the idea that the UN should be at the core of the solution to this crisis and that we should call on UN representatives when the time comes to establish a military force.

• (1115)

Also, we must not rule out the possibility of NATO member countries, and people from these countries, taking part in a UN force, or in a joint force, unless the objections raised by Russia are critical to the point that such a force must absolutely be under the control of the United Nations.

Russia must be involved in the decision that will be made. It must, because the Serbian forces and President Milosevic will have no choice but to accept a force in which Russia has agreed to take part.

But the solution to this conflict truly lies in the UN getting involved again, in a decision being made by the security council, and in a force that will act during a set period to put an end to ethnic cleansing, allow Kosovars to return to Kosovo, and ensure that the Balkans can again find peace.

*Supply*

There is also a German peace proposal to restore stability in the Balkans that deserves the serious consideration and the support of all the states.

**Mr. André Bachand (Richmond—Arthabaska, PC):** Madam Speaker, we do not have a lot of time, but I would like to thank the New Democratic Party for allowing this House, once again, to continue its debate on the events in Kosovo. Once again, this is an opposition initiative.

This motion and the proposed amendment make significant reference to the blockade or embargo that NATO and the European countries have decided to decree. The New Democrats do not support a blockade or embargo. In essence, the reason is to avoid upsetting or angering Russia. Russia has been cropping up in discussions since the start of this conflict.

However, I would remind my New Democrat colleagues that we started bombing Yugoslavia and Kosovo without giving a whole lot of thought to Russia. Furthermore, I would point out that it was not an embargo or blockade that was proposed, but a check, control, at the borders, including those of Montenegro.

We read in this morning's paper, in statements by our own Minister of National Defence and a German general, that no ships will be stopped by force. Requests will be made to board ships delivering cargo to Yugoslavia, including oil.

They said in their statement that there would not be too much of a push. They are afraid of the reaction of the Russians. The Minister of National Defence went even further, saying that Russian oil exports to Yugoslavia would not be stopped.

There is a war of words. In addition to a real war, there is a war of words that, in my opinion, is really not credible. Why? Because, from the beginning, Yugoslavia was told that it would be bombed but no ground troops would be sent. Now, it is being told that there will be an embargo, but that no ships will be stopped and Russia will be allowed to continue exporting its oil.

There is a credibility problem in this war, no clear plan of action. All eyes are on Russia. Our minister is to hold meetings; it is worth mentioning and worthy of our appreciation. After this visit, Russia will probably put a resolution before the security council. The council will say that, in the event of a ceasefire—not peace, because negotiating peace is a long, drawn-out affair—in Kosovo and in Yugoslavia, Russia should lead a force under the UN. We will quickly see this in the security council in the days and weeks ahead.

And all to the good, if it will end the war. Increasingly, we are seeing cracks and divisions beginning to develop in the Yugoslavian bloc, just as they are developing in this House. We are starting to qualify our initial reactions, our initial statements, our initial press releases. Divisions are becoming apparent in Parliament.

• (1120)

It is clear that the House is divided, just as the Yugoslavian parliament is divided. The Yugoslav deputy prime minister—who may or may not be credible—is becoming open to the idea of a unilateral ceasefire, on condition that troops are withdrawn from Kosovo. There is no talk of peace. That will require negotiation, and a signed agreement. But at least there is talk of a ceasefire.

This is good news because President Milosevic has been called so many names, and accused of war crimes and of crimes against humanity. It was difficult, therefore, for NATO to find someone with whom it could eventually sign a peace accord. It would appear there is now a breach in the Serb bloc, which could lead to a peaceful settlement.

We are seeing the same thing here. During the first two weeks of fighting, opposition parties, especially the New Democratic Party and the Bloc Québécois, had rather harsh positions and were talking about genocide in Kosovo and deploying ground troops there. The NDP member corrected our Reform colleague but I too remember that we were talking rather tough. The media were reporting that several opposition parties were calling for the deployment of ground troops. Today the situation has changed. We are talking diplomacy. Of course it is important, we have been saying it all along.

But we should restrain NATO's eagerness. Let us not forget the war in Kosovo is being conducted under NATO's auspices. In the end what the amendment from the New Democratic Party is saying is that NATO should maintain its current position and not do more. What a nice message for Milosevic. It is as if we were saying to him "Don't worry, we will not deploy ground troops, we will not prevent you from buying oil or food". This is not the kind of message we ought to be sending. The initial message was loud and clear. Are we going to stick to it or not? If not, let us get out of there real quick.

I do not believe anything will come of this idea of a blockade or embargo, because at any rate right here in Canada, in Germany and elsewhere in the world people are saying it is not a real blockade, a real embargo.

We are now seeing Canada multiplying diplomatic initiatives, which is good. But what did Canada do before the war? On one of the occasions when the Minister of Foreign Affairs appeared before the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, I asked him what efforts and actions Canada had taken in the 9 to 12 months prior to this war. The minister is supposed to be providing us with that information. What action did Canada take to try to prevent this war? What efforts did it make on the diplomatic front?

At this time we are at war, and the diplomatic process is being stepped up, as indeed it should be. But what was done in the past? We do not know. What was Canada's role before the war? The government has kept very quiet so far. We are still waiting for the

*Supply*

documents. This is not very credible, unless we are given evidence to the contrary. We are still waiting for the information.

Much emphasis has been put on Russia, and Canada also wants to play an important role. Canada is an aggressor in Kosovo. It is, therefore, certain that a third party will have to step in, before an end to this conflict can be reached, hopefully.

Yesterday, the President of Libya was putting in his two cents worth. Canada can play an important diplomatic role, but not with the Serbs. This is impossible. We are one of the aggressors in Kosovo, so a third party needs to be called in, and that third party is Russia.

We also need to wonder what sort of ceasefire there will be, in the near future, or so I hope. What sort of peace treaty will there be? There are many differing opinions here in this House, as well as on the international scene. Will there be a protectorate? Will there be an accord similar to the Rambouillet accord? In the schedule appended to the Rambouillet agreement, it was set out that three years after its signing, the Kosovars would be asked about their future. Would they opt for independence, autonomy or a protectorate? The Serbs refused, because they consider Kosovo part of Yugoslavia, and they would never let it go. Autonomy within Yugoslavia is one thing. Independence, never.

• (1125)

The Rambouillet agreement contained an important element, which, rightly or wrongly, offended the Serbs, and which was the fact that three years later a referendum would be held and the Kosovars would decide their future. This may be a fine thing in the Canadian context, it is very democratic, but, in the Balkan context, it is another matter.

The whole picture needs reassessing. There is a lot of improvisation going on. Everyone recognizes that a tragedy is unfolding in Kosovo. As the conflict continues, peace plans are being proposed. Measures that are not really applicable are being advanced. There is talk of ground troops and then there is talk that there will not be any. There is a significant lack of planning.

We hope that things will be resolved very quickly. Here in Ottawa, today, the weather is fine, the sun is shining. In Kosovo and in Yugoslavia the roads, bridges, houses, water supply and electrical systems are all destroyed. If the war lasts another two or three months, what will happen to the 750,000 Kosovar refugees in Albania? Winter will come. Will they spend winter in little tents? The country is destroyed.

We need to find a peace agreement very soon. We must propose effective means and be credible in our proposals.

[*English*]

**Mr. Sarkis Assadourian (Brampton Centre, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I followed intently the comments made by the hon. member, who sits on the the foreign affairs committee with me.

Almost a decade ago the Berlin wall collapsed and the Warsaw treaty was no longer in force. NATO is now the only military alliance in Europe.

Let us think forward and assume that the Kosovo issue is resolved. Because the Warsaw pact is no longer in force to counter NATO and the UN, what kind of changes does the hon. member envision for NATO that would prevent its members from acting differently than they would have 10 years ago when the Warsaw pact was in place? Does he have any suggestions to make with respect to revamping NATO and the UN so that we can go forward into the 21st century with new institutions and without the cold war?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. André Bachand:** Madam Speaker, since we are in the middle of a conflict, we are not talking about revamping a system or an organization. In fact, there was not really any discussion of major changes at the Washington summit. Why? People are waiting to see what reaction there will be to NATO's involvement in the conflict in Kosovo. Then there will be a debriefing as to whether or not NATO did the right thing. The analysis can come later.

I remind the House that NATO was not created to do what it is now doing in Kosovo. It took a unilateral decision, without any real negotiations or discussion, to play an offensive role. It may be right, but the fact remains that a small group made this decision without any real negotiations or discussion.

People are asking what role NATO should play. It is no longer the same organization that it was 50 years ago. It has changed completely. In fact, the various types of international organizations should be reviewed.

Will NATO become an organization for ensuring the military protection of Europe, as seems to be happening, in which case there will be military forces on every continent to ensure a certain stability? Maybe so, and maybe not.

Thought is being given to revamping NATO. The organization has undergone a rapid metamorphosis over the past year. Should NATO revert to its original role, or stay as it is? That is perhaps the real question.

[*English*]

**Mr. Gordon Earle (Halifax West, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I listened with intent to the hon. member's discourse. He expressed some concern about the NDP position on this issue. The NDP's position has been consistent from day one. We want peace. We are simply by this motion calling on the government to intensify and accelerate diplomatic efforts to bring about this peace.

• (1130)

The hon. member also expressed concern, and quite rightly so, about the devastation and destruction that is taking place in Yugoslavia.

*Supply*

The hon. member asked what kind of message we are giving to Milosevic. Does the member feel that the message we are putting forth, a strong desire for peace and a desire to use every diplomatic effort to obtain peace and end the destruction is wrong?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. André Bachand:** Madam Speaker, the problem is what kind of message we want to send Milosevic.

At the beginning of the conflict, everyone agreed on a tough stand. Today, members are questioning the decisions of NATO and the European Community regarding an embargo or a naval blockade. Through its amendment, one party in the House is questioning those decisions, rightly or wrongly, it does not matter.

What message are we sending today? NATO has decided to impose an embargo or a blockade, not a very stringent one, but still it has decided to announce one and Europe supports it. We are saying that this is not the way to go. There should be no naval blockade or other intervention, including ground troops. What message are we sending with respect to the seriousness of past, present and future military intervention in Kosovo?

**Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I will share my time with the hon. member for Regina—Qu'Appelle.

It is with great sadness that I rise in this House today to express my thoughts on the action that Canada must take in light of the critical situation that currently prevails in Kosovo.

The NDP is raising this issue today because thousands of Kosovars are deprived and without shelter, security and recourse as a result of the unthinkable actions of their own government.

This is a complex issue and the decisions that face us are among the most difficult that our country has ever had to make.

Since the beginning of this crisis, the NDP has been advocating a diplomatic solution. But, tragically, initial efforts failed. Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic refused to participate in a constructive dialogue or to make compromises. Instead, he continued his reign of terror in Kosovo.

We are currently witnessing a serious humanitarian crisis. The Milosevic government embarked on an ethnic cleansing campaign, in an effort to scare away Kosovars from Albanian origin. Villages are in flames; men, women and children are being killed; women are being raped. Milosevic seems to have succeeded in scaring away terrified Albanian Kosovars.

We remember the atrocities committed in Bosnia by Milosevic, where over 200,000 people died. Can we allow ourselves to let Milosevic continue his rampage?

As this human tragedy worsened daily, the NDP acknowledged that there are times when the world community must react to human rights violations with actions, not just words. This is why the NDP has acknowledged the importance of responding with military strikes. Milosevic had to be shown that such atrocities would not be tolerated by the international community.

Before the NATO air strikes, 250,000 Albanian Kosovars saw their houses burned before their very eyes. If the western powers had not intervened after so many final warnings to Milosevic, they would have been sending a message to the Serbian leader and to other tyrants that it was acceptable to terrorize people and to violate human rights, without facing any consequences.

The decision to use air strikes is certainly not an easy one, but were we supposed to do nothing in response to Milosevic's attacks against humanity?

● (1135)

I would like to quote what Tommy Douglas said at the time of the Second World War:

—when a group of anarchists sets itself to destroying the fabric of law and order on which human civilization is based, then it is my duty to intervene—

But the success of the air strikes is now being questioned. Ethnic cleansing has been stepped up, and there has been a dramatic increase in the number of refugees.

We have a duty to put an end to this human suffering and to come to the aid of the hundreds of thousands of Kosovars who have lived with this terror for too long.

This is why the NDP is proposing, after 35 days of strikes, a solution based on five elements.

The first is the immediate cessation of NATO air strikes on the condition that the Serb government agree to resume negotiations and put an immediate end to hostilities against the Albanian Kosovars.

The second is the holding of negotiations under the auspices of the United Nations with Russia's participation.

The third is that the Canadian government should request a special meeting of the UN general assembly to debate the Kosovo crisis.

The fourth is that no Canadian military contingent is to be sent without a special debate in the House with the members voting on the matter.



*Supply*

And the fifth is that the UN High Commissioner for Refugees is to continue to help refugees in Macedonia and Albania.

I will use as an example my years of experience in negotiations between unions and employers, where there is a labour conflict. This boils down to pretty much the same thing, because conflict is also involved here. Conflicts are always resolved at the negotiating table. It may take a week, two weeks, a month, or three months, but in the end, the parties must return to the negotiating table. It is there that conflict is resolved.

This is why the NDP is saying that the negotiating table is where these conflicts will be resolved, sometimes with a change in position. I have an example. On the day of the strike, we are in a strong position and that is what we want. The employer too is in a strong position and that is what he wants. If no one is prepared to shift their position, the strike will go on. This is why no one can have an absolute position. You have to always be ready to change.

The five elements I mentioned earlier underscore the importance of a diplomatic solution. Following our interventions here in the House, the government finally recognized the importance of diplomatic efforts by sending the Minister of Foreign Affairs to Russia later this week.

We must focus all our efforts to bring an end to this conflict. This is why we are asking the government to intensify and speed up efforts to find a diplomatic solution to the crisis in Kosovo by ensuring that Russia and the United Nations are involved.

Once again, I draw on my union example. Sometimes it is necessary to appeal to mediators to help the parties find a solution. Russia must be seen as a mediator and be able to intervene and propose solutions to this conflict.

NATO must also be encouraged not to take actions that would extend the conflict and hamper the search for a diplomatic solution.

I come back to my example of a union. When workers are on strike or in a lockout situation and solutions are being sought, if one party resorts to extreme measures, this will sometimes make matters worse. We then think "If only they would calm down and go back to the bargaining table". Even the government agrees. This is why we must put these things into place today.

The context seems increasingly favourable to a diplomatic solution. We must help make things happen and create a situation where Russia and the United Nations can play a leading role in resolving this conflict.

That is why we are so categorically opposed to a naval embargo. Such an embargo would only increase tensions and adversely affect efforts to find a diplomatic solution.

Canada can provide meaningful leadership in the search for diplomatic solutions to this conflict. We should immediately focus

our efforts on this type of solution. These must also focus on the assistance we can provide to the tens of thousands of refugees.

• (1140)

These people often find themselves separated from their families, after witnessing the killing of loved ones in some cases. In the safety of our homes here in Canada, it is hard for us to imagine a situation where people are deprived of everything and have no way out. We must therefore do our utmost to put an end to this suffering.

[*English*]

I would like to congratulate the thousands of Canadians for their efforts to contribute goods and money to help the Kosovar refugees. They have demonstrated once again that Canadian generosity can always be counted on in times of hardship.

[*Translation*]

I also want to mention the efforts of all the humanitarian groups that bring direct and indirect support to the refugees. It is through their efforts that we hope to be able to alleviate the devastating impact of Milosevic's actions.

Finally, we must turn our attention to the Canadian military personnel participating with courage and integrity in these operations. They are the ones making the greatest sacrifice and we are grateful for that. We also thank their families for being so understanding under the circumstances.

We all hope that this conflict will be settled as soon as possible, so that the members of our Canadian forces can come home safe and sound.

[*English*]

**Mr. Murray Calder (Dufferin—Peel—Wellington—Grey, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I listened with a lot of interest to the member's speech. He asked how we can stop the human suffering. He made the point that he felt we should get back to the negotiating table to solve the problems. He wanted a diplomatic approach. Then he also said that he wants no further action by NATO.

We already know that unless Milosevic is confronted with force, he will not go back to that table. He has already proven that. The actions by the NATO forces right now have basically stopped the fuel supply to his army so his tanks cannot move. We have taken out bridges so they cannot cross rivers. Does the member really think if NATO withdrew at this point in time that Milosevic would go back to the negotiating table and negotiate in good faith? Does the member think that?

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Madam Speaker, I have never said that we should withdraw. I have said that we should not increase it.

*Supply*

If we put an embargo on the fuel going to Kosovo, another country may get involved in this issue. Instead we would want that country to go there and negotiate peace. That is what is important.

I want to make it clear that what we have said is not to remove. If we remove ourselves from it, we want everybody to stop. We want Milosevic to stop the killing he is doing in Kosovo. At the same time, let us stop the hitting and go to the negotiating table. If that does not happen, we are not saying that we should remove ourselves, but that we should not increase it. That is what is important. I want that to be clear.

[Translation]

**Mr. Jean-Paul Marchand (Québec East, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I greatly appreciated the comments by my colleague from Acadie—Bathurst.

I remind him that in 1755 the Brits deported the Acadians. In those days, the situation was non negotiable. The Brits had total control over the situation, so much so that those who would have offered to negotiate a peaceful settlement to the conflict would never have been heard. The Brits succeeded in their endeavour because they had the power and determination to do so.

The way the situation is evolving in Kosovo is a bit like that. We might talk about and wish for a negotiated settlement to the conflict, but is it feasible? As my colleague said earlier, Milosevic is a barbarian. He has terrorized Kosovo. He has violated the rights of a whole population. We know he has exterminated, killed thousands of people. We may get more accurate figures once the conflict is over.

It seems rather obvious that while we want a negotiated settlement to this conflict, we must realize that Milosevic has no intention of negotiating.

• (1145)

His goal is to rid Kosovo of its population to seize one half, one quarter or a third of the territory. Of course, he would like to have all of it. In the end, there is only one solution, and that is to keep up the pressure against this barbarian, to force him back to the negotiating table. Wishful thinking will settle nothing.

Does the member not believe this situation is very similar to or worse than what the Acadians went through in 1755?

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Madam Speaker, my colleague spoke of the Acadians of 1755. I wanted to speak of them in my remarks, but have chosen not to. I would never want it to happen again, because the people at home, although our ancestors left, still talk about 1755, the year the Acadians were sent away from their country and arrived here in Canada by boat.

Is the solution to say that there is no limit and that everything will be destroyed? That is the issue. There are strikes at the moment, but how many are we prepared to do? Is success achieved through destroying another people? I agree with my colleague that Milosevic is wicked, but are we going to destroy his people? Are the people wicked or is it he? This is where we have to use our good judgement and ask ourselves whether we are doing enough.

Negotiations, however, could help, and I think that is—

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault):** I must unfortunately interrupt the hon. member because his time has expired.

[English]

**Hon. Lorne Nystrom (Regina—Qu'Appelle, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I wish to say a few words in the debate this morning, basically to underline the importance of a serious diplomatic thrust to try to bring an end to this very unfortunate conflict. Hopefully the initiatives being taken now by the foreign affairs minister, by the Russians and by others will bear fruit. We should put a real emphasis on trying to accelerate the diplomatic efforts of finding peaceful solutions to what is happening in Yugoslavia, what is happening in Kosovo.

It need only be said in passing that we oppose what Milosevic is doing. It is abhorrent. It is barbaric. Something has to be done to stop what he is doing to the people in Kosovo. I also believe that we should try to escalate the presence of the United Nations in terms of it taking an initiative to do what it can to bring about a very peaceful solution. Right now people are suffering in that part of the world. People are being bombed. People are being killed. People are being exterminated. That has to end and end as soon as possible.

I want to try to bring a bit of human face to this situation if I possibly can. In 1968 I had the opportunity to go into the middle of a very vicious civil war in Nigeria, into the breakaway province of Biafra. This morning I dug up a comment in a speech I made in the House on November 26, 1968, a little over 30 years ago. I was only 12 years old; I was elected at the age of 11 or thereabouts to the House.

I spent two weeks over there. I spent one week on the Nigerian side and I spent one week in the war zone on the Biafran side. I had an experience which changed my life forever in terms of what humanity is all about. I literally saw people dying after being bombed. I saw people dying of starvation in huge sick bays in refugee camps.

At that particular time I travelled there with a Liberal member of parliament by the name of Ralph Stewart. Before us a couple of other MPs had gone, a Conservative named David MacDonald and a New Democratic named Andrew Brewin. We went there to try to

bring attention to the suffering and the need for some humanitarian help.

I can remember flying into what was then known as Biafra. At that time the Nigerian armies had encircled the province of Biafra. There was a form of genocide going on where hundreds of thousands of people were dying. We flew in under the cover of darkness on a church plane bringing drugs and landed on a small jungle air strip. I spent seven horrifying days actually seeing what happens when there is war.

• (1150)

I remember being caught in a bombing raid and having bombs drop literally a few metres away. We thought we were going to die because these bombs were coming out of the darkness of a jungle night. People were screaming. Some people were saying the rosary. Other people were crying and running and being scattered.

The terror is hard to put into words. I reread the speech I made in the House back on November 26, 1968 describing the trip. The then minister of external affairs was Mitchell Sharp, and he spoke right after me.

One of the things we saw was a Catholic hospital that had just been bombed. Another was a Red Cross hospital that had just been bombed, both of them by mistake, I am sure, according to the military authorities at the time.

We also went to many refugee camps and what they called feeding centres and sick bays. They would feed people at five o'clock in the morning just before dawn, before sunrise, because if the bombers came over and saw a huge crowd of people in a jungle opening there was a chance that there could be an attack.

One of things I referred to in my speech, and I remember it to this day, was going to a feeding bay where they had 3,500 pregnant and nursing women coming for their daily iron pills and a bit of fish stock that was provided because of the protein in fish.

To go through this experience, to get caught in a bombing raid, to hear the airplanes doing the strafing, to go up to a war front and see wounded soldiers, and to be close enough to hear the rat-a-tat-tat of machine guns in the darkness of a jungle night, it certainly had an impression on me. I did not think I would come back many times during that one week. It had an impression on me of how uncivilized human beings are at times to one another. Everything has to be done to bring an end to that kind of torture and torment. I just wanted to relate some of those comments to try to make this situation a little more real.

The brunt of the situation now is being borne by the Kosovars who are in huge refugee camps. Some are in Macedonia and some

### *Supply*

in Albania. Many of the Kosovars are still trapped behind the lines in their native province, the part of Serbia they come from and have lived for many years. Many of these people are dying of starvation. Many of these people are being shot. They are being executed.

I remember when I was in Biafra, for example, at a hospital or a church when a worker came out of the jungle with a child in his arms who might have been four or five years old. The child was basically just the skeleton of someone who was barely clinging to life. In my life I have never seen a person as emaciated or skinny as that little child was.

That kind of thing is happening now. It is happening in Yugoslavia and it is happening because of a madman named Milosevic. It is also happening because there are NATO bombs being dropped in Yugoslavia.

When I was in these little jungle villages and lying there with bombs dropping, I realized one thing. A bomb does not discriminate between a very poor black African peasant and a white politician from the western world. It does not discriminate at all. If one did not believe that going into that situation, it becomes a reality extremely quickly when a bomb is dropping out of the sky. We all have the same kinds of fears.

Those people are going through hell on earth and there is no better way of putting it than that. It is an absolute hell on earth. We should do what is being initiated today. We should do whatever we can to escalate the diplomatic offensive by bringing in Russia, the United Nations and other countries like Canada that are highly respected in the international forum and building up the diplomatic offensive to try to bring an end to the killing, the torture, the bloodshed and the hell on earth that is occurring in that part of the world. That is what we have to do.

At the same time we should signal as a country that we do not want to escalate the conflict by being part of a naval blockade. I do not think we should be doing that. It just leads into the possibility of making the situation more of a tinderbox. It brings in the possibility of a conflict with Russia.

The oil that goes into Yugoslavia comes primarily from Libya and from Russia. As the President of France, Jacques Chirac, said a few days ago, if one stops a ship bringing oil to that part of the world it is basically an act of war. We know the situation now in Russia where there is basically no government. It is a situation that is almost analogous to anarchy. There are ultranationalists, communists, unrest and economic chaos. It would not take much to push that country into a situation where this conflict could escalate beyond control of the world.

We should do everything we can, absolutely everything we can, to bring a diplomatic end to this kind of a crisis. Those people are suffering. Those people are dying.

*Supply*

• (1155)

As we talk today there is a child dying. There is somebody being shot, someone being mutilated. Thousands of people are hungry. People have lost their families. People are crying. People do not know where their homes are. Their homes have been destroyed. This is real and genuine human suffering.

We stand here in a parliament well dressed, well fed, well nourished and with shelters over our heads. It is difficult to imagine the suffering these human beings are going through. They are like us. They are human beings. They are being deprived of their loved ones. They are human beings that suffer pain and death and see their families being killed.

This kind of thing is very dangerous and could escalate. We have a fine reputation around the world, going back to the days of Lester Pearson and before, where we are the peacemakers. We are respected. We have diplomatic clout and diplomatic power. We should do all we can to escalate that and emphasize that in the hours and days that remain in the next week or so.

**Mr. Ted McWhinney (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I compliment the hon. member for Regina—Qu'Appelle on his intervention. I have two points.

Would he not agree that after the initial statements from NATO on a naval blockade, the commentaries made by the Minister of National Defence are very close to those used by President Kennedy in the Cuban missile crisis where a similar situation existed in the naval terms, which were fully compatible with international law? The Government of Canada is very clear on its commitment to international law and its commitment to the United Nations.

Would he not agree also that after fulfilling our obligations to NATO, we are bending our efforts in the last few days and the last few weeks to getting the issue back to the United Nations?

That is the explanation of the mission to Moscow of the foreign minister, the mission to Greece, the discussion of the Simitis plan for a more inclusive international force which must certainly be there when peace is restored.

**Hon. Lorne Nystrom:** Madam Speaker, I certainly agree and I think that is what I said at the beginning of my remarks.

I am pleased there are some initiatives on the diplomatic front. I am pleased our Minister of Foreign Affairs will be involved in these diplomatic initiatives. I am pleased the Secretary General of the United Nations is now trying to involve himself and the United Nations in seeking a diplomatic solution to what is happening in Yugoslavia and Kosovo.

I fully agree with what the member has said. I am sorry I was not here for question period yesterday. I have no idea what the Minister of National Defence said either inside or outside the House.

[Translation]

**Mr. Daniel Turp (Beauharnois—Salaberry, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank our colleague from Regina—Qu'Appelle for sharing his Biafran experiences with us. It was very useful for this House to hear them.

Others could tell similar stories of events in Sierra Leone, southern Sudan, Iranian or Turkish Kurdistan, more tales of atrocities, rapes and crimes against humanity, which are as serious in those regions and countries as they are in others, and this is what must be of concern to us in the aftermath of this crisis. These other crises must be considered equally important and they too merit diplomatic intervention and solutions.

I like it when there are references made to the late Lester B. Pearson, for there is one thing the two of us have in common. Like the former Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs, I favour bow ties.

But my question to the hon. member for Regina—Qu'Appelle is as follows: The motion refers to United Nations participation. I would like to know exactly what the NDP members have in mind. They are, no doubt, aware that the United States appears to be behind a security council resolution at this time, which calls for the council to again get involved in this international dispute.

Is this what they had in mind or is it, first and foremost, UN participation in an international military or civilian force in Kosovo.

• (1200)

**Hon. Lorne Nystrom:** Madam Speaker, now there is a very important UN initiative. The secretary general is in Europe. This is a very important initiative. We support it.

[English]

Also in the future there is going to be a ceasefire, there is going to be a settlement, and hostilities will stop in that part of the world. I believe there is going to be a need for an international force to keep the peace. We believe in our party that the force should come under the auspices of the United Nations.

**Mr. Lynn Myers (Waterloo—Wellington, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I will be sharing my time with a colleague.

Over the past few months we have witnessed the greatest humanitarian disaster in Europe since World War II. In the heart of Europe and on NATO's doorstep the people of Kosovo have been forced to abandon their homeland and have suffered unimaginable atrocities, not because of anything they have done, but simply because of who they are. We hear reports of men being taken

outside their homes to be shot, women being raped in front of their families and children being orphaned.

The motion before the House calls for a diplomatic solution. This has always been the preferred course and NATO's political objectives still include a diplomatic settlement. This motion not only ignores this fact, it also ignores the situation which confronts us.

After long and hard months of political and diplomatic activity, Canada and its allies have chosen to take military action. The resort to military force in Yugoslavia was a decision reluctantly taken, but Mr. Milosevic left us no choice. He consistently has refused to live up to agreements he has made. At the 11th hour at Rambouillet the Yugoslavs turned their backs on diplomacy. Taking military action was, and still is, the right decision.

The alternative, to do nothing and allow Mr. Milosevic to pursue his deliberate policy of repression and ethnic violence, was simply unacceptable to Canada, the NATO alliance and, indeed, the international community. By responding as we did, Canada and its allies have taken a strong step toward a goal that has always been in our national interest, a peaceful and democratic Europe.

Our military objective is clear and our will to see it met is unshakeable. The NATO campaign is aimed at diminishing and degrading the tools the Milosevic regime has been using against helpless civilians in Kosovo since last year: the Yugoslav military, the police and paramilitary forces.

This will not be a short mission. It is difficult to be patient amidst such a humanitarian tragedy, but we should not waver from our chosen course. All NATO allies understood from the beginning that the struggle was not going to be easy. Military operations as large as this rarely are easy, if ever, and we need to provide the desired results as soon as we can, but it will take time.

The air campaign is having an effect on the Yugoslav military and police forces. The first phase of the air campaign struck at the nervous system of the Yugoslav military machine, its air defence and command and control networks. The second phase is designed to degrade the overall strategic capability of the Milosevic regime. This includes strikes against Yugoslav forces operating in and outside Kosovo, at military infrastructure and at other assets which allow the Yugoslav forces to operate.

Past experience shows that Mr. Milosevic does not respond without pressure. NATO operations are making him pay a price for his actions. In the space of a few weeks NATO attacks have destroyed more than 50% of Yugoslavia's fuel reserves and significantly reduced the capacity to refine the remaining oil. Sixteen of Yugoslavia's early warning radar sites have also been severely damaged or destroyed, and 35 ground attack aircraft and half of Serbia's MiG-29 Fulcrum fleet are gone. Airfields and aircraft support facilities have been severely damaged and key routes

### *Supply*

which Yugoslav forces used to move supplies to and from Kosovo and other parts of the country have been degraded.

It is important for everyone to recognize that these strikes are having a real impact on the situation on the ground. Yugoslav forces are running into problems with fuel, with munitions and they are having trouble supplying their planes and tanks. NATO has steadily intensified its air campaign by increasing the scope and tempo of operations and will continue to do so until Mr. Milosevic accepts the legitimate demands set out by the international community.

• (1205 )

Over the course of the last three weeks Canada and other NATO allies have increased their contribution of aircraft to the campaign. The Canadian forces are playing a significant role in this operation and we are all very proud of their efforts in that regard. Our initial contribution of six CF-18 fighter aircraft was increased to twelve in response to a NATO request for additional combat power. In response to NATO's most recent request for additional aircraft, Canada announced on April 17 that another six CF-18s would be deployed, bringing the total Canadian contribution of CF-18s to eighteen.

Canadian forces members are also playing an important role by flying in the NATO airborne warning and control aircraft. These planes not only help direct our planes to their targets, they also provide warning information about hostile aircraft.

NATO is prepared to introduce ground forces in Yugoslavia to monitor and enforce a peace agreement along the lines set out by the Rambouillet talks in February. That is important to note. This is a clear demonstration that although we are currently engaged in military operations, NATO wants and is desperately looking for a diplomatic solution, and is actively preparing for the time when such a solution is reached. I believe that is important.

If Mr. Milosevic chooses peace and meets the demands of the international community—and we hope he does—a peace monitoring and implementation force will be established. As the government announced during the House debate on this subject, Canada is prepared to contribute between 500 and 800 personnel to this end.

This past weekend in Washington NATO marked its 50th anniversary. There was a clear message of unity and determination among alliance members to end the violence in Kosovo. The crisis represents a fundamental challenge to the values for which NATO has stood for half a century: democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

Canada and its allies seek a diplomatic solution, but we are being realistic about how this can be brought about. Words alone will not bring Mr. Milosevic to his senses, and that is unfortunate. We tried for months and it produced nothing. NATO wants a diplomatic

*Supply*

solution, but we have to make Mr. Milosevic want one as well. To do this, more than words are required.

Intensified military operations are designed to put more pressure on Belgrade. Reducing this pressure would do nothing to bring about a solution at this time. I want to emphasize that diplomacy has not been forgotten.

In Washington NATO allies recognize the role that Russia can play in trying to find a diplomatic solution based on the conditions set out by NATO and the international community. The Minister of Foreign Affairs is going to Moscow to hold discussions with the Russians regarding this matter. The diplomatic route can be retaken at any time, but that decision lies with Mr. Milosevic.

Today the European continent is confronting a serious crisis. Kosovo is a very small place on a very large fault line, an historic crossroads of religion and ethnicity that has often bred hatred and violence. It is in the national interest of Canada and its allies to prevent this region from once again sparking wider instability, just as we have a moral imperative to not simply watch from the sidelines as hundreds and thousands of people are brutalized and forced from their homes.

For these reasons we must stay the course and end the violence in Kosovo. Peace will not be achieved if we are weak willed and lose the courage of our convictions. We must continue to hold the tools of diplomacy in one hand and military means in the other. The dark forces at work in Kosovo will not be turned back in any other way, and that is important to note.

**Ms. Elinor Caplan (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Health, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I rise to comment on the words of the member who just spoke. I agree completely with him. I think his speech was excellent.

I agree that the world cannot stand by and expect that peace will just happen. I am a peace loving person. I think I speak for all of my constituents in Thornhill when I say that we wish for world peace. However, we cannot stand by and watch terror, ethnic cleansing, rapes and murders; the violence we have seen from that unfortunate part of the Balkans. We cannot stand by and allow dictators, those who would dictate to the world on their terms, without standing firm and expressing the values in which all Canadians believe. The world has stood by too often in the past and not acted in a way which would make us proud. We must stand for peace, for human security and we must do what we can, united with our NATO allies.

• (1210)

Those in the world who wish peace are standing together at this time, hoping that Mr. Milosevic and those in that terror stricken part of the world will indeed, as the member said, come to their senses, come to the peace table and establish a plan for the return of

the refugees to Kosovo. Hopefully we will see peace in that region, which for too many generations has been troubled with violence and hatred.

I compliment the member on his speech. I have no question for him. He said it all and he said it eloquently. I know we have had many opportunities in the House to debate this issue and I thank the House for the opportunity to add these few words.

**Mr. Lynn Myers:** Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for the points she raised. We need to work together effectively to bring about the kind of solution that is important for this part of the world.

It is indeed a problem area and we need to stay the course in this very important effort. It is incumbent upon the Canadian government to do so and I know that the Canadian people are very much with us in this matter, knowing full well that we are doing the right thing and doing it in a manner consistent with the values that unite us as a nation and define us as a people.

**Mr. John Bryden (Wentworth—Burlington, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, there has been a lot talk in this debate about international law. I point out to the member that there are several instances in the very recent past where countries have militarily done things that would appear to be in violation of international law.

I cite, for example, Canada's seizure of the Spanish trawler, which was a seizure that actually occurred on the high seas. This occurred during the cod crisis. The reason for the seizure was that the Spanish were fishing on the high seas, just off Canada's fishing grounds, and were destroying the cod stocks.

I remember very vividly talking to a member of the diplomatic community who said that seizing a vessel on the high seas is a declaration of war.

We know now, in retrospect, that most of the world agrees with that move; that countries do have to take action, even on the high seas, if it is a matter of protecting not only their own resources but the world's resources.

I point out also that we have another unusual circumstance in this situation. Canada still has representation from Yugoslavia here in Canada, even though we are in the position where we are making military strikes on Serbia.

Is it not now a situation where we should be expecting to revise some of the international laws and conventions that were basically framed in the 19th century and the early 20th century as we go into the new millennium?

**Mr. Lynn Myers:** Madam Speaker, it is incumbent upon us always to look at various conventions and other articles of law in the context of world peace. What we are doing in that part of the

world is effective and it is important that we carry on in a manner consistent with the values of Canadians and our NATO allies. That is the right course. Canadians expect us to do that and that is precisely what we are doing.

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, as hon. members will know, our government has pledged to keep the House and the people of Canada fully up to date on the scope and nature of Canada's involvement in the humanitarian crisis in Kosovo. There have been regular briefings of members of parliament as well as full discussion in question period and during debates.

• (1215)

The House will remember that prior to commencing military action against the government of Slobodan Milosevic, NATO had drawn up plans to deploy an international force to Kosovo to ensure the fair implementation of a just peace in that troubled province. Members will also remember that in February they debated Canadian participation in such a force. There was broad support across party lines.

I now rise to inform the House that Canada has received a formal request from NATO to initiate the deployment of our portion of the peace implementation force to the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia. Today we intend to inform NATO that the government agrees to this request. My colleague the Minister of National Defence will provide the specific details and timetable for this deployment. These troops, some 800 in total, will join 12,000 NATO troops that have already been pre-positioned in the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia to move into Kosovo as part of a peace settlement.

[Translation]

I wish to assure hon. members that the purpose of this deployment does not extend beyond what has already been debated in this House. The sole purpose is to support the principal objective that Canada, and all of our NATO allies, have pursued for many years in Kosovo: a fair and just peace, one that would allow the people of Kosovo, once again, to live in peace and security, that ensures that the machinery of repression and atrocities is gone, and that they can safely return to their rightful homes.

It is a matter of great pride to me, as Prime Minister, that members from all sides have spoken out with eloquence in favour of these principles, and have endorsed a role for Canada in enforcing them. As a body, we have given voice to values that our people hold so dear, tolerance and justice.

As Canadians also know, the government, together with our NATO allies, is also involved in seeking a diplomatic resolution to this crisis. That is why the Minister of Foreign Affairs is travelling this week to Moscow to meet with Russian officials and the Secretary General of the United Nations.

*Supply*

I am confident that the military and diplomatic course that NATO is pursuing will, over time, bring a just end to the crisis. But I would also like to assure all members that, if there is a NATO request to deploy Canadian troops in combat, the House will be consulted before any final decision is taken.

[English]

I will use the few minutes I have left to talk about what happened over the weekend.

As members know, we have renewed the collective agreement of NATO. In the debate on Kosovo it was extremely clear that all 19 nations involved were unanimous in the need to carry on the air strikes to persuade the government of Belgrade to end the atrocities, the murdering and other things that are happening, to withdraw its troops from Kosovo and to permit international troops.

Last week there was a statement made that only NATO troops were involved. We as Canadians initiated talks about having an international group involved, not just NATO. That is what is being debated at this time. But the five conditions have to be met by the government of Mr. Milosevic before we stop the air strikes.

What is very important too is that all the countries surrounding Yugoslavia, countries like Bosnia, Albania, Croatia, supported the actions of NATO when we met on Sunday morning. Later on we had a meeting with the group of nations involved in the regroupment for peace. The group involved many of the new republics of the former USSR. They were in agreement and talked, to my great satisfaction, about human rights, democratic rights and so on. It was an uneasy situation because about six of them were former members of the politburo. Somebody made the observation that was just to show the progress.

• (1220)

It was very evident that the government of Milosevic is completely politically isolated at this time. We have to intensify the economic pressure on it so it will withdraw from Kosovo and permit the Kosovars to go back.

There was a lot of activity. The House rightly asked us last week to propose the involvement of the Russians. Everybody is in agreement on that. Kofi Annan is going there this week. The Minister of Foreign Affairs will be there. There is some activity. There was some discussion with President Clinton on Sunday morning. The president informed some of us privately and after that collectively of the nature of the discussion. There is at least discussion at this time and there is a desire by the Russians to be part of a peaceful solution, just as the premier of China told me when he visited Canada not long ago.

Canada is playing the best role we can. We are one of the many countries there. We are making a peaceful solution a priority. It is

*Supply*

clear there will be no peaceful solution unless we persuade Milosevic to do what was agreed upon in Rambouillet. It was agreed upon in Rambouillet by everybody including the Russians. The difference we had and still have with the Russians is about the air strikes. After so many years of negotiation and precedent in Bosnia and elsewhere we had no choice but to proceed with air strikes. According to the briefing we had, they are having some effect on the government of Belgrade.

There are some positive signs like the statement made by the vice-prime minister on Sunday which was quite in contradiction from the official position of Belgrade. We do not know whether it is just another tactic. President Milosevic has been very good at using all sorts of tactics to postpone and postpone and postpone. As we have unfortunately learned, long before we had started the bombardment, more than eight months before, he had already started a plan of cleansing and murdering the Albanian Kosovars.

We are working hard to find a peaceful solution. In the meantime it is very important for everybody to know that the resolve of the 19 nations was extremely strong and very clear.

[*Translation*]

When I left for Washington, I thought there would be considerable division and that discussions would be rather difficult, but I quickly realized that there was unanimous agreement that what the government of Belgrade was doing had to stop.

The important thing is that NATO took on a role in this mission, because the political stability of all of Europe is at stake. If this problem is not resolved, there will be repercussions in all the other countries. I met with the presidents of neighbouring countries, such as Bulgaria and Hungary, which are already seriously affected by the crisis. There are 300,000 Hungarians in the northern province of Yugoslavia.

All the tension and the problems of many heads of government makes quite an impression.

[*English*]

We are very fortunate to be far away from the problem in some ways, but for those running a government that is very close there is a lot of tension. It is very difficult for countries that have people of the same faith as the Serbs. It is extremely complicated to manage, but everybody has shown solidarity through NATO and the neighbouring countries have clearly stated that we have to carry on. We all pray that it will terminate as quickly as possible. We are doing everything we can on the diplomatic front.

• (1225 )

We have some different points of view in the House of Commons and that is normal. But all the leaders of all the parties have

supported the action of the government and the action of the 19 countries involved in NATO. I would like to use this occasion again to say thank you to the members for their participation and collaboration.

Canada has been a member of NATO for a long time. I was very pleased that the president of the United States referred to Mike Pearson and quoted him about the purpose of NATO. NATO today is not only to defend against invasion. We have moved for the first time on a question of human rights and protection of the dignity of individuals and so on, contrary to what has been done so far. This is probably establishing a new situation that might make sure that what we have seen and still see in Kosovo will not be repeated elsewhere.

All that is done in the context of the stability of Europe. We have established our commitment to stabilize Europe for 50 years. We see the new members of NATO, the Czech republic, Hungary and Poland there. Immediately on becoming part of NATO they are being forced to be in a situation like that and are showing support of the collective effort which is extremely rewarding.

I would like to say thank you to the House. I think I probably broke the rules but if not, I am willing to take some questions.

**Mr. Preston Manning (Leader of the Opposition, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the Prime Minister for making this announcement in the House. It certainly does give members an opportunity to raise questions and comments. I have two questions for the Prime Minister with a bit of preamble.

First of all, I think the House has agreed that the three objectives that are being pursued in Yugoslavia are the moral objective of stopping the ethnic cleansing; the political objective of creating a safe home for the Kosovars in the region; and the military objective of damaging the Serbs' military capability to the point where they cannot practise ethnic cleansing and come to the negotiating table. I do not think there is much disagreement here on the overall goals.

My first question would be, could the Prime Minister perhaps elaborate a little bit further on how the particular creation of this peacekeeping force will enhance those goals in practical ways?

My second question is a follow-up to the debate we had in the House some weeks ago. I think there was general assent in the House to Canada's role in the air strikes that NATO was carrying on. There was a strong feeling, certainly in the House and I think in the country, that if Canada was to expand its role in any way, either through ground troops or perhaps even a naval blockade, that it would be very important to have a motion presented to the House to give the government a mandate to do whatever it was proposing to do and to have a vote on that motion. Canadians would then be clear on what authority was being given to the government. In that debate questions could be raised about how the creation of this peacekeeping force would achieve the ultimate objectives and also precisely would Canada have the capability to do what is being asked of it by NATO.



My second question would be, in light of the announcement that the Prime Minister has made, will he be bringing a motion to the House asking for a specific mandate to endorse this increase in our role in the Balkans?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien:** Madam Speaker, in answer to the first question, it is part of the plan that was established at the Rambouillet discussion and submitted before the conclusion that we should send some peacekeepers there. Other countries have sent their peacekeepers. There are 12,000 of them. We have not. Because of distance it is more complicated for us, so we waited until they were needed.

• (1230)

If no peace agreement is reached they will not move in or become involved. These are not ground troops. They are peacekeepers. They will go in only when there is an agreement to move. They will be on the ground and will have the proper equipment. Six or eight helicopters will be available for reconnaissance. At this time they are helping the people involved in the humanitarian task in Macedonia.

We had a chance to talk with the Macedonians. Their economy has gone to virtually zero with 40% or 45% unemployment at the moment. They cannot take everybody. This is an extremely complicated situation. I can guarantee the House that they are there and ready to move. If there is a peace agreement, they will move quickly.

I am not afraid of a vote in the House of Commons. The question is: What is the proper thing to do? We can have debate. However, we operate under a certain system. I am not afraid of a vote because I know the vote will be clear. In our parliamentary system, the government has the confidence of the House. If a government loses the confidence of the House there are many ways to proceed.

We have heard talk about a blockade or an embargo. We have a ship available over there. The leader of the opposition gave me the impression that members would now like to have a vote on the presence of this ship that is already there. Does that mean that every little move by the armed forces and the government will result in a vote in the House of Commons? That is not how our democracy and legal system operate.

The government is the executive and needs the support and confidence of the House of Commons. This was done on previous occasions. I am afraid for the future of the House of Commons if this is the best way to run an operation. Great Britain felt it had no hope, not because the government was afraid of losing with its huge majority, but because it was keeping the principles of the executive and legislative bodies.

If the leader of the Reform Party wants to have a vote, he can frame a motion. The Reform Party still has two votable motions. A

### *Supply*

debate could be held tomorrow if the Reform Party wanted one. It can draft any resolution it wants. It can indicate what it wants and what it does not want. It can also agree. We can hold a vote to see who agrees and who does not agree with what we are doing. The Reform Party has the option.

As a representative of the executive of the government, I have to presume that I have the confidence of the House, otherwise the system would break down. I do not want to be political, but we have had more debates on this than ever before. I made an agreement with all of the opposition parties to have take note debates where everybody can speak up and express their views. I found the late debate to be very good because we had general agreement.

The question of having a vote on every little move is not the system under which we operate. I did not establish the distinction between the legislative and the executive for the fun of it. It would be easier for me in this case because I do not see a strong opposition. However, I have to remain very responsible for the proper administration of the political system of Canada.

**The Speaker:** Colleagues, we all appreciate that this is a very important issue that we are dealing with. I would just bring up a small point. With the unanimous consent of the House, I will entertain at least one question from the leaders of the other parties. Is it agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

• (1235)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like some clarification from the Prime Minister on a couple of points.

First, what exactly will be the role of the troops leaving for Macedonia in a few hours? It is said to be peacekeeping, but I would like to know more specifically what role they will play.

Second, around ten days ago we raised the point that the deployment of troops in the Balkans, even for peacekeeping purposes, in Macedonia rather than in Kosovo, might prove to be, in the short or medium term, the first step towards a military presence with an offensive mission in Kosovo itself. Admittedly, Macedonia is a lot closer to Kosovo. This is a concern.

I wonder why the Prime Minister is not holding a debate here in the House, followed by a vote, as Germany did and as the Czech Republic will do if ground troops are to be deployed. Prime Minister Jospin also announced France would vote on the issue.

*Supply*

I do not understand the Prime Minister's attitude nor the reasons for it. We are not asking to vote on every single military maneuver that might take place, on every little move. This is not what we are asking for. Rather we are questioning the very principle of deploying ground troops.

Moreover I am told the House must follow parliamentary procedure; it just happens that in this House votes take place every day after debate, of course. We hold a debate and then we vote on a variety of issues much less important than the deployment of troops, be it for peacekeeping or an offensive military operation. It seems to me it would be in keeping with the House's responsibilities to hold a debate, followed by a vote, as we do on so many other issues.

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien:** Mr. Speaker, I thought I had explained it earlier, but I will be glad to explain it again. In preparing for an agreement with Belgrade, it was anticipated that troops would be involved. We hope an agreement can be reached at the earliest opportunity.

We were asked to send troops so as to be ready. The troops that are currently in Macedonia help greatly with the refugees. This is one of the reasons we were asked to be there. We have helicopters that may eventually fly over Kosovo, but right now they can be used to help refugees. The troops will not go to Kosovo until there is an agreement. If they must go, I said I would come back to the House of Commons with this.

As for the other issues, it goes without saying that votes are held every day. But I explained that, with an issue such as this one, the parliamentary system is based on the confidence that the House of Commons has in the government. In a situation like this one, we assume, since we form the government, that we have the authority to act until we lose that confidence.

I also said that we now have a mechanism that did not exist in the past. Nothing prevents opposition parties from asking questions during an opposition day. It is not the government's responsibility to do that. We will examine any motion to that effect and vote on it. However, we assume that we have the confidence of the parties in the House. The Bloc Québécois had an opportunity a few days ago. It could have asked a very clear question, but instead it asked an ambiguous question.

The day after the debate in the House, the Reform Party asked a strange question on a motion that had nothing to do with the crisis in Kosovo, but referred to a committee holding consultations in western Canada. The opposition is not interested in using the opportunities that it has.

At some point, the issue of confidence will be dealt with specifically in a motion. On June 9, a vote will be held in the House of Commons on supply for the Department of National Defence. The House can vote against this. That is one way of going about it. The opposition cannot have it both ways. If it does not want us to

do this, it should reject the defence budget, then we will not be able to go. This would then become a vote of confidence.

• (1240)

[English]

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I first want to say how very much we welcome the decision of the Prime Minister to enter this important debate today. It has been very much in the spirit that we intended in introducing the NDP opposition motion today that we have this forum to discuss further what we are going to do to intensify and accelerate our commitment, as a nation, to find a speedy, peaceful, diplomatic solution to the Kosovo crisis.

I want to say again, what we have expressed publicly and on the record, that we think having an opportunity to vote is an important issue. I have some difficulty in understanding where the Prime Minister is coming from because when we were in the gulf war we had six votes in the House and no one saw that as an erosion of the government's confidence or ability to do its job.

My question today does not focus on any votes around any possible escalation of military effort. It is our urgent hope that the point that we have now reached means that we will not be talking about escalating the military effort but rather we will be focusing on escalating the diplomatic effort.

The Prime Minister's statement today about the deployment of troops for peaceful purposes only is very much in the spirit of the position we have set out in our motion. We will of course be very vigilant in making sure that we are only talking about peaceful deployment.

My question focuses on the motion that we put before the House because that is the debate we are having. In relation to the Prime Minister's assertion about the critical importance of Russia's participation in advancing a peaceful solution, the Prime Minister knows that Russia has said that under no circumstances will its participation be possible if NATO proceeds with an oil embargo and the possibility of a naval blockade.

In that spirit, will the Prime Minister assure Canadians today that he, on behalf of Canada, and the foreign affairs minister and the defence minister, will stake out clear, unequivocal opposition to any such course of action?

We have a golden opportunity here to advance peace. We have an opportunity with the foreign affairs minister going to Moscow in what I think is increasingly an opening up of diplomatic opportunity to say that we will provide leadership in ensuring that Russia's position on this issue is respected and that we will not do anything to jeopardize the possibility of being able to continue to involve

*Supply*

Russia in advancing a speedy, peaceful, diplomatic solution to this situation.

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien:** Mr. Speaker, it is not a blockade. On Sunday I said that we would do nothing to provoke the Russians. The embargo is done. A lot of people can help to ensure that economic isolation is made clear to the government of Milosevic. As I said before, what is the use in bombarding the refineries when gasoline will still come in by ship from the south to replenish what was lost? We cannot have it both ways.

On the diplomatic front, when we started collectively to talk about only NATO troops there, Canada was the first to say it should be enlarged. The embargo will be a collective decision. It will not be a blockade. We are not planning to use military ships to sink Russian tankers. We are only talking about an embargo.

• (1245)

The Russians have an interest in finishing it too. They are opposed to the air strikes but they are in favour of Rambouillet. There is no doubt about it. We feel very strongly that we have to carry on. It is not the time to stop.

I said earlier that it is known Milosevic has been extremely skilful at quasi-agreeing to something and then delaying and delaying while doing his job. Now the collective result is to do it. The weakening of his infrastructure is huge and it will intensify. He is completely politically isolated.

I read, and probably members read it too, that there was hope in Belgrade with the news that Russian planes would come to rescue them. They are not there and they will not be there. The Russians like us would like to have a resolution of the conflict but the five conditions have to be met.

If NATO is not there, the Kosovars will not want to go back. It is very nice to say that there will be no more bombardment, but they will think twice before going back to a place that has been devastated. Their homes have been burned by the Serbs and their cities have been destroyed. They are now in Albania. When we ask them to go back home they will want to go back under a certain security.

There is another element. We have to stop the conflict. A group in Kosovo is using arms today to try to make Kosovo independent. This is another side of the problem which has to be kept in mind. We want peacekeepers there so that the people of Kosovo can go home, live a normal life and have the freedoms we are all fighting for.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. André Bachand (Richmond—Arthabaska, PC):** Mr. Speaker, like many of my colleagues, I wish to thank the Prime

Minister for taking the time to come and speak to the House. We are very grateful.

Today, the Prime Minister has announced that Canada will be sending peacekeeping troops, what we used to call blue berets, to Macedonia. They will not be wearing blue berets, because the operation will be NATO-led.

I would like to know which countries have asked for this, because the Prime Minister said it was NATO that had called for troops, not the UNHCR.

Could the Prime Minister tell us what contribution other countries are making? By sending troops at this stage, is the Prime Minister saying that hostilities will soon be over? What is the rationale for sending peacekeeping troops, at NATO's request, to Macedonia right now? If it is to help refugees, the request should perhaps have come to us from the UNHCR.

Now, on the topic of the naval blockade, we are told that this is neither a blockade nor an embargo, but simply a check of what is going into Yugoslavia. Would the Prime Minister comment on what the newspapers were saying this morning, that the Minister of National Defence and a German general said that there is no question of using force to stop ships travelling to Yugoslavia through Montenegro, nor is there any question of using force to stop the entry of Russian oil?

My last question is this. Is the Prime Minister ruling out a peacekeeping force other than NATO's in Kosovo, perhaps under the UN, with the Russians?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien:** Mr. Speaker, I just explained the role. The British, the French, the Italians and the Americans are already there, under the NATO umbrella.

They sent troops in the context of the preparations for the Rambouillet agreement, which did not happen. We were asked to do the same. There have been discussions and now we have received an official request, but it came from NATO.

• (1250)

Regarding the embargo, we have asked the military to prepare a plan. At present, the details are unknown. As I explained, this is an embargo, which means that weapons will not be used to set up a blockade.

As for the details on how this will work, at this point we do not know what types all the vessels deployed will be exactly. Some are completely above-board. It must also be kept in mind that the democratically elected government of Montenegro must not be weakened any more than necessary. Montenegro is a fairly independent province of Yugoslavia, and things between it and the government in Belgrade are rather tense.

*Supply*

On the other hand, the focus must not be on the south at the expense of our actions in northern Kosovo and in the Belgrade region.

It is our hope that the peace force sent to Kosovo will be a UN force. That is what we want. I do not know if that will be possible, but more than NATO is needed, and we have already said so in this House, last week.

Although the word from Brussels was that only NATO troops should be involved, personally, I remain convinced that the Russians and Ukrainians are needed in order to make the foreign presence in Yugoslavia more acceptable.

I have had an opportunity to speak to President Kuchma. Not many have contacts with the government in Belgrade, but he has sent his Minister of Defence and Minister of Foreign Affairs to Belgrade. He has given me his view of the situation, and among the points he raised, I agreed with him that countries other than NATO countries ought to be involved in any future peace force.

[*English*]

**Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Coquihalla, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Edmonton East.

Before I get into my comments regarding the motion before us today, I would like to comment on what we have heard this afternoon from the Prime Minister. I appreciate his being in the House to present this information and his giving Canadians and members a brief lecture on politics 101 and the executive authority of the government in the House of Commons.

I remind the Prime Minister and the executive branch of government that along with their executive decision making power comes something called executive responsibility. The opposition will be holding the government accountable for every action it takes which seems to be inappropriate to the official opposition and to the people of Canada.

With respect to that I have great concerns over the types of troops we have heard are being deployed to the Balkans. The Prime Minister has given us very few details about those troops. He has given us a number of 800 troops, but he has said very little about their role and their missions of operation. He has said very little about all of these things. I get the assurance from the defence minister that he will also speak to these issues.

My point is that the House agrees executive decision making is in the mandate of the Government of Canada as is executive responsibility. We will do everything to make sure the proper troops are deployed and the capabilities are there. We all know the government has reduced military capability over the last five years since it came into power. It will be held to account for all those things. The auditor general has pointed it out. The chief of the

defence staff has also pointed out the capability deficit we have now after six years of Liberal dominance in the country.

• (1255 )

However, I digress. I rose this afternoon on behalf of the people of Okanagan—Coquihalla to speak to the opposition motion:

That this House calls on the government to intensify and accelerate efforts to find a diplomatic solution to the crisis in Kosovo through the involvement of Russia and the United Nations, and to urge NATO not to take actions that expand the conflict and stand in the way of a diplomatic solution.

I congratulate members of the Canadian Armed Forces, particularly those in the air force who have done a superb job in executing the sorties and missions they have been given over the last 35 days. All Canadians should take time to thank them for that, and to pray for their safe and speedy return to Canada. All of us want to see a diplomatic solution to this situation.

Therein lies the problem with the motion. In the way it was written it makes it sound as though we have not been concerned about a diplomatic solution. In the newspapers I read on a daily basis and in the media reports I see, the diplomatic flurry of activity surrounding Kofi Annan, the ministers from Russia, our Minister of Foreign Affairs and other interested parties has definitely increased. Canada must show its absolute resolve not to fray away from its NATO allies in this terrible tragedy happening in Kosovo.

The motion lays out some assumptions that the Russians and the UN have been kept out of the negotiations. I feel that is totally false. I would not even want to be sending that message. That is why I cannot support the motion before the House today.

It is also important to note that the UN has been in the Balkans for most of this decade, trying to resolve various territorial and ethnic disputes. There is increased diplomatic activity going on right now, but there has been such activity for the last 10 years. We have tried.

If members of the NDP think this is some whim NATO has embarked upon for no good reason, they are sadly mistaken. We have to remember Canada's involvement. We have a stake in it as well. Eleven of our peacekeepers have died through peacekeeping operations in the Balkans. I do not say that lightly. I am quite concerned about that. Do we have a stake in it? Of course we do, because those people did not die in vain.

NATO has taken military initiative due to the failure of an agreement in the UN to take action against Serb ethnic cleansing in Kosovo. Russia and China would oppose UN sanctioned action in the security council. We know that full well. Kofi Annan has even identified that.

It is ridiculous to say that Russia has been excluded. Russia is important. Every media report, everything we see, shows that all

*Supply*

the stakeholders are trying to get Russia involved. Russia is seen as an important mediator to end this conflict.

I will remind members of the House and maybe my colleagues in the New Democratic Party of the goals. I am not condemning the NDP for bringing the motion forward. They drafted the motion in the spirit of wanting to find a solution, but I do not think there has been a lot of thought into what they are saying here.

First, one of NATO's goals is to end ethnic cleansing. Second is the withdrawal of Serb forces. Third, refugees must be allowed to return to their homes in Kosovo. Fourth, NATO peacekeepers must be allowed to enter Kosovo. Fifth is a political solution. That is the fifth link in the NATO agreement to which the 19 member states have agreed.

We are already striking Yugoslavia with our NATO air forces to reduce the ability of the Yugoslavian military and paramilitary to commit aggression. This is very, very important and it is working. The evidence shows that this tactic is working.

• (1300)

The comments made yesterday by the deputy prime minister of Yugoslavia show that the political decision making powers are fraying on their side. We cannot allow them to fray on our side. NATO must maintain its resolve to continue the campaign until the Yugoslavian leadership accepts a negotiated settlement.

With this type of motion I would have to ask what kind of message are we trying to send to Mr. Milosevic? He would love this motion, because this motion shows cracks in NATO's resolve. I just do not think that is appropriate at this juncture.

We have successful air operations continuing. We are reducing the Yugoslavian army capability. That is very important and there are signs that a political solution may be found.

I want to also remind people that on April 12 the Leader of the Opposition laid out some principal objectives in supporting the government and NATO. The first was that it attains the moral objective of halting ethnic cleansing. Second was that we achieve the political objective of creating safe homes for Kosovars and stabilize the region through negotiations. Third was that we pursue the military objective of damaging the military capabilities of Yugoslavia to reduce its capacity to practise ethnic cleansing and bring the Yugoslavian government to the negotiating table.

When I was home on the weekend I met up with a World War II veteran and I had a conversation with him. His name is Lieutenant Colonel Harry Kwarton. I said to Harry, "Sir, what do you think of what is going on right now?" He said to me, "At the end of the second world war we told the world that we would never let this

happen again, and you bet we are doing the right thing by being there and supporting this". I think we are on the right track.

I want to congratulate our troops and again remind the government that I for one will be holding it responsible for its executive decision making. It had better make sure that the capabilities it commits are the proper ones and we have the ability to do the job.

**Mr. Peter Goldring (Edmonton East, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, once again I am pleased to stand in the House on behalf of the constituents of Edmonton East and contribute to a very important debate.

Canada has a proud war history, but our role in this conflict is very different from our triumphs in Europe earlier this century. While I support the troops no matter where in the world they are sent, I too share some reservations with respect to our role and long term plan, if there is one.

The official opposition is prepared to support our involvement under the following guidelines with respect to the war in Yugoslavia. We must obtain the moral objective and halt the ethnic cleansing that has been perpetrated by the Yugoslav government. We need to achieve the political objective of creating a safe home for Kosovars by stabilizing relations between the federal republic of Yugoslavia and its neighbours through peaceful negotiations. We will pursue the military objectives of damaging the offensive military capability of the Yugoslav government and reduce its capacity to practise ethnic cleansing.

No country in history has ever been conventionally bombed into total submission and likely never will. It is clearly evident even to most armchair generals that a more comprehensive plan is required. The largest participant in this mission, the United States, knows all too well that a 20th century ground war would be both ugly and deadly.

Military force is only a tool with which to achieve our objectives. The Reform Party has noted that it is prepared to support military force and the commitment of Canadian forces only if our government demonstrates to this House that new commitments from Canada are needed to halt ethnic cleansing and to provide for a safe return of Kosovar refugees and that the government demonstrates to the House that all Canadian duties fall within Canada's existing military capabilities and guidelines.

• (1305)

Until now the Liberal government has not been open with parliament and the Canadian people. The three take note debates on the crisis have been little more than a public relations token. Canada's elected government has really had no say at all. Most recently this issue came up with regard to ground troop deployment. Any naval blockade is also an escalation in this conflict and in my view deserves the attention that ground troops are due too.

*Supply*

The last debate was on April 12 and took place two weeks after Canadians were already involved in the conflict. The government informed parliament of Canada's involvement in the bombings when Canadian planes were in the air. Most important, there has never been any vote in parliament on Canada's involvement in the war.

Parliament has played no role in setting the parameters for involvement once again if we end up enforcing a NATO naval blockade. We must not fool ourselves into thinking that stopping ships on the high seas will not escalate this crisis. We must have clearly understood rules of engagement before we embark on any escalation in or around Kosovo.

The government must change its approach and keep parliament fully informed and involved. Canadians call on the government to give parliament a role in setting the parameters and conditions for continued or additional Canadian military participation.

The Reform Party has supported the use of air power as a means to stop Serb ethnic cleansing activities in Kosovo and to force Mr. Milosevic to the negotiating table. The air campaign has been presented as the best alternative. It would not have been acceptable or morally right to sit idly by and watch fellow humans massacred and driven from their homes. It would have handed the president a victory and fed his appetite for greater conquests. On their own, air strikes might not exert the necessary pressure to encourage Serb disengagement.

The human race has witnessed acts of genocide throughout its history. Genocide is not solely the horrendous byproduct of certain wars. Incidents of genocide are not war related at all. Genocide is also a failure of humanity, the dark side of a civilization run amok. We must admit that Kosovo unchecked could be just this, death and destruction of homes and whole families by dictate of a man gone mad.

It is important for groups that have been decimated by genocidal acts that the world remember the particular atrocities in order to learn and understand what happened. Groups affected by genocidal acts want only to be remembered. The genocides of world history cannot be distinguished on the basis of size and scope. It is commonly understood that our history has witnessed one holocaust and many attempted genocides. In my view genocide should be regarded more as a failure of civilization than a product of war, whether it be the Ukrainian famine, the Cambodian killing fields, the Holocaust, or now reportedly Kosovo. In my view Canada should institutionalize remembrance through the construction of a stand alone world genocide museum.

NATO's collective strategy is seemingly starting to have an effect. We ought to give it more time to work. However, as the situation on the ground in Kosovo changes and new commitments are considered, the government must demonstrate to this House that any such commitments still fulfil the primary objective of stopping and reversing ethnic cleansing and Milosevic's genocidal tendencies.

Our pilots and troops are to be congratulated for the fine effort they have been making. They have been doing their best to help reverse this tide of inhumanity. For that we should be proud.

The families of ground force peacekeepers in past missions worried daily. Children had no idea of what horrors their parents had witnessed and had little understanding when their parents returned home permanently different from when they had left. Post-traumatic disorders are serious, debilitating and devastating to families who seek to pick up from where they left off months earlier.

Committing Canada's ground force troops will undoubtedly mean facing these challenges and trials again. Are we learning from past experiences? We must be extremely careful in planning our troop deployment.

• (1310)

A few weeks ago retired Major General Lewis MacKenzie stated in the *Ottawa Citizen*:

—we are not in a position to participate in any prolonged ground offensive in Kosovo. . . . During the past 20 years, successive governments, both Liberals and Tories, have used Canada's modest military as a cash cow which has resulted in a dramatic reduction of its operational capability.

These comments were made by one of Canada's most respected military leaders. General MacKenzie is saying that the ability of the Canadian forces to sustain long term ground operations, especially those far from home, has been sharply eroded by the government.

Between 1993 and 2000 there will have been \$9 billion in defence cuts. About 18,000 troops have been cut. Morale is at rock bottom, especially when money is being spent on sex change operations and combat bras. Our soldiers are lining up at food banks and wearing hand me down battle uniforms.

I do not see the distinction between the escalation by land or by sea. Whether it is a blockade or an embargo, an escalation is just that and has inherent dangers and concerns. Putting our frigates on front line service as floating targets is daunting enough. To do so without clear objectives, plans of action and with poorly understood engagement rules in my mind is reckless.

We should clearly define the role of our naval contribution with every bit of seriousness as that we would with ground troops. The government must allow the military leadership of the Canadian forces to be more honest and forthcoming. Our military command must be allowed to brief all members of our involvement. We understand that sensitivity and confidentiality are very important in military planning and we would be pleased to have the briefings in camera. For the sake of our troops' safety we must remember that the need to know must be appropriately balanced through careful disclosure and full public debate.

*Supply*

**Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to speak to this motion today.

Let me say clearly at the outset that we in Canada, we in the government, seek peace. As always we prefer to seek peace through peaceful means.

[*Translation*]

In its quest for peace and security, Canada has always favoured diplomacy.

[*English*]

Our diplomatic heritage has become a tradition that we further at all opportunities. It is something that we are justifiably proud of.

But even our elder statesman of diplomacy, the former Prime Minister Lester Pearson, the father of peacekeeping, understood that military force had a necessary role in achieving peace and security. Why? Because sometimes words and threats are not enough. Negotiations require two parties at the table together believing in what their words and promises can achieve.

We have been and are willing to sit at that table. At this point President Milosevic is not. Let me remind the House of Mr. Milosevic's appalling track record when it comes to willingness to negotiate.

In March 1998 the United Nations passed resolution 1160 calling on all parties to reach a peaceful settlement. This was followed by UN resolution 1199 in September. It demanded that both sides cease hostilities and improve the rapidly deteriorating humanitarian situation in the region. In October 1998, backed by the threat of NATO air power, an agreement was reached that established a ceasefire and allowed for an observer mission led by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe to verify compliance. The agreement also called for strict limits on the deployment of the Yugoslav security forces.

Regrettably, and true to form as we have seen over many years, Mr. Milosevic did not keep his word. Yugoslav forces violated the ceasefire, responded disproportionately to the actions of the Kosovo Liberation Army and carried out a campaign against civilians in clear violation of international humanitarian law.

• (1315)

Despite this gross misconduct, we still gave negotiations another chance. Talks quickly began in Rambouillet, France. These negotiations sought a peaceful solution by balancing the interests and the demands of the parties. The interim agreement we reached provided for a high degree of autonomy for Kosovo, but as part of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. In the end the Kosovars agreed. They exercised courage and they signed the agreement. Mr.

Milosevic did not. Eleventh hour efforts by U.S. envoy Richard Holbrooke proved fruitless.

By March 24 we realized that the diplomatic track to that point in time had run its course. Our patience and our commitment to leave no diplomatic stone unturned was once again rewarded by Mr. Milosevic's unwillingness to honour the agreements that he had made or to seek a peaceful resolution.

I have just described the long history of our diplomatic efforts to stand against Milosevic's tyranny. This crisis represents a fundamental challenge to the values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law. These are values which Canadians have defended in words, but also in deeds in the first and the second world wars, in Korea and, more recently, in the gulf war. They are also values that NATO has upheld since its inception some 50 years ago.

Our military actions are justified. We have been forced to use the military tool because the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has repeatedly violated United Nations Security Council resolutions. It has spurned attempts to forge a negotiated peace, with catastrophic results to the people of Kosovo. The unrestrained assault by the Yugoslav military police and paramilitary forces on Kosovar civilians has created a massive humanitarian catastrophe and threatens to destabilize the surrounding region. These have been extreme, calculated and criminal policies. They cannot be defended on any ground.

Let me be clear. The military action against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia supports the political aims of the international community. Our objective is to foster a return to a peaceful multi-ethnic and democratic Kosovo in which all of its people can live in security and enjoy universal human rights and freedoms on an equal basis. Canada and its allies are united in this objective.

It is an objective that is supported by the UN Secretary General and the European Union, and by Russia. Even Russian efforts to seek a negotiated settlement were met with half-hearted concessions and a flagrant disregard for the need to respect basic human rights and international law. However, the alliance shares a common interest with Russia in reaching a political solution to the crisis in Kosovo and will work constructively with Russia to this end wherever possible.

We know of the forthcoming mission of my colleague, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and we wish him well in his efforts to help bring that about.

The international community is united in its ultimate preference for a negotiated settlement in this crisis.

Before I finish I would like to provide some additional information on the latest developments. As the Prime Minister indicated just a few moments ago, Canada has now received a formal request from NATO to deploy to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia the military contingent we had identified some months ago as

*Supply*

our contribution to the international peace implementation process in Kosovo. We have agreed to this request.

A Canadian peacekeeping force in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia will consist of up to 800 people and will be equipped with about 280 vehicles and eight Griffon helicopters. Its main components will be a reconnaissance squadron, which will be capable of conducting surveillance and security operations in Kosovo. In fact, they will be using some of the latest equipment, such as the Coyote. The helicopter unit which I mentioned will carry out airborne surveillance, transport and medical evacuation missions. Also added to this team of about 600 people will be 200 combat engineers.

• (1320)

Our force will operate as part of a British armoured brigade within the NATO led allied rapid reaction core. That is why we are going to Macedonia. That is where the British brigade is located. These troops and these functions complement and supplement those which the British will be providing. We currently work with them in SFOR in Bosnia and it will be a similar kind of arrangement in Macedonia. The British already have troops in the region and they are counting on us to be there with them. The secretary of defence for the U.K. specifically said that to me in a meeting held last week.

It will take our force up to 60 days, we hope a little less, to reach the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and become operationally ready. This period is necessary to assemble the required military equipment and logistical supplies, move them by rail to Montreal and then by ship to Europe.

As the Prime Minister pointed out, our Canadian forces contingent will be part of an international peace implementation force. In other words, they will be peacekeepers. Although a peace settlement has not yet been reached, deploying our people now will serve two important purposes. First, it will allow our force to integrate fully with the British brigade and to train with them so that they can respond rapidly and effectively when a settlement is reached. Second, our troops will be able to provide immediate support to ongoing humanitarian operations in the region until and after a peace settlement is reached.

With our military campaign we are achieving what we set out to do. The cost of standing idly by is being measured in the lives of our fellow human beings. We have seen so far a callous and ominous disregard for human security. Canada always prefers a diplomatic solution. Our tradition has always been to appeal to the powers of reason and to try to achieve peace without the use of force or even the threat of it.

Although we have gained a deserved reputation as a peacekeeper, no one should ever forget that we have never and will never shy away from the stronger means if that is what is necessary to pursue peace and human rights.

[Translation]

**Mr. René Laurin (Joliette, BQ):** Madam Speaker, the hon. minister mentioned troops in Macedonia, saying that they will be equipped with Griffon helicopters, which will conduct security operations in Kosovo.

I would like him to elaborate on this because we were under the impression, after listening to the Prime Minister's statements, that our troops would be stationed in Macedonia only. There was no mention of Kosovo for the time being, but the minister said there will be security operations in Kosovo.

Does this mean there will be forays into Kosovo? I would like the Minister of National Defence to elaborate on this.

[English]

**Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton:** Madam Speaker, I neglected to mention at the beginning of my speech that I will be splitting my time with the member for Lac-Saint-Louis.

In response to the question, we are pre-deploying our troops to FYROM, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, for eventual movement into Kosovo as part of a peacekeeping mission when a ceasefire and a peace settlement has been reached. That has always been the plan. That was what was talked about in terms of the Rambouillet agreement, that we would have an international military presence in Kosovo to ensure the peace and security of Kosovo and for the Kosovars to be able to live in peace and security.

We are taking them from Canada to the region and putting them adjacent to Kosovo, in Macedonia, so that when the time comes for a peacekeeping mission to go into Kosovo they will be there together with numerous other countries. It is not just the British, it is the French, the Italians and numerous others. There are 12,000 of them in Macedonia, but there are also a number of troops in Albania, troops that will be part of a peacekeeping force that will go in when agreement is reached.

• (1325)

**Mr. Gordon Earle:** Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I wonder if you would seek the unanimous consent of the House to extend the time for questions to be put to the minister by about five minutes.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault):** The hon. member is asking the House for unanimous consent to extend the period by five minutes. Is there consent?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Mr. John Williams (St. Albert, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, we have now had the announcement today that the troops are moving closer and closer.



*Supply*

We have seen the terrible destruction of innocent people in Kosovo. They have been raped and murdered, their houses burned and their livelihoods destroyed. The hearts of all Canadians go out to them.

Let us look at what has been happening. NATO leaders huffed and puffed and then they started to bomb. In the meantime, Milosevic has continued his ethnic cleansing and the situation has worsened. We now have the announcement that troops are moving next door into Macedonia. There is this creeping effect that seems to be dragging us more and more into this morass each and every day.

I wonder what is going to be left of the Kosovars and Kosovo by the time we get around to pushing Milosevic out of that region so that these people can live peacefully. What kind of timetable does the minister have? It seems to me that by the time this thing drags out at the speed that NATO is moving there will be nothing left to save.

**Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton:** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the concern expressed by the hon. member. We have that concern as well. We are anxious that this matter be brought to an end as quickly as it possibly can, using both military and diplomatic means. We want to see a solution to this matter as quickly as possible.

The air campaign is being intensified. Additional aircraft are going into the area. The Apache helicopters will soon be deployed. As the weather gets better more sorties will be carried out.

It is not that we want to do this. We would rather have Milosevic come to the table.

We put in place last fall this air operation plan. We then spent every bit of time between then and March 24 trying to find a diplomatic resolution to the matter. Still we must seek every opportunity to find that diplomatic resolution.

However, so far Mr. Milosevic has not yielded to what the international community asks of him, to pull back his troops and to let the Kosovars return to their homes. Yes, they are going to have to rebuild their homes. A lot of them have been burned out. They are going to need help in doing that. In fact the entire region is going to need help in reconstructing itself and moving forward economically. A lot of reconstruction work will have to be done.

So far Mr. Milosevic has not yielded. He ignores the international community. He goes on with his ethnic cleansing and the butchering of the people of Kosovo. We cannot stand by idly. We have done everything we can to this point in terms of diplomacy. We will continue to do things in terms of diplomacy, but meanwhile the air campaign will intensify until the Yugoslav government comes to the table and agrees to the terms. Then we can put in place a peacekeeping force, which will include 800 Canadians, to make sure that the Kosovars can return to their homes in peace and security.

**Mr. David Price (Compton—Stanstead, PC):** Madam Speaker, I tend to agree with the minister this time. It does not always happen, but I think we are making the right move this time in moving in our peacekeepers. In fact, we said before that they probably should be there so they have a better chance to pre-train, as the minister said, and become a little more inter-operable with their British counterparts, with whom they will be working in the future.

What is the training background of the troops we are planning to send? Has it been strictly in peacekeeping? Will they be prepared to defend the borders, for instance, if there are incursions?

**Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton:** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the comments and the support of the hon. member for Compton—Stanstead. I am pleased to receive particularly his remark that this is the right move to make.

• (1330)

With respect to the training they have received, all our troops that go overseas or to any mission receive standard training of combat capability. Part of the 1994 defence white paper was to have multipurpose combat capable troops. They also receive specific training relevant to the mission and relevant to peacekeeping.

Peacekeeping nowadays, as we have seen in Bosnia and in other areas, requires our troops to be able to defend themselves because of some very difficult circumstances. The Medak pocket was a great example of that in Bosnia a number of years ago. They have to be combat capable because peacekeeping can be dangerous at times. Over 100 Canadians in the years that we have been involved in peacekeeping have lost their lives in peacekeeping missions.

They have received standard combat capable training, specific training relevant to peacekeeping and specific training relevant to this mission. They will continue to get training while they are in Macedonia with the British brigade because we want the units to work well together. Our Canadians will be self-sustaining. They will be a sustainable force but they will work with the British and will get further training.

With respect to the borders, each of those countries has responsibility for their borders. We will also be there helping out in terms of the refugee problem wherever we can be of help. We would certainly want to make sure the refugees are protected, so there may be occasions when we could be involved. We hope that will not be the case in terms of that kind of defence. The essential responsibility for the borders belongs to each of the surrounding countries.

**Mr. Gordon Earle (Halifax West, NDP):** Madam Speaker, my question will be very brief. With respect to the 800 troops that will be deployed, the minister mentioned combat capable. Does this

*Supply*

mean these troops will be armed? Second, where will these troops be coming from, which particular area of Canada, which base?

**Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton:** Madam Speaker, yes, they will be armed just as they are armed in Bosnia, as they are armed in most other theatres of peacekeeping operation. They will be armed and able to defend themselves if that becomes necessary.

They will be deployed out of Edmonton, Alberta. As I indicated earlier there will be some 280 vehicles. Those vehicles will start to move toward Montreal. They will then be put on a ship and sent to Europe and then taken from there into the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia.

**Mr. Leon E. Benoit:** Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Because of the extra sense of urgency, the even added sense of urgency that has come about as a result of the Prime Minister's statement, I seek unanimous consent of the House to extend the question and comment period by five minutes.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault):** Is there unanimous consent to extend the question and comment period by five minutes?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Leon E. Benoit (Lakeland, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, I certainly am very pleased and thank the House for the unanimous consent to extend the question and comment period. This is an extremely sensitive situation and an extremely important issue of debate.

The Prime Minister expressed support for Canadians accelerating the conflict in the Balkans in two ways: first by the possibility of putting an embargo in place and second by sending Canadian troops to the area.

My question is for the Minister of National Defence. Are we in fact at war now? Has the government now decided that Canada is at war and, if not, should the decision of whether Canada goes to war be made by the executive branch of government or by parliament, by all members of the House?

The second question has to do with the chief of defence staff. We are sending 800 troops to the area. They are going as peacekeepers. The minister said that. However, with the acceleration of the conflict, it is quite possible that these troops could be involved in full combat before this situation is over.

• (1335)

Does the minister have assurance from the chief of defence staff, the person who would make decisions about the capability of our troops and whether they are properly equipped, that if it becomes a full combat situation Canadian troops can in fact meet the obligations that NATO will place on them?

**Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton:** Madam Speaker, with respect to the question of whether or not this is called a war, I think most people call it that. However there are also legal implications of using that term. That term has not been used in the case of this conflict by either side. In fact it was not officially used in Korea. Korea was called a war by everybody but that was not part of the official terminology. Neither was it in the gulf. People will call things as they see them, but there is no change in the status as a result of what has been announced today.

I would beg to differ that the actions we have taken today are accelerating the conflict. We are sending troops over to be part of a peacekeeping mission. That has been made quite clear. It has also been made clear that if they change to doing anything else, anything that involves a heavier kind of conflict or less permissive kind of atmosphere going in on the ground into Kosovo, that matter would come back for debate in parliament and would require a decision of the government as well. That commitment sticks. These people are only going over there for that business. That hardly accelerates the conflict. They are just going over as peacekeepers.

In terms of what they are capable of doing, they are capable of being involved in a greater combat situation than we would hope peacekeeping would involve because they are trained as combat capable troops.

There can be speculation on the different kinds of readiness they would require, depending upon where we end up in terms of going into Kosovo, but our military planners are looking at a number of options. That is as far as it goes because the commitment at this point in time is to continue with and intensify the air campaign and to have the 800 troops as part of a peacekeeping force that would go into Kosovo when a ceasefire peace agreement has been reached.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. René Laurin:** Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I thought there was unanimous consent to give the member five more minutes. He already has had five additional minutes.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Thibeault):** The five minutes have expired.

**Mr. Clifford Lincoln (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, there are times in politics which go beyond partisanship; I believe the motion before us today is one of those.

I believe I am speaking for all of us here, and certainly for all Canadians, when I say that our priority is to reach a lasting and peaceful solution as soon as possible.

When I spoke last week about Kosovo, as did many of my colleagues, I mentioned that a peaceful solution would be more likely if the Russian government were involved on a more proactive basis. The Prime Minister also pointed this out on several occasions.

*Supply*

This is why I really congratulate the Minister of Foreign Affairs, who is soon to leave for Moscow to urge the Russian government to participate proactively in the quest for a solution involving the United Nations.

The talks the minister is about to embark on with Russia, together with certain NATO colleagues and the UN secretary general, could open the door to the possibility of a real and lasting solution. I believe this is the way to go in this conflict.

• (1340)

[*English*]

In the meantime we must do whatever we can, together with the UN community, to avoid an escalation of the conflict including a naval blockade, which will make it all that more difficult to enlist Russian co-operation. We must resist at all cost the temptation placed in our way by the British, among others, to escalate the NATO intervention toward an eventual ground war. I rejoice in this connection. At a summit meeting in Washington last week NATO leaders, including our Prime Minister, rejected the use of ground forces for military purposes.

I think, however, we all agree that Canada should play a leading role in the peacekeeping effort. In this sense I welcome the intervention of the Prime Minister and the Minister of National Defence today that we will get ready with our peacekeeping forces to participate actively in that effort.

More than ever now we must put our partisan differences aside and support wholeheartedly the initiative of the foreign minister and his colleagues in the search for prompt diplomatic solutions which might include economic and other sanctions through the United Nations, a solution which will achieve the return home of the Kosovars so savagely cast away from their rightful place and home in Kosovo.

Any solution should guarantee a lasting peace, and we are committed to guaranteeing a lasting peace through peacekeeping operations and the return of the Kosovars home to lead a normal life again.

I hope this will be a UN peacekeeping force which will include a broad spectrum of the various nations that usually participate in peacekeeping operations. We must be mindful that any solution will include the need to have a plan for reconstruction and rehabilitation of the Kosovars into their rightful homes and the reconstruction of the damage caused by the conflict. Once peace has returned it will take a formidable international challenge including massive financial resources both to guarantee peace and to ensure reconstruction and renewal of Kosovo and the areas destroyed by the conflict.

Therefore I join with all of us in the House in praying that the initiative of the foreign minister will be successful. I wish him and

his colleagues in NATO and other countries, including the Secretary General of the United Nations, a successful and positive result in Moscow and Godspeed.

**Mr. Gordon Earle (Halifax West, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his comments. He spoke about the peacekeeping force and I am sure he heard earlier the hon. minister speak about that force as well.

Would the hon. member, being on the government side, have any knowledge of whether or not the Russians have been informed of this massing of troops? Would he feel that might jeopardize or impair ongoing diplomatic efforts?

**Mr. Clifford Lincoln:** Madam Speaker, I do not have any particular knowledge except that there are now some 12,000 troops already in place for peacekeeping purposes in the same way as our 800 troops will be involved.

The Prime Minister confirmed that these troops are there purely in anticipation of a peacekeeping role in Kosovo. The foreign minister is going to Moscow this week. I am sure he will assure the Russians that this is the intention of the troops there including ours. I do not see it prejudicing any possibility of a solution involving the Russians.

• (1345)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. René Laurin (Joliette, BQ):** Madam Speaker, we have now been discussing the problems in Kosovo for more than a month. I believe it is important for us to examine the progress we have made because the Prime Minister has just told us that he is now sending troops to Macedonia.

The situation is, briefly, as follows: Kosovar refugees have been driven out of Kosovo. Of these, some 140,000 are in Macedonia, 375,000 in Albania, and 75,000 in Montenegro. Some are in France, and a few in England. It is estimated that, in all, about 735,000 Kosovars have been forced out of their country. In addition, it is estimated that another 500,000 to 800,000 have been forced out of their homes but remain within Kosovo.

Considering that there are about two million Albanians in Kosovo, this means that more than three-quarters of the population is now experiencing instability.

This situation requires us to ask ourselves what our reaction should be, as a country that is outside this theatre of military conflict.

Obviously, we cannot be insensitive to the situation, but it must be kept in mind that what we are seeking first of all is to restore peace. We also seek to prevent more Kosovars being forced out of their country. We seek to restore peace. We want to see the expelled Kosovars be allowed to return to their country of origin and start to rebuild.

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So we cannot oppose any action that might lead to the achievement of these objectives. The last measure we discussed was an embargo by NATO members and neighbouring countries to block oil supplies to Serbia.

Obviously, if, after we have bombed oil refineries and destroyed this means of oil production, they succeed in obtaining oil supplies from outside, we have not really resolved the problem. There are in fact countries that would stand to benefit since, for them, this is a new export target. It could be economically attractive, as a stopgap measure.

We are not talking about a blockade. I think that was made clear. Setting up a blockade could be very dangerous, because it assumes military force will be used against tankers bringing supplies to Serbia. There could be Russian tankers among these ships, and the Russians are sympathetic to the Serbian cause, at present. Will we open up new fronts? I think we have to be very careful.

An embargo implies the willing consent of all possible oil suppliers. If the international community is aware of the danger Kosovo represents, it should willingly agree to this embargo and refuse to deliver oil to this country in conflict.

• (1350)

The best solution is still patience, diplomacy and political negotiations.

It is true we are dropping bombs, and there are skirmishes. There is no ground combat, but there is air combat. However, we must think that, beyond the fighting, there will have to be peace one day. So every action taken today must be taken, considered and planned according to what will happen at the end of the conflict.

It is all very well to crush a people and a political regime, but to crush the feelings and emotions of a people is something else. These people will have to live together after the conflict and live in peace. The Kosovars and the Serbs will have to live next to each other and maintain economic, social and political relations. They will have to accept to live as a community.

When two peoples are pitted against each other, they can be forced to cohabit. They can be physically forced to do something, but we cannot change their souls, their minds, their feelings and their emotions through force.

The consequences of this conflict may be felt for many years, if not generations. This is why we must carefully measure the impact of each action, to avoid exacerbating the psychological state of those who will have to live together after the conflict has ended.

We must save lives, not only the lives of Kosovars, who are currently mistreated and forced from their homes, but also the lives of Serbs. There are Serbs who are innocent in this conflict. There is a president, a dictator who does not care about the population. However, there are also innocent Serbs who are being forced to take military action.

Not all the Serbs are prepared to take arms in this conflict. These people also deserve to live. They too are at the mercy of a tyrant and they will need understanding and help. Their lives deserve to be saved just like those of the Kosovars and of the people in neighbouring countries.

Instability in the Balkans would pose a threat to all of Europe and perhaps even to the other countries that might be drawn into a world war. We must take great care that this goal of saving lives now does not lead us to thoughtless acts of war that would yield undesirable results.

At any rate, the decisions being made are very serious. This is why we congratulated the Prime Minister today on informing us of Canada's most recent decision to send troops over there. We are delighted that the House was the first to be informed, but we believe this is not enough.

We still ask for a vote on this and on the deployment of troops. We do not know what the future will bring.

• (1355)

What will happen to the 600 or 800 Canadian troops who are going to be sent to Macedonia in the weeks to come? They will bear arms, they might come under attack. This has already begun. This morning a dispatch published in *Le Monde* said "Acts of anger or open hostility against NATO countries are becoming more numerous in Macedonia".

Further it said "The twelve thousand NATO men stationed in Macedonia frequently have stones thrown at them. On April 20, a French forces jeep was set on fire in a village inhabited by Serbs". This is happening in Macedonia. This is what NATO troops are being subjected to.

How can we tell whether in a week or two—

**The Speaker:** I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member, but his time is up. He will still have five minutes to respond to other members' questions or comments after Oral Question Period.

We will now proceed to Statements by Members.

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

### AIR CADETS

**Mr. Bryon Wilfert (Oak Ridges, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this year marks the 30th anniversary of the 778 Banshee Royal Canadian Air Cadet Squadron in Richmond Hill.

From its early beginnings in 1969, the 778 Banshee Squadron has been an active force in the community, whether it has been in helping out with many community activities or in supporting local charities. Its tireless efforts were rewarded in 1998 by the town of Richmond Hill by being awarded the best volunteer organization in the community.

From an initial membership of 30 in 1969 to a strength of 110 today, the cadets are continually learning that hard work and team effort produce positive results. Their motto: To learn, to serve, to advance.

The rewards of joining the air cadets are many. The vision and attributes it builds in our youth are outstanding.

Commanding Officer Javed Khan, his officers and civilian instructor team and all the cadets have much to be proud of. I take this opportunity to congratulate them. I wish them every success in the future.

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#### FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

**Mr. Howard Hilstrom (Selkirk—Interlake, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, freedom of the press is one of the cornerstones of a democratic society. I believe this cornerstone is being weakened by the direct intervention of the federal government.

Terry Milewski of the CBC reported possible misconduct by the Prime Minister. The PMO complained and Milewski was suspended. Given the price he paid in reporting this story, will Milewski be willing to report negatively on the Prime Minister in the future?

John Collison, a vocal critic of Winnipeg's mayor, was recently dismissed as a talk show host at Winnipeg radio station 1290 Fox. He was fired because in his words "station managers feared reprisal from the CRTC". Mr. Collison stated, "I feel the CRTC has created a situation where you are advised to check your civil liberties at the door, that if you enter a broadcast profession, you give up the freedom of conscience, expression and speech".

I may not agree with a journalist's opinion or with how the journalist reports a story. However, I will defend with my life their right to freely express their opinions without government interference.

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#### MINING INDUSTRY

**Hon. Charles Caccia (Davenport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, arsenic is a very dangerous substance when it comes in contact with humans. Arsenic often reaches drinking water from mining operations.

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In Yellowknife the Giant gold mine contains 260,000 tonnes of arsenic dust. Clean-up costs are estimated at \$100 million. The owner of the mine has filed for bankruptcy. Who will pay for the clean-up?

Meanwhile in Ontario the provincial government has failed to prevent massive arsenic leaks from an old mine and toxic waste dump near Belleville.

Clearly where pollution has already occurred, the polluter must pay. The mining industry has a responsibility to the public and should not leave Canadians on the hook for the damage caused by its activities. The mining industry should live up to its Yellowknife declaration and clean up its contaminated sites instead of passing on the damage to the public purse, mainly to Canadians at large.

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#### INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS

**Mrs. Judi Longfield (Whitby—Ajax, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to welcome the International Association of Fire Fighters to Ottawa as it holds its eighth annual Canadian Legislative Conference.

Firefighters form the backbone of our emergency services. They are always the first on the scene. They are always prepared to do whatever it takes to deliver others from harm's way, including risking their own lives.

As the former chair of the Whitby Fire Department, I had the opportunity to work closely with these men and women. I can personally attest to their professionalism, their loyalty and their devotion to making our communities safer.

● (1400)

The IAFF continues to push for the adoption of Operation Respond and for the establishment of a third party federally regulated investigative agency that would help protect firefighters from some of the dangers they face on a daily basis.

Renowned on the hill for their hospitality, our firefighters have come to us with proposals that will make our communities much safer. I thank them for their continuing efforts and wish them a successful conclusion to their visit in Ottawa.

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#### LEUKEMIA

**Mr. Jim Abbott (Kootenay—Columbia, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, recently I had the pleasure of meeting a truly special individual from Kootenay—Columbia, a young lady who has beaten the odds and provided inspiration for people across Canada and the world.

Pamela Finnie, who lives in Golden, B.C., was diagnosed with leukemia in 1994 when she was 10 years old. At that time, Pamela found it difficult to talk to anyone about her illness and instead

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channelled her feelings into a scrapbook, stories and even a book entitled "My Life with Leukemia".

She also used her creative talents to develop a board game for kids called "Talking for Tokens". Knowing how she felt when she was diagnosed with leukemia and how hard it was to talk about it, Pamela created the game to help other kids with cancer to express their feelings.

Pamela is now 15 years old and tomorrow will be honoured with the Terry Fox Award on the 10th annual YTV Achievement Awards. I know I speak for everyone in Kootenay—Columbia and, I am sure, in the House when I thank her for her inspiration and unwavering strength. Congratulations to Pamela.

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**YOUTH VIOLENCE**

**Mr. Gurbax Singh Malhi (Bramalea—Gore—Malton—Springdale, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, last week two teenagers killed 13 people at a high school in Littleton, Colorado, in the U.S. Those who say it cannot happen here in Canada should remember December 6, 1989 when 14 young women were killed in Montreal.

Television, movies, computers, video games and the Internet, all these modern developments are leading to a decline in empathy among today's youth. Contact with machines is no substitute for human interaction. Technology firms and research groups must reconsider the impact of the various mass media on our humanity.

It is time for government to introduce more public awareness programs through community groups, schools, police and volunteer organizations aimed at helping youth get in touch with their feelings and the feelings of others.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**GOVERNMENT OF QUEBEC**

**Mr. Nick Discepola (Vaudreuil—Soulanges, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the referendum campaign is off and running.

The odds are strong that the PQ government will be tempted to use public funds in the coming months to promote Quebec's separation from the rest of Canada.

Quebec would still face a period of political instability with consequent economic repercussions. Separatists will be sending unsettling messages to possible investors.

But Quebecers will not fall for these PQ tricks. They will be able to distinguish between the messages of separation sent by the

PQ over the next few months and the federal government's call for co-operation in improving the Canadian federation.

\* \* \*

[English]

**VETERANS**

**Mr. Bob Wood (Nipissing, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to take this opportunity to pay tribute to two esteemed veterans who passed away a few days ago, Wallace Pike from Newfoundland and James A. MacAuley from Prince Edward Island. Both of these men were the last surviving veterans from the first world war in their respective provinces.

A retired brigadier with the Salvation Army, Wallace Pike fought alongside fellow Canadians in some of the great war's most infamous battles, including Ypres and Vimy Ridge. He was forced to return to Newfoundland after being hit by burning shrapnel that blew off two fingers on his right hand.

James A. MacAuley enlisted in the Canadian army two years into the first world war shortly after reaching the age of 16. He was sent to the front lines in France in the summer of 1917 and spent most of the war in the trenches.

At a very young age, these two men were exposed to the brutal reality of war. They sacrificed their youth so that we could enjoy our freedom.

We thank James and Wallace. Canada remembers their contribution and will never forget them.

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**CHILD PORNOGRAPHY**

**Mr. Eric Lowther (Calgary Centre, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I had the pleasure today of presenting a petition from over 100,000 Canadians who are calling for the enforcement of Canadian law against child pornography. This is the single largest petition of this parliament. It is twice as large as the next largest petition. It has reached this size in only a few short weeks and more continue to come in. This is because three months ago a B.C. court struck down laws against child pornography. The Liberals voted against upholding the law when they voted down a Reform motion in February. Meanwhile, pornography has poured into B.C. and court cases are on hold.

• (1405)

The court appeal has finally begun. How much longer will it take the government to give Canadians their law back and stop putting children at risk? Canadians are telling those who champion more rights that they have gone way too far when we can no longer protect the most vulnerable in our society.

[Translation]

### YOUNG OFFENDERS

**Mr. Richard Marceau (Charlesbourg, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, when it comes to young offenders, the federal government is at complete odds with the supreme court.

In a recent decision, the court said that the federal government was sending far too many offenders to jail. The court pointed out that Canada had one of the highest rates of people behind bars of any country in the world and that the number of jail sentences handed down by Canadian courts had increased in recent years.

What is the federal government's response? It is scrapping the existing Young Offenders Act, which has been working just fine, and introducing a bill that will now put adolescents in the repressive environment of adult prisons. And it is doing this to keep the Reform Party happy and ape our neighbours to the south.

The Bloc Quebecois urges the Minister of Justice to listen to the supreme court and not impose its new young offenders legislation on Quebec.

\* \* \*

### QUEBEC MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

**Mr. Denis Paradis (Brome—Missisquoi, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Quebecers are tired of referendums, and Premier Bouchard is promising us another one.

He has even sent Louise Beaudoin, his minister of international relations, to Belgium, where she told the newspaper *Le Soir*, as reported in its April 12 edition, that Canada and Quebec are drifting apart.

She went on to say "Things are such in Canada now that the federal government has become the central government. The provinces are simply advisory bodies, in essence like any other body".

Ms. Beaudoin, come home quick. Being far away, you have lost the sense of what Canada is all about—decentralization, consensus and flexibility.

\* \* \*

[English]

### CANCER

**Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, we are ending cancer month on a note of despair, not hope.

We have firefighters here today trying to get the government to minimize exposure to cancer causing hazardous products. We also have new statistics showing that lung cancer related deaths are

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actually going up. This year 17,000 Canadians will die from lung cancer.

Tragically these deaths are preventable because nine out of ten are caused by smoking and smoking, we know, is not an accident. That is why tobacco companies spend millions of dollars advertising their products. We know the rate among young people is actually going up and advertising plays a role.

The real question for us today is: Why is the federal government so acquiescent in the face of pressure from industry? Why does it not listen to the firefighters and implement Operation Respond? Why does it not listen to the cancer society and to the voices of young people and actually do something about young people and smoking?

As we wrap up another cancer month, let us recommit ourselves to do whatever we can to stamp out this deadly disease.

\* \* \*

### HOUSING

**Ms. Carolyn Parrish (Mississauga Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Affordability and Choice Today program, ACT, at the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. This program, which was recognized in 1998 by the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements, was selected as one of the top 100 global best practices in improving the living environment.

The Minister of Public Works and Government Services recently announced that 14 grants worth up to \$20,000 each were awarded under the ACT program. Members should also note that the minister has extended the program for an additional three years. The ACT program helps improve affordability and choice in housing by finding innovative projects that demonstrate and encourage local level regulatory reform.

Once again, congratulations to CMHC and its partners in the ACT program, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, the Canadian Home Builders' Association and the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association.

\* \* \*

### IBM CANADA

**Mr. Jim Jones (Markham, PC):** Mr. Speaker, as home to over 750 technology companies and growing, the town of Markham is Canada's high tech capital. That reputation grew on Friday when IBM Canada officially announced that the new site for the IBM software solutions laboratory will be in Markham.

This lab is one of Canada's largest research and development facilities and employs more than 1,500 software developers, engineers and support staff. IBM lab employees currently work at three separate leased facilities in the greater Toronto area.

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Starting in the fall of 2001, they will all work in a new \$125 million state of the art building in Markham. This is the latest example of IBM's positive contribution to Canada.

• (1410)

In 1998 alone, IBM Canada has invested \$250 million in research and development, hired over 3,300 regular employees, has a workforce of over 17,000 regular workers across the country and will provide work term experience for 800 students.

Let us do more to nurture the success of companies like IBM Canada.

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**RADIO MUSIC AWARDS**

**Mr. Mauril Bélanger (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, last month some of Canada's best new artists were honoured when the Canadian Radio Music Awards were presented during Canadian Music Week.

The nominees were chosen as first time charted artists based on radio spins recorded last year. The winners were determined by votes from radio station program and music directors as well as on-air staff.

I would like to congratulate this year's winners: Melanie Doane; the Matthew Good Band; Bruce Guthro; the Moffatts; Heather Nova; VIP; Love Inc.; Justin Gray from the Band 3 Deep; and, of course, Shania Twain.

Once again I offer my congratulations to these Canadian artists and invite everyone to encourage them and other Canadian performers in their quest for success and excellence.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**AMATEUR SPORT**

**Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères—Les-Patriotes, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, a remarkable woman, an exemplary citizen, a trainer who led the Canadian women's hockey team to a perfect record and who headed the team that was the pride of us all, that is Danièle Sauvageau, Quebecker, francophone and competent.

But the Canadian ice hockey association is laying her off. What is wrong? Is it because Danièle Sauvageau is not from western Canada? Because she is a francophone? Or because she is a woman? A Quebec trainer for a year, is that enough?

This is another case of an organization funded by Heritage Canada guilty of flagrant, petty and unacceptable discrimination. And what control is there over this organization? None, chorus the good Liberal members.

Wrong. In the case of such patent and unfair discrimination by a petty and miserable clique, the minister must intervene and cut funds, if need be. And clean house while she is at it.

Discrimination and injustice in Canadian sports organizations funded by taxpayers—enough is enough.

\* \* \*

[English]

**FRASER RIVER**

**Mr. Grant McNally (Dewdney—Alouette, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, in my riding and in other ridings in B.C., local emergency officials are warning residents to be well prepared and ready for a flood or high water. If the area gets a long hot spell, a record snow fall or heavy rains, it could cause a major flood on the Fraser River.

Not to worry, some say, because the municipal dikes are built to withstand a flood equal to the devastating floods of 1894 and 1948. However, local officials have told me that due to cutbacks in funding more than 100 kilometres of dike in the valley have been poorly maintained and do not meet that standard. Much of that 100 kilometres is in my riding.

If a flood should occur, how can I assure my constituents that they will receive the emergency assistance that the military can provide so well, when the Liberal government has closed CFB Chilliwack? Will men and equipment be flown in from Alberta to Abbotsford airport which might be under water?

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Surely the government can assure British Columbians that it has done all it can to prepare for the possibility of flooding and that it is ready to provide immediate effective assistance if a flood should occur.

\* \* \*

**PENSIONS**

**Mrs. Michelle Dockrill (Bras d'Or—Cape Breton, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, Bill C-78 is about a basic principle: Who owns pension funds? Most Canadians agree that pensions are delayed earnings and belong to the workers. At one point the Liberals believed this too.

In 1986 a Liberal member spoke on pension legislation and said:

Those pension funds should be solely directed toward the payment of pension benefits to retiring and outgoing workers.

Last night that member, the Minister of Canadian Heritage, proved how much value we can place on the words of a Liberal in opposition. She could have voted to protect the rights of members of the armed forces, public employees, RCMP members and their families. Instead, she voted for legislation to take away their pension surplus and turn it into a personal account for the Minister of Finance.



*Oral Questions*

The Minister of Canadian Heritage got it right in 1986. Pension funds and any surplus belong to the workers. The federal government should set an example for other employers. Instead, the government is ramming through legislation that tramples the principle for which people have fought for decades.

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**CANCHILD CENTRE**

**Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I salute the good work of the Hamilton based CanChild Centre for Childhood Disability Research.

Formed in 1989, CanChild works to maximize the life quality of children and youth with disabilities and their families. Its multidisciplinary team has taken a leadership role in identifying emerging issues for research, practice, policy and education and works to educate consumers, service providers, policy makers and students.

Today, CanChild's research in products have been translated into a dozen languages and are being used around the world.

• (1415)

I congratulate members of CanChild on the success they have achieved in helping others. This shows that Canadian researchers are second to none.

**ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**

[English]

**KOSOVO**

**Mr. Preston Manning (Leader of the Opposition, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, this morning the Prime Minister informed the House that Canada would be committing peacekeeping forces to Kosovo. The mission would be to enforce a peace agreement when it is reached with the Yugoslav government.

Since we are being asked to commit peacekeepers to Kosovo, is the government assuming that there will soon be a peace agreement to enforce there?

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we hope there will be a peace agreement and we are working hard to try to achieve one. As I said in the House yesterday, there are a number of active discussions going on. There are a number of interventions taking place in Moscow.

Some indication has come out of Belgrade that certain political leaders there are of a mind to do it. We are actively engaged in trying to get a diplomatic process together to get agreement on the five points that have been raised, and particularly come to grips

with the fundamental issue of having an international force in Kosovo to protect refugees. That is the key issue.

All I can say to the hon. Leader of the Opposition is that we are making every effort, along with many others, to try to bring that about.

**Mr. Preston Manning (Leader of the Opposition, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, if there are no solid signs from the Yugoslav government that it is prepared to commit to a peace agreement, what is the government really committing these troops to?

If these ground troops enter Kosovo, even under the umbrella of a tentative peace agreement, is there not a real possibility that they will find themselves involved in a serious armed conflict and what we are really being asked to do is to commit ground troops to the conflict in Yugoslavia?

**Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as the Prime Minister said today, these 800 troops are being sent over in connection with peacekeeping functions. They will be located in Macedonia. They will be working with a British brigade. That is why they are going to that specific location.

There are already some 12,000 troops in Macedonia who are there for purposes of moving into Kosovo when a peace agreement is reached. Then we will go in there to help bring about peace and security for the people of Kosovo.

There is no other reason for them to be there. As the Prime Minister has said, if there is any change in those terms or conditions there would be further debate in the House.

**Mr. Preston Manning (Leader of the Opposition, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, what we do not want to do is commit 800 Canadian troops to a peacekeeping role in Kosovo and then three, four or five weeks down the road have the government come back and tell us that these troops are now engaged in a full ground war because the peace agreement collapsed.

We want to make sure that these troops are committed to enforcing a peace, in other words not making war. If what the Prime Minister wants is a commitment of Canadian ground forces to peacekeeping activities only, why does he not bring a clear, votable motion to that effect before parliament?

**Hon. Herb Gray (Deputy Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will make the position very clear. We have already had four take note debates on this matter. There has been general assent for the idea of Canadian troops being involved in peacekeeping activities.

I do not see any change from that situation as compared to what the Prime Minister had to say so eloquently this morning.

**Miss Deborah Grey (Edmonton North, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, that could be some comfort except that this morning a top

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American envoy met with the Russian government. Those negotiations were hampered by the NATO embargo of Russian ships.

NATO has a no compromise position that makes it hard, if not impossible, to broker a peace deal. How could this NATO no compromise position ever entice the Russians to broker a peace deal?

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am not quite sure what this no compromise position is that the hon. member talked about.

We have just come from a NATO summit where the basic outreach to the Russians was strongly endorsed by all the countries. We talked about the need to have a broader international force, not just a NATO force. We talked about the importance of developing major initiatives in the Balkan region to help in the reconstruction.

I do not think there is a no compromise position. What there is no compromise on is the fundamental principle of securing the safety and rights of the people of Kosovo.

• (1420)

**Miss Deborah Grey (Edmonton North, Ref.):** We agree, Mr. Speaker, but we cannot have it both ways. The Minister of Foreign Affairs will soon follow the American envoy, the UN secretary general and the foreign minister of Greece in a diplomatic mission to Moscow.

What specifically will our Minister of Foreign Affairs be able to bring to the table in Moscow that is not already being offered by the Greeks, the Americans and the UN secretary general himself?

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** To begin with, Mr. Speaker, I hope the one thing I can bring is the full endorsement of the House, representing all Canadians, to find a peaceful resolution. That is what I hope I can bring. I hope we can be assured of that matter, because we decided coming out of the Washington meetings that it was important to engage in a dialogue.

In particular, one thing we have very much in common with the Russian government at this point in time is that we both want to see an involvement of the United Nations Security Council as a major player in helping to secure a peaceful resolution. That is something we can identify with and work with the Russians on.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, according to this morning's *Montreal Gazette*, while the European Union is trying to put an oil embargo in place against Yugoslavia, some U.S. companies are selling oil to Yugoslavia. This would appear to be a completely ridiculous situation.

Can the Minister of Foreign Affairs tell us whether some U.S. companies are indeed delivering petroleum products to Yugoslavia, in violation of the European embargo?

[*English*]

**Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I do not know if that is the case, but the United States government, along with the European Union governments, would want to ensure that such products which are supporting the war effort of the Yugoslav government would not get into Yugoslavia.

The idea behind the embargo that NATO would be involved in policing would ensure the will of these individual governments is met when merchant ships are coming toward that harbour.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I find it somewhat surprising that the minister would not be aware of this.

It seems to me that it is rather important to be kept current, since adoption of such a strategy of bombing the Yugoslav refineries would place our soldiers in danger, if the Yugoslav forces have fuel to fight back.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs will be going to Moscow. Can he assure us that no Canadian company, or foreign company with subsidiaries in Canada, is delivering petroleum products to Yugoslavia in violation of the embargo and of the entire strategy upon which there should be total NATO solidarity? Otherwise, this becomes ridiculous; we are just shooting ourselves in the foot.

[*English*]

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, according to the information we have, no petroleum products have been exported from Canada since January 1998.

In this case Canada is clearly on line with what the embargo is presenting. We will make sure that if countries sign on to the embargo they will adhere to its requirements.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Daniel Turp (Beauharnois—Salaberry, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the hope for a diplomatic solution through Russia appears to be fading.

This morning, in Moscow, Mr. Chernomyrdin repeated that NATO's air campaign had to stop to allow negotiations with Belgrade to get under way. As for Mr. Draskovic, he seems to have backed down from the comments he made yesterday.

In that context, I ask the Minister of Foreign Affairs if the deployment of additional forces in Macedonia, as announced by the

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Prime Minister, and the call up of 33,000 reservists by the United States are signs of the imminent sending of ground troops into Kosovo?

[English]

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I think the leader of the New Democratic Party put it properly this morning. The commitment made today to fulfil our commitment to ensure there is a peace implementation force is one of the best signs and indications that we want a peaceful resolution to the dispute.

[Translation]

**Mr. Daniel Turp (Beauharnois—Salaberry, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, we also believe that a diplomatic solution is best. However, the number of troops now gathering outside Kosovo's border is very large.

Did the Prime Minister make a slip of the tongue this morning when he said that helicopters may be used in Kosovo? In making that comment, did he not give another indication that the sending of ground troops into Kosovo is now imminent?

• (1425)

[English]

**Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** No, Mr. Speaker. We are sending them there for peacekeeping purposes. The helicopters are part of the reconnaissance purpose of the Canadian forces that will be there. There are some 800 of them. They will be in neighbouring Macedonia. They will be there working with the British. They will take some training time when they get over there so they are ready to move into Kosovo when a peace agreement is reached.

Meanwhile, they will also be able to help out in the humanitarian effort with respect to the refugees that are there, help to protect those refugees.

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the foreign affairs minister.

Canada has announced that it is sending 800 ground troops to enforce a peace settlement in Kosovo. However there is no peace settlement. What we have instead is a NATO embargo in the face of Russian objections.

Does the government believe this interference with Russian ships, this military escalation, enhances prospects for a peaceful settlement?

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I think the Prime Minister answered that question very succinctly this morning when he said the whole purpose of the embargo is to continue to apply the pressure that is necessary to bring the Milosevic regime to the table to begin to negotiate .

We will not go out of our way to provide any provocation. It will be done within sort of the legal rules. We have asked the planners at NATO to come up with the proposals that would incorporate those kinds of elements.

What we are doing is what I said yesterday, trying to get a balanced approach. We will continue the negotiation but continue the pressure at the same time.

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has said that he supports his foreign affairs minister's diplomatic mission to Moscow. However, again today he made it clear that he also supports the NATO embargo.

This sets us on a collision course since Russia has made it clear that it will not respect a NATO embargo. How can the Prime Minister pretend that this provocation will help secure Russian co-operation for a peace settlement?

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I do not see it that way. I really want to suggest to the hon. member that what is being applied, coming out of the NATO summit meetings, is the important unified position of keeping pressure applied to the Milosevic regime through the air campaign, through cutting off supplies to his military activities. At the same time it is important, as a clear connection to that, that we undertake negotiations and have the Russians become involved in seeking the solution.

I certainly can report to the hon. member discussions I have had this morning with some of the people who have already been there. It does not appear to be as big a problem for the Russians as it appears to be for the leader of the New Democratic Party.

**Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC):** Mr. Speaker, my question relates to the Prime Minister's announcement this morning. We all hope in the House that the Prime Minister will make a full report to parliament on the NATO Washington meeting, as Prime Minister Blair did in his parliament yesterday.

Have orders in council been passed authorizing the sending of Canadian air force personnel and peacekeepers to Yugoslavia? If not, how are their veterans benefits being secured?

**Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, for anybody who serves in the Canadian forces in an overseas mission in a hostile situation there are special allowances and special provisions with respect subsequently to pensions for any that are injured. All of these apply in this particular circumstance.

We are absolutely determined if we send any of our peacekeepers, any of our air force personnel into harm's way, to look after them as best we can. We will reduce the risk to them while they are there. If something does happen—we hope it will not—to any of them we will look after them as best we can.

**Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC):** Mr. Speaker, according to the defence minister's own staff and according to legal counsel

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from the House of Commons, the order in council that is in place is inadequate at the present time and the statutes are not sufficient. Our research indicates that the order in council the minister referred to last week is insufficient.

I am asking the Prime Minister today to pass a retroactive order in council to ensure that our troops, both in the air and on the ground, will receive the veterans benefits when they return. Or, will it turn a blind eye to these troops as it did to merchant navy veterans 54 years ago?

• (1430)

**Hon. Herb Gray (Deputy Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I can assure the hon. lady that the Minister of National Defence will take all necessary steps to make certain that our valiant troops and air force and naval people in the area will get all those benefits to which they are fully entitled. All necessary steps will be taken. The hon. lady can be assured of that.

**Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Coquihalla, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the official opposition offers its moral support to the 800 troops that the government has committed today. I think Canadians should all pray for a safe and speedy return. However, there are many questions that must be answered.

The 800 Canadian troops heading to the former Yugoslavia will be working in conjunction with the British Fourth Armoured Division. Canadians want to know precisely what the command and control structure will be. Will our troops be commanded by Canadian officers or will the British have complete command and control over our forces?

**Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, of course the immediate command of our forces will be by the Canadians who are there, but they will be operating as part of a British brigade, so they will be working closely with the British in that connection.

All of the details of that will be worked out, as is required, and we will be happy to inform members of the details.

**Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Coquihalla, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, these are urgent issues on which all Canadians want to have details.

One of the most important questions that must be answered today, however, is the matter of rules of engagement for this mission. Somalia and Bosnia have shown us that the rules of engagement must be established at home, in Canada, before the deployment of a mission.

Will Canada determine its own rules of engagement, or will they be determined by NATO? Will the defence minister tell us precisely today what those rules of engagement will entail?

**Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (Minister of National Defence, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, they will be NATO rules of engagement. We

are part of NATO and we are part of working out those rules of engagement. I would be happy to provide the hon. member with that information.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**MILLENNIUM SCHOLARSHIPS**

**Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, as usual, the Minister of Human Resources Development has not answered the very specific questions about the millennium scholarships.

We know why: the foundation's administrative costs are estimated at 5% of the annual \$300 million in scholarships, or \$150 million over 10 years.

Does the Minister of Human Resources Development realize that the federal government's stubborn insistence on this further duplication will deprive 50,000 students of \$3,000 scholarships? Does the minister realize this, or is he waiting for the students to come and tell him?

**Hon. Pierre S. Pettigrew (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am not waiting for the students to come and tell me. I will soon be meeting with the students, who asked to see me again. That will be next Thursday. I always enjoy meeting with the students.

However, I hope we will be able to talk the Government of Quebec out of its inflexibility. Last week, it was on again about the right to opt out with full compensation, when even the National Assembly's unanimous resolution does not mention this.

It was Minister Legault who brought this up again last week, but what I would like to see is an agreement between the foundation and the government to help Quebec's students.

**Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, how does the minister explain that, even though the money in the EI fund belongs to workers and employers, he refuses to create an autonomous fund, but when it comes to the millennium scholarships, he is handing over \$2.5 billion of taxpayers' money to a private foundation so as not to be accountable? Is this not an out and out contradiction?

**Hon. Pierre S. Pettigrew (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I see that Bloc Quebecois members are again opposing the fact that Canada wants to celebrate the advent of the new millennium by providing assistance to students.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh.

**Hon. Pierre S. Pettigrew:** It is absolutely incredible that the government is being criticized for wanting to help students with a

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ten year program to help them further their knowledge in a knowledge-based economy. [Translation]

It is this inflexibility, this ideology, and this referendum campaign mindset that is harming Quebec's students.

\* \* \*

• (1435)

[English]

**KOSOVO**

**Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, in answer to an earlier question the foreign affairs minister said that he did not understand where "no compromise" had come from. Let me quote from the NATO communiqué of this weekend to which his government agreed: "There can be no compromise on these conditions", referring to the five NATO conditions.

How can this minister go over to Moscow to negotiate when he is not prepared to have any compromise, which is what it says in black and white on this statement?

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there is a very substantial difference between having a set of principles on which you do not compromise and looking for the means of achieving those principles in which you can accommodate and compromise. We on this side of the House are not used to compromising our principles. Maybe the hon. member is, but not us.

**Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, we keep hearing this doublespeak about what they mean by embargoes and what they mean by all of these things. The bottom line is that we are asking the Russians to give us a hand in finding a peace settlement for Kosovo. The question is obvious. What are we offering to the Russians? What sort of hand are we offering when we are not prepared to break from these terms? How can we possibly negotiate?

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in the statement given by the Prime Minister this morning he pointed out one very major initiative that Canada helped to create. We proposed that the international force that would implement the agreement would not have to be just a NATO force, that it could be broader than that. I think that was accepted by NATO members at the summit. That was one of the major areas of disagreement in previous negotiations with Russian emissaries.

That is one good example around which we can discuss establishing an international force that would implement the agreement and would have with it—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Drummond.

**TAINTED BLOOD**

**Mrs. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, last September 18, the federal government announced the injection of \$300 million into a new program aimed at helping the provinces meet the costs of health care for all victims of tainted blood.

Since Quebec already has a similar program, which provides care to all tainted blood victims, does the minister intend to pay Quebec its fair share of the federal funds on a per capita basis, that is \$75 million?

**Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have already offered Quebec its share of this funding to ensure the availability of medical services for those infected with hepatitis C.

I have already sent documentation concerning this proposal to my colleague, the Quebec Minister of Health, Mrs. Marois. I await her response.

**Mrs. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, in the 1996 throne speech, the government made the commitment that it would not put into place any new cost-shared programs with the provinces or, if it did, there would be a right to opt out with full compensation.

In the case of this program for assistance to tainted blood victims, will the government finally respect its own commitment from 1996?

**Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is, unfortunately, mistaken. This proposal is not affected by the commitment she refers to. The commitment is not pertinent to this program.

What we proposed is merely an approach that will ensure that people infected with hepatitis C can have access to the required medical services now and in the future.

I have proposed a certain approach to Mrs. Marois, and I await her response.

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[English]

**JUSTICE**

**Mr. Eric Lowther (Calgary Centre, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, it was presented today. Over 100,000 Canadians signed it, the largest petition of this parliament. The petition calls for the strong enforcement of Canadian law against child pornography.

For three months child pornography has poured into B.C. and court cases are on hold. What is the government's answer to the 100,000 Canadian petitioners who want children to be protected

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from pornographers now; not a day from now, not a month from now, but now?

• (1440)

**Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the answer is loud and clear. It is too bad that members of the Reform Party do not stop their scaremongering in terms of this issue and act a little more responsibly.

Our position on child pornography and the constitutionality of the section in question is clear. The hon. member should read our factum. This matter is before the courts now. We believe the law to be constitutional and we, along with the attorney general of British Columbia, are defending that law.

**Mr. Eric Lowther (Calgary Centre, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the government had an opportunity to uphold Canadian law three months ago. One hundred thousand names on this petition have been gathered in three short weeks, compared to three months of inaction. The petitioners are calling on the government to answer this question today: When are you going to fix this? The petitioners want it fixed now.

**Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this party, this government, has respect for the rule of law. We along with attorneys general in provinces such as British Columbia and Alberta understand that the correct approach is to defend the existing law, which we believe to be constitutional.

**The Speaker:** I ask all hon. members to please address the Chair in their questions and answers.

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[Translation]

**AMATEUR SPORT**

**Ms. Caroline St-Hilaire (Longueuil, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Prime Minister took part in the tribute to the great Maurice Richard and praised his huge contribution to hockey in Canada.

In the meantime, Hockey Canada has treated trainer Danièle Sauvageau in a very particular and unfair manner.

My question is for the Prime Minister. Does the Prime Minister intend to ask Hockey Canada why it gave trainer Danièle Sauvageau such discriminatory treatment?

**Mr. Mauril Bélanger (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the government honoured its commitment to amateur sport by increasing the budget for it by \$10 million annually. Part of the budget was for improved training for trainers.

From that to saying that the government must get involved and go as far as to choose the trainers, as suggested by the opposition,

there is a step we are not prepared to take. It is not up to the government to meddle in the internal administration of national teams.

\* \* \*

[English]

**NATO**

**Hon. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade tabled a report in the House on issues relating to nuclear disarmament, including a representation that Canada urge NATO to review the strategic concept for NATO.

Can the Minister of Foreign Affairs tell the House what steps Canada undertook to review the strategic concept for NATO at the summit this past weekend?

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for Mount Royal for her question. With the attention being paid to Kosovo, a very important statement coming out of the summit was overlooked. The NATO leaders made the commitment that arms control and disarmament is a vital part of maintaining NATO security. The communiqué issued clear instructions that there would be a review of the nuclear policy for NATO and we have asked our ambassador to start preparing recommendations in that regard. That was an initiative which Canada supported.

I want to thank all members of the committee who helped to bring about that very important initiative.

\* \* \*

**YOUNG OFFENDERS ACT**

**Mr. Chuck Cadman (Surrey North, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, just how far does the Young Offenders Act go in protecting identities? Last Friday in Vancouver Paul Glover was awarded civil damages against two men who assaulted him when they were teenagers. The media will not name them, fearing repercussions under the Young Offenders Act.

Will the Minister of Justice please clear the air? Does the Young Offenders Act apply to civil proceedings and can we expect the same from the new youth criminal justice act?

**Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have no intention of commenting on matters that may continue to be before the court.

**Mr. Chuck Cadman (Surrey North, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, Paul Glover at no time raised the issue of criminal proceedings. The young men raised it themselves in an attempt to escape civil liability. The minister knows that civil court is the only place where victims can seek redress for pain and suffering.

I ask the minister again: Does the Young Offenders Act apply to the civil courts? And there is no appeal pending.

• (1445)

**Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am not going to comment on the specifics of this case. I would be more than happy to discuss this particular case in private with the hon. member.

\* \* \*

### PENSIONS

**Ms. Alexa McDonough (Halifax, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, Bill C-78, the pensions bill, is complex and has profound precedent setting implications, yet the government moved closure after only four hours of debate. Some 670,000 Canadians will be affected directly, and many more indirectly, by this legislation.

Will the President of the Treasury Board assure the House today that he will approve extended committee hearings across the country? Will he allow those affected to voice their concerns, even if their elected representatives here in the House of Commons will be denied that opportunity?

**Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, those affected have been expressing their concerns for at least a year. We have been negotiating in particular the issue of joint management of the pension plans with them. The employee representatives have been quite aware of the issues for months and months. We have discussed with them. We have laid out the issues in front of them.

I think what we have in Bill C-78 is something that is in the interests of public servants and in the interests of taxpayers.

**Mr. Pat Martin (Winnipeg Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the President of the Treasury Board has insisted ad nauseam that he has the right to take the \$30 billion pension surplus because the government has paid the shortfall of about \$13 billion over the years. If the plan owes the government \$13 billion, where does he get off taking \$30 billion to pay for that? I could get better terms from a Las Vegas loan shark. I probably could get better terms from my Bank of Montreal MasterCard.

Why will the Minister not take his \$13 billion and leave the rest where it belongs to provide pension benefits for deserving retirees?

**Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Bill C-78 guarantees to public servants and continues to guarantee to them all the benefits they have been guaranteed before. None of these benefits are affected except that the number of benefits are increased.

### Oral Questions

In the past, public servants have had absolutely no responsibility for the funding of the plan. It is the taxpayers who have taken all the risks. It is the taxpayers who have funded all the deficits. It follows that it is the taxpayers who deserve the surplus.

\* \* \*

### AIR SAFETY

**Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester, PC):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport.

Eleven years ago Transport Canada officials determined that the Kelowna air traffic control tower did not meet minimum safety standards because the air traffic controllers cannot see the runway and cannot see the taxiway. A temporary permit was issued to allow the tower to continue to operate on the condition that a new tower be constructed. Eleven years later, there is no new tower. Will the minister instruct that a new tower be built?

**Hon. David M. Collenette (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Nav Canada is responsible for air navigation in the country and for assessing the appropriate regime that should be used in the present circumstances.

On the particular question, I will get back to the hon. member after researching the issue.

I want to underscore the fact that Transport Canada is absolutely adamant that safety especially in our skies is our top priority.

**Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester, PC):** Mr. Speaker, if safety is the number one priority, let me read from the Transport Canada report on Kelowna which states: "Due to the location and/or height of the control tower, portions of the runway and taxiways are not visible. The problem is becoming even more serious. The margin of safety has been jeopardized. Visibility has been identified as a major safety concern".

That is from a Department of Transport report and I believe it speaks for itself. We should have a new tower in Kelowna immediately.

**Hon. David M. Collenette (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I certainly heard the hon. member's representations.

\* \* \*

### KOSOVO

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration.

Canadians collectively share a concern for the plight of refugees from Kosovo. The minister will also know that many members of parliament have been approached by constituents who have family members in the area.

*Oral Questions*

Will the minister please advise the House about the government's efforts to assist the refugees from Kosovo, particularly those with family members already in Canada?

• (1450)

**Hon. Lucienne Robillard (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I must say we are making all the efforts we can to facilitate family reunification. Today under our special program, the fast track process for family reunification, we have received more than 120 applications from Canadians who have relatives over there and it could include 700 people.

I am pleased to say to the member that the first refugees from Kosovo will arrive today. I am sure that Canadians will welcome them as members of our family.

\* \* \*

**ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS**

**Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, three years ago the federal government invoked a moratorium on gravel extraction on the Fraser River in order to protect salmon stocks. During the past week the Cheam Indian Band has been busy removing 100,000 tonnes of gravel from the Fraser River without a permit and in a restricted area.

Yesterday the minister of Indian affairs struggled to her feet and what she should have said was that she did not have a clue what was going on. Instead she said that aboriginals should have access to the gravel because it was an inherent right.

Why does the minister support the double standard? One set of strict stringent guidelines for everyone who uses the river and another special set of guidelines that seems to only apply to aboriginals.

**The Speaker:** The hon. parliamentary secretary.

**Mr. Wayne Easter (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, maybe if the member had not spoken in such a gravelly voice yesterday we would have understood him more clearly.

On this particular issue we are trying to work with the band in a non-confrontational manner. We are investigating the matter of the gravel. If charges should be laid, they will be laid. It is under investigation.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**YOUNG OFFENDERS**

**Mr. Michel Bellehumeur (Berthier—Montcalm, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, on April 23, the supreme court ruled the following in the Gladue judgment, and I quote "In recent years, compared to other

countries, sentences of imprisonment in Canada have increased at an alarming rate".

Will the Minister of Justice admit that, by imposing harsher penalties, her young offenders bill ignores not only the large consensus in Quebec, but also the opinion of the supreme court itself?

[English]

**Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, indeed not. In fact, as the hon. member knows, our youth justice strategy is an integrated and balanced strategy that acknowledges the fact that this country incarcerates too many young people. Our strategy, when implemented, will ensure that fewer young people are incarcerated needlessly in this country.

\* \* \*

**PENSIONS**

**Ms. Bev Desjarlais (Churchill, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, in 1995 the Liberal government used the turbot war with Spain as a smokescreen for the devastating changes to EI. These changes have made it possible for the Liberal government to rip off \$26 billion from Canadian workers. Now the Liberal government is using the war in Kosovo as a smokescreen for the \$30 billion rip-off of pensioners.

Canadians whose pensions are affected by Bill C-78 deserve to have their voices heard. Will the President of the Treasury Board agree to have cross-country consultations, or is the Liberal government intent on ramming this bill through parliament while the war in Kosovo still provides a convenient cover?

**Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, once again, this question has been debated for months and months. It has been known. We have discussed it with the unions. We have been at the same table. They have all the information.

In this case the question is very clear. The civil servants have been given all the benefits that are in the law. None of them have been taken away from them. The government continues to guarantee them by law. The surplus, once again, has been paid for by the taxpayers. It belongs to the taxpayers. It should be returned to the taxpayers.

\* \* \*

**DEVCO**

**Mr. Gerald Keddy (South Shore, PC):** Mr. Speaker, Devco miners have been exposed to coal dust and gases that have caused serious health side effects and led to many miners being unable to pass medical examinations. Cape Breton has one of the highest rates of cancer in Canada. Now the government is closing the Devco mines leaving miners without medical plan benefits.



*Oral Questions*

What is the Minister of Natural Resources doing to help the miners and their families who are going to be without much needed health insurance?

**Hon. Ralph E. Goodale (Minister of Natural Resources and Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as I have listed on a number of occasions in the House, the government through a variety of means has put together a package that totals something in the order of \$550 million to address a variety of issues in relation to Devco.

We understand very clearly that this is a very difficult circumstance for the people in Cape Breton. We are pursuing all possible means to ease those circumstances.

• (1455)

If there are some specific proposals that are worthy of consideration in respect of the continuation of medical benefits, I would be very interested in hearing the details of any proposal. I will do my best—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Scarborough Centre.

\* \* \*

**KOSOVO**

**Mr. John Cannis (Scarborough Centre, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, over 600,000 Kosovars have sought refuge in neighbouring countries. Half of these people are under the age of 18. As many as 400,000 more Kosovars are internally displaced with no access to international relief.

Can the Minister for International Cooperation update the House as to the humanitarian situation and tell us how their needs are being addressed?

**Hon. Diane Marleau (Minister for International Cooperation and Minister responsible for Francophonie, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, international and Canadian relief agencies are doing excellent work under very difficult conditions.

Immunization programs are in place. There are enough food supplies for the next two weeks with more food on its way. Better still, the International Red Cross has been able to gain access to Kosovo to witness conditions there. We are very hopeful that soon they will be able to commence some relief operations for the internally displaced in Yugoslavia.

\* \* \*

**HOCKEY**

**Mr. John Nunziata (York South—Weston, Ind.):** Mr. Speaker, the federal government is being asked to provide financial assistance to National Hockey League teams.

The major contributing factor to the financial difficulties of some NHL teams are players' salaries. The average NHL salary has gone from \$250,000 to \$1,250,000 in the last seven years.

Will the government give its assurance that NHL teams will not be given subsidies or preferential tax treatment? Will the minister not agree that the government has no business subsidizing wealthy professional hockey players?

**Hon. John Manley (Minister of Industry, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I met earlier today with representatives of a number of Canadian cities that are homes to professional hockey league teams. I am happy to say to the member that nobody asked for subsidies for professional hockey players. There was a lot of concern expressed about the value that mayors in particular perceived there to be for their communities to have a team present. Calgary, Edmonton, Ottawa and Montreal were represented.

I have agreed that I will continue to meet with representatives of the appropriate stakeholders in order to consider what can be done to ensure we do not lose all our hockey teams.

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**ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS**

**Mr. Mike Scott (Skeena, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the minister of Indian affairs knows that aboriginal women do not enjoy the same rights as ordinary Canadian women across the country. She knows that in the event of a marital breakdown, most often it is the aboriginal woman who is out of the house and on the street, and often with the children.

Why is it that the minister and the government negotiated a treaty with the Nisga'a that does nothing to address this problem and makes it out of reach that this could ever be entrenched as rights for aboriginal women in the future?

**Hon. Jane Stewart (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, what I know is that as a result of talking with aboriginal women, in Bill C-49 we have actually taken steps to ensure that land codes will include the reflection of matrimonial property for women in those 14 first nations.

Under the Indian Act now we talk about communal properties and there are no opportunities for aboriginal women. We have identified and want to have a fact finder to help us deal with the issue of matrimonial property. I expect to receive input from that fact finder and make continued progress in this regard.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**HUMAN CLONING**

**Mrs. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the news this morning that Quebec researchers have succeeded in cloning three goats stresses the urgent need to settle the issue of human

*Points of Order*

cloning. Canada only has a moratorium on human cloning, while the European Union officially took position against that practice.

My question is for the Minister of Health. Will the minister pledge to pass Bill C-247, which makes human cloning a criminal offence, before the end of the session?

**Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, a few years ago, we imposed a voluntary moratorium on this practice. That moratorium remains in effect.

We must of course do more. I have already begun consulting experts, including the chairperson of the royal commission that dealt with this issue.

It is my intention to table a bill on this issue later this year.

\* \* \*

• (1500)

[English]

**CANADA PENSION PLAN**

**Hon. Lorne Nystrom (Regina—Qu'Appelle, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my question concerns the Canada pension plan.

The government is aware that there are about 100 firefighters in the hallways this week lobbying. I think the government understands as well that this is the most dangerous occupation in the country.

The firefighters are requesting that they be able to qualify for reduced CPP benefits at age 55, with full benefits at age 60, rather than the current ages of 60 and 65.

Would the Minister of Human Resources Development agree to propose an amendment to the Canada pension plan so that firefighters can receive those benefits at an earlier age because of their dangerous occupation and do so without financial loss?

**Hon. Pierre S. Pettigrew (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question. I will take it under advisement.

I will look into it, as it concerns provincial jurisdiction, and I will get back to him.

\* \* \*

**DEVCO**

**Mr. Gerald Keddy (South Shore, PC):** Mr. Speaker, closing the Devco Mines is putting 1,700 miners out of work in Cape Breton and only 337 of these miners qualify for full retirement pensions.

There will also be remedial work to clean up the mines, work that Devco miners need.

What plans does the Minister of Natural Resources have in place to help the miners earn the pension points needed for full pension?

**Hon. Ralph E. Goodale (Minister of Natural Resources and Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the numbers with respect to those who may qualify for a pension are in the order of 340 in terms of the new proposal that we have on the table. That is in addition to about 137 under existing old pension provisions, and 650 will qualify for severance arrangements that work out to about \$70,000 per person on average.

In addition, there may be some future job opportunities with respect to environmental remediation and we would obviously look at that as an important economic diversification opportunity for Cape Breton.

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**POINTS OF ORDER****QUESTION PERIOD**

**Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Coquihalla, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, during the course of question period I asked the Minister of National Defence about the rules of engagement. He referred to guidelines that had been established by NATO.

I wonder if the minister would table those guidelines for the House this afternoon.

**Hon. Don Boudria (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member opposite knows that is not the rule. He knows the rule is that when a minister, not anyone else, reads from a public document, that is, a government document, he or she must table it in the House.

This has nothing to do with the fact that the minister may have referred to something else. That is an entirely different story and this criteria does not apply.

• (1505)

**The Speaker:** I did not see the hon. minister reading or referring to any document, so I would rule this is out of order.

**Mr. Randy White:** Mr. Speaker, I understood that the question of privilege which was raised yesterday would be responded to.

**The Speaker:** The question of privilege will be responded to when the hon. member for Provencher is here. I would like to hear what he has to say too. Whenever he is here, that is when we will hear it.

*Supply***GOVERNMENT ORDERS***[Translation]***SUPPLY**

ALLOTTED DAY—KOSOVO

The House resumed consideration of the motion and the amendment.

**Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup—Témiscouata—Les Basques, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I will use this question and comment period to congratulate the member for Joliette on his speech. He has stressed how important it was for NATO and Canada to take a very firm position in order to bring the situation in Yugoslavia back to normal, while being very active on the diplomatic front.

I would like to ask him the following question. Students at La Pruchière school, in my riding, sent me more than one hundred messages they have written to children in Kosovo to give them hope, hope that the war will end soon and they will be able to live like normal children again.

Could the member for Joliette tell me whether a vote by the House on Canada's position on this crisis and the deployment of troops would not help the diplomatic efforts undertaken by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Canada and all those involved in this conflict bring about a peaceful settlement as soon as possible, thereby responding to the call from the students in my riding?

**Mr. René Laurin:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague for letting us know about the wishes of children in his riding.

This shows that we in Quebec live by the democratic spirit of institutional governance. We want to live peacefully, this is a concern children have very early on. For them to convey this to children in Kosovo shows that Canadians and Quebecers in particular are a peace-loving people who, even when they have to take this kind of measures, are still seeking international peace and stability.

In a situation like this one, a vote is a must. We just gave a mandate to our troops. We are sending from 600 to 800 soldiers supposedly to keep the peace, but we never know when the conflict might escalate.

As I mentioned before, the paper *Le Monde* was reporting today that the 12,000 NATO troops already deployed had stones thrown at them; two weeks ago a jeep was set on fire; and already there are signs of impatience. These people are not in Kosovo, they are in Macedonia.

Will the soldiers we are sending in come under attack? Will they be the target of violence? Do they have the mandate and authority

to defend themselves? If so, they seem to, according to what the minister said this morning. But if they have a mandate to defend themselves against attack by the extremists over there, what assurance do we have that there will be no escalation, that things will not degenerate? What assurance do we have that they will not be forced to attack in order to defend themselves? Where is the line drawn between legitimate self-defence, attack and combat?

● (1510)

This means that the troops are perhaps right on the verge of engaging in a combat that will lead who knows where. It would therefore be important for this House to send a message, through a precise and clear vote in this House, a heavy majority vote, to these people who are headed off to defend freedom, to defend democracy, telling them "You have the support of all Canadians and all Quebecers. The people are behind you. They support you because they know you are going to defend the freedom and the spirit of democracy they hold so dear".

What more do we need? The Prime Minister tells us that, if there were any changes in the situation, he would come back to the House for a debate. At the end of a debate, a mere 15 or 20 minutes are needed for the House to be heard through a vote.

Is it that the Prime Minister's daily agenda is 15 or 20 minutes too short, or is it because the issue is not on the cabinet's agenda?

The House has spent hours upon hours, sometimes until 3, 4, 5 and even 8 in the morning, debating such issues. Since we can talk for hours on end, what prevents us from taking an additional 15 minutes to vote on these issues?

The Prime Minister spoke of the need for flexibility, for being able to react quickly in extreme situations. But would 15 minutes prevent him from taking quick action? France stated its position through its prime minister.

Today, Lionel Jospin assured French parliamentarians that the possibility of a military involvement on the ground would not be considered without submitting the matter to them. "In such a case, you would be consulted in a formal fashion to authorize or not, through a vote, such an intervention".

If France can do it, so can Canada. This is what respect for democracy is all about.

**Mrs. Monique Guay (Laurentides, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in this House to debate with you the motion by the New Democratic Party, which reads as follows:

That this House call on the government to intensify and accelerate efforts to find a diplomatic solution to the crisis in Kosovo through the involvement of Russia and the United Nations, and to urge NATO not to take actions that expand the conflict and stand in the way of a diplomatic solution.

*Supply*

First off, I would like to inform this House and my NDP colleagues that we will support this motion.

We support this motion because it is very similar to the position the Bloc Quebecois has upheld and encouraged before and during the conflict in Kosovo, namely, a diplomatic solution that would involve the United Nations, Russia and, why not add China. We must not forget China. It is still a member of the UN security council and has a veto. China alone could paralyze all the actions of the UN.

The Bloc Quebecois has always hoped that the current conflict in the Balkans could be resolved under the aegis of the United Nations, as was Iraq's aggression against Kuwait, in 1991. Unfortunately, the close historical ties between Russia and Serbia, like the special relationship Yugoslavia maintains with China, has made the diplomatic route increasingly difficult.

The conflict we are currently witnessing in Kosovo is the product of many years of instability in the Balkans, fomented primarily by a single man, or should I say dictator, Slobodan Milosevic.

For more than ten years, Milosevic has played with the nerves of the people of Kosovo and the international community. Patience has its limits. Before this conflict began, members will agree, a number of diplomatic attempts were made. The diplomatic impasse has lasted for over a year.

• (1515)

Over and over again, the international community tried to come up with a diplomatic solution to end the war and repression in Kosovo.

There were UN resolutions 1199 and 1203, as well as the October 1998 accords between the OSCE, NATO and the former Yugoslavia, which were never enforced. We could also include the Rambouillet agreement, but the refusal of Yugoslavian authorities to sign this agreement was at the root of NATO's offensive against Milosevic and his war machine.

After all the foot-dragging, discussions and negotiations, the situation in Kosovo became unbearable. In fact, we now know that Milosevic's strategy was to play for time in order to complete his ethnic cleansing of Kosovo.

For all these reasons, the Bloc Quebecois supported NATO's military intervention in Kosovo and in Yugoslavia so as not to let the situation in Kosovo worsen further, and the present situation there shows that we were right.

UNHCR estimates that close to 585,000 Kosovar Albanians have taken refuge in neighbouring countries. Seventy thousand of them had already fled to these countries between March 1998 and the first NATO air strikes on March 24.

There are over 120,000 refugees in non-neighbouring countries, mainly throughout Europe, which, according to UNHCR estimates, brings to over 700,000 the total number of refugees who fled Kosovo since 1998. Not to mention the rapes, physical atrocities and mental anguish a whole people has had to endure.

In the light of these atrocities, it was appropriate for the Bloc Quebecois to support an intervention by NATO. This did not mean diplomatic efforts had to stop. There is always room for diplomacy.

It is in times of crisis that the strengths and weaknesses of an organization become apparent. In this respect, Canada's foreign policy has showed its weaknesses through its lack of vision and direction and, as a result, its lack of credibility.

Canada has been a member of the UN security council since January 1. How then can we explain that Canada, through a lack of initiative, did not intensify its efforts to give the UN its rightful place in this conflict? Once again, Canada's international relations policy has been dictated by the United States and countries in the alliance.

Not to mention some mind-boggling improvisation. Last Friday, the Prime Minister said that a UN negotiated solution to the conflict in Kosovo was not foreseeable in the near future. However, three days later, he now hopes the UN will participate in an international force to be deployed in Kosovo when the war is over.

Could it be that the Prime Minister just remembered Canada is a member of the UN security council, and that it is about time it used this influential position to find a diplomatic solution to the conflict? After 34 days of conflict, Canada has finally woken up.

It is Canada's duty to use every means possible to try to provide the security council with a draft agreement reflecting the main thrust of Rambouillet. Or yet again, the Minister of Foreign Affairs could take advantage of his visit to Russia on Friday to push the German peace plan.

As the saying goes, it is best to strike while the iron is hot. With the new open-mindedness that seems to be developing in the Yugoslav government, whose deputy prime minister has said that his government was prepared to accept a peace plan which called for deployment of a UN force to Kosovo, is the Canadian government going to have the presence of mind to pass this proposal on to NATO as well as to the UN security council?

A breach seems to be developing on the diplomatic front. Canada therefore has a duty to intensify its diplomatic discussions in order to restore the UN to its rightful place in this conflict.

• (1520)

What is more, with the massive exodus of refugees into the various humanitarian aid camps, where there was such chaos initially, coupled with the fact that Albanian gangsters were diverting donated food supplies, the difficult political situation in Macedonia and Montenegro, and the logistical complications in

*Supply*

Albania, is the Canadian government going to carry out a thorough examination of roles and responsibilities, and of how the work of the humanitarian organizations and the military ought to be co-ordinated in future?

According to the United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees, there seems to be a blurring of roles between what is humanitarian and what is military, since the army is administering the refugee camps.

Naturally, we must tip our hat and express our gratitude for the vital help the military has provided in the various refugee camps.

Military logistics were essential in setting up the various refugee camps. However, as Jacky Mamou, president of Médecins du monde, has stated, the organization considers military forces turned humanitarian unhealthy.

Mr. Mamou is concerned as well about practical organization, and I quote:

Will there be a NATO co-ordinator? Will they put themselves at the disposal of the HCR? Whose role it is to protect refugees? That is the real problem.

And the European commissioner for humanitarian aid, Emma Bonino, agrees. Here is what she has to say:

The military can help us in an emergency, but we have very different roles, the management and co-ordination of humanitarian aid activities must be left to humanitarian agencies.

She too referred to a certain cultural clash between the employees of humanitarian agencies and the NATO soldiers.

Will Canada, as a member of the United Nations security council, take the initiative and propose thorough consideration at the UN and in NATO of the distribution of roles and the co-ordination of humanitarian aid activities in the event of another conflict of this size? We must learn from our mistakes and make sure this confusion does not recur in the future.

Canada could, if it wanted, be a leader in humanitarian aid. Up to now, in the conflict in Kosovo, Canada has been content to simply provide troops and aircraft.

Let us hope that the meetings the Minister of Foreign Affairs has on Thursday and Friday this week with the UN secretary general and his Russian counterpart will turn Canada into a credible player on the world diplomatic stage.

[English]

**Mr. John McKay (Scarborough East, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure once again to speak on this topic. I will be splitting my time with the member for Durham. The last time I spoke on this

subject was at one o'clock in the morning. This is a far more civilized hour and I hope I am a little more coherent at this point.

Shortly after speaking in the previous take note debate I was asked by a reporter what I thought of the debates. I said to him at the time that I thought parliament was struck with a severe case of me-tooism. I was not only out of touch with my party's view on this matter but I was out of touch with other members of parliament. I thought that the Prime Minister's position had been vindicated and that he had a working consensus with the Parliament of Canada to prosecute this war.

However, we do live in a democracy and I will take this opportunity to pursue my line of dissent in order to push the edges of the debate.

The essential question here is whether the war in Kosovo can ever be considered just. I bring the attention of the House to an article by Marcus Gee in the *Globe and Mail* who articulates five essential questions: Is the cause righteous? Are the intentions good? Was the war declared under proper authority? Is there a reasonable chance of victory? Are the means proportionate to the end?

For the purposes of the debate, I am perfectly prepared to concede that the cause is righteous. Clearly the stated aim of the prosecution of this war is the protection of Kosovo Albanians. That is in and of itself a righteous cause.

The second question is, are the intentions are good? It is pretty obvious that this is not a war of conquest, that this is not a war of revenge. We do not appear to have any strategic goals. There is no obvious benefit to any of the NATO members other than an attempt to bring harmony to this very troubled part of southeastern Europe. It may even be argued that NATO has been unselfish in its attempt to bring resolution to ancient conflicts which have existed in this area of the world for years and years and which certainly precipitated World War I and arguably also may have precipitated World War II. I am prepared to be equally generous in the question that the intentions were good.

• (1525 )

The third question is, was the war declared under a proper authority? The obvious answer is no. Canada and indeed no other NATO nation has yet to declare war on the sovereign state of Yugoslavia. We are bombing a sovereign nation without ever making a formal declaration of war. It is the first time we have actually engaged in offensive actions against a sovereign territory in over 50 years and we have done that without actually ever having declared war.

We also have not bothered with the niceties of a UN resolution. I appreciate it may be difficult to obtain a UN resolution either at the security council or at the general membership level. However, having said that, it seems to me that we want to work both sides of

*Supply*

the fence. We want to say for some purposes that we respect the views of the United Nations and we support and commit ourselves to the United Nations; however, when those views as expressed through the security council are not to our liking, then we do our own independent thing.

This is a very significant issue for Canada, in part because we are such avid UN supporters. Unlike our U.S. ally who considers the UN to be an irritating irrelevancy, we have been UN boosters. We have paid our dues on time. We have always signed up for any peacekeeping initiatives. We articulate our views to the world through the United Nations.

In ignoring the obtaining of the UN resolution, in large measure we also ignore the rule of international law. That will have implications which we have yet to contemplate for us as a nation and for other nations. It also undermines our commitment to other international institutions, such as the International Criminal Court, which we have so assiduously pursued. It appears that when it works for us, we use it, but when it does not, we ignore it.

The next question is, is there a reasonable chance of victory? I suppose we could have been persuaded that the first few days of bombing would bring Mr. Milosevic to his knees. I would submit that either that was a gross miscalculation of the resolve of the citizens of Yugoslavia, or it is a gross miscalculation of Mr. Milosevic's military muscle, or it is a gross misreading of the ethnic hatred that literally has been in that country for hundreds and hundreds of years, or we have been fed a line of propaganda which changes over time.

Air bombing will not do it. We have control of the air, in fact we have control of the sea, but the only place where it counts is on the ground. Interestingly, prior to the Washington summit the talk was whether we were going to commit ground troops. After the summit, the talk clearly shifted. It was that we were going to impose an embargo and that we would occupy the airspace of other countries.

An embargo certainly has not worked all that well in Iraq. It has hardly brought Iraq to its knees. As to occupying other countries' airspace and land, we already use it anyway whether we have their consent or not.

The final question is, are the means proportionate to the ends? Some people who have spoken on this issue have talked about the greatest oxymorons of the 20th century: bombing for peace, humanitarian hawks, killing to save lives. To state the phrases is to point out their logical absurdity.

I suggest we look at the victims to date. Prior to the initiation of the bombing there were about 2,000 dead on both sides of the conflict, I would say disproportionately skewed to the Albanians, but there were certainly some dead Serbs as well. After a month of bombing we certainly have a lot more than 2,000 dead. Indeed, I suppose we have at least 2,000 dead Serbians. We certainly have a

lot more than 2,000 dead Albanians. We have displaced about 1.5 million out of the 1.8 million Kosovar Albanians.

Certainly, as the war drags on, the toll will exceed 2,000. The real question is how many people have to die before this madness ends? How many victims will have to cry out before sanity prevails?

Our other speaker and I attended the national prayer breakfast last week. The speaker at the national prayer breakfast was Kim Phuc. Ms. Phuc was the subject of that classic photograph in the Vietnam war. She was the naked little nine year old girl running toward the photographer, fleeing the napalm bombing. The napalm was burning her clothes and the skin off her body.

• (1530)

Ms. Phuc told her story. There was not a dry eye in the house as she told about her pain and her suffering and her life since that time.

She is in some respects the quintessential victim of the 20th century, of an era we consider modern warfare. Now Ms. Phuc is a Canadian citizen, living in Ajax, a community just east of my riding.

As I speak to the House I cannot get the image of Kim Phuc out of my mind. I cannot rationalize this war and have that image in my mind at the same time.

I have to ask myself if this is a just war and if it is based on good intentions. Is it under proper authority? Does it have a reasonable chance of success? Are the means we are using proportionate?

Can members of the House answer these five questions. If in fact they can answer them then I suppose we should prosecute this war. If in fact they are troubled by those five questions then I think we need to address the Kim Phucs of the world.

**Mr. Jay Hill (Prince George—Peace River, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest to my hon. colleague's presentation this afternoon. Obviously he put a lot of thought, energy and effort into his speech on this issue of such importance.

I am reminded of our present situation with the no compromise position, as it was called during Oral Question Period today, that NATO has taken with regard to the present conflict in the Balkans. I am reminded of another hard line taken by the allies in the second world war when they coined the phrase unconditional surrender.

While I believe very strongly as a student of history that it was quite appropriate at that time to have a demand of unconditional surrender by the Axis forces during the second world war, the very hard line approach being taken by NATO at the present time is not very conducive to negotiating a peace settlement.

*Supply*

In light of the comments made by the hon. member across the way, would he care to elaborate on his speech and on what his thoughts are about perhaps NATO backing away from its hard line approach in the hope of achieving a peaceful settlement in the near future?

**Mr. John McKay:** Mr. Speaker, like all members of the House, I presume on a certain level of thoughtfulness and presume on a certain level of concern about this issue which yields no ready answers.

I thought at the end of the weekend that in some respects NATO had stepped back one or two steps from pursuing its goal on a kind of unconditional basis or on a no compromise position and that the diplomatic initiatives and the engaging of Russia were put into a higher level of engagement. I was somewhat comforted by that process.

I can still see the wagons circling. There is obviously a military agenda in terms of circling Yugoslavia and not only bombing it but bringing the embargo into play. I was somewhat comforted by that.

I am not there. I cannot actually know what is going on, but I take some comfort in the fact that our Minister of Foreign Affairs flies off to Russia this week to engage the Russians, who many people argue are the key to the resolution of this conflict.

• (1535)

**Mr. Jim Karygiannis (Scarborough—Agincourt, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to share something with my colleague and ask for his comments. An e-mail came to me today and was addressed to the scientific community. It read:

Dear Colleagues,

I have to inform you that the threat for the VINCA Institute of Nuclear Sciences in Belgrade is going to be bombed is now realistic. As our attitudes and understanding of situations are different from the ones that politicians have, I am warning the scientific community of the disaster that would occur if the VINCA facility (two nuclear reactors, accelerator installation and ammonia cooling system, isotope production etc.) are hit.

I am sure that you will consider this information very seriously and I am appealing to you to do as much as you can to prevent that from happening.

Hoping that soon you will be able to continue your collaboration, I am sending you my best regards,

Yvanka Bozovic

VINCA Institute of Nuclear Sciences.

This is a nuclear facility in Belgrade. Does my hon. colleague, who is very close to my riding and shares a lot of my concerns, have any comments to make in this regard?

**Mr. John McKay:** Mr. Speaker, the essential presenting proposition of all NATO nations is that this is a humanitarian interven-

tion into a situation in another sovereign state to prevent an ethnic disaster or a genocide, the new world order.

The converse of the new world order is that modern warfare can visit on populations and on environments disasters that people in World War I, World War II, the Korean war and even the Vietnam war could only vaguely understand. We have the ability to create a situation in Yugoslavia which will literally last for thousands of years.

My friend points to one possible area where if the facility were bombed it would last literally thousands of years as the damage spread over the area.

**Mr. Alex Shepherd (Durham, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am always pleased to follow my colleague from Scarborough East. He was speaking about the meeting, which I think was last week. Kim Phuc was there. I agree with his sentiments about the people who listened to her.

Just to refresh our memories, she is the girl in the classic picture of a little girl running down the road naked, having just been struck with napalm in the Vietnam war. I know as she told her story that all of us were very cognizant of the fact that we were engaged directly in a campaign of dropping bombs and other so-called military hardware in the area of Serbia.

I do not think we can ever forget about the realities of war. It is very nice to be able to sit home and look at it on our television sets as if it were a strategic, very clean process. I do not think our television sets tell us about the horror and suffering of whatever side it is, whether Kosovars or Serbians or others are involved in this tragic affair.

It is with great reluctance that we deal with the whole issue of aggression, whether we are aggressive or whether we are trying to defend a group of people from further aggression among their own people.

I just came back from Brussels where I attended the interparliamentary union. This is a group of parliamentarians from 130 nations around the world. It meets on a biannual basis. The discussion there was basically about Kosovo.

It was a great opportunity for me. I know the Reform Party does not like to participate in these things, thinking they are a waste of time and money, but for me it was a great opportunity to talk to parliamentarians from that area of the world. The Yugoslavs were there. The Russian federation was represented, as were Bulgaria and most of the countries that surround the former Yugoslavia.

It was interesting to talk to these people about some of the history of these conquests. I had the opportunity before that to look at an art museum. I went in and looked at the various pictures. There was a very tragic picture of a murder, of somebody stabbing somebody with a knife.

*Supply*

• (1540)

I looked at the bottom of the painting where it read "The War in Kosovo, 1825". It tells something about this conflict which seems to have been going on almost indefinitely. I believe it started with the penetration of the Ottoman empire into Europe and the gradual withdrawal and downfall of the Ottoman empire. As this happened different ethnicities mixed within Europe, specifically in the areas of the Balkans. The Kosovar people are basically Muslim while the Serbian population is Christian. This seems to be the nucleus of the conflict.

Those of us in Canada think this as kind of absurd. The object of the exercise is that we can all live together in spite of our cultural differences and religious beliefs, but apparently that is not so in that part of the world.

Another element that is very much a part of the process is the whole issue of sovereignty as has been mentioned a few times today and in other debates. What is the limitation of sovereignty? The member who spoke before said that he did not think we had attacked a sovereign country since the second world war. That is probably the case.

The world population is now changing to the point that it recognizes there is such a thing as human rights. Human rights to a certain basic fundamentalist supersede the rights of sovereign countries and how sovereign countries deal with the people within those borders.

A Canadian jurist heads up the World Court. It is very unfortunate that the World Court is not as strong as it should be. We need to support the World Court process a lot more. If people like Slobodan Milosevic thought they were involved in this war, that bombs were going to land on them, or more important that there was a higher court, a world court that would actually try Slobodan Milosevic for some of his atrocities, this conflict could have possibly been nipped in the bud before it got totally out of control.

We in Canada and our international partners have to be more judicious in bringing a form of justice throughout the world. We have to temper our views about sovereignty to the point where we will not tolerate its entrenchment or overriding of the basic fundamental human rights we believe in.

It is an oddity that the nations which are the strongest critics of NATO's actions invariably are countries with their own human rights problems. It is an odd case where the NATO forces have got together and basically said it is time to draw a line in the sand concerning just how far we think a nation can go in ethnic cleansing, or whatever the case may be, to show that we are not willing to tolerate it any more.

A regrettable crossing of the line has occurred here. It is appropriate that we take this kind of action. It is regrettable because

I do not think anybody wins in a war. Nobody wins by the destruction of assets. Nobody wins by the expenditure of large amounts of money on military hardware and other things. Everybody is a basic loser. It is unfortunate that the international community has let this situation get to the point where we have to take this action.

On the good intentions of my NDP colleagues who want to address the need for a diplomatic solution, I do not think there is any question that Canada, its NATO partners and others in the United Nations have tried to arrive at a diplomatic solution to the issue through the former Yugoslavia, from Bosnia to Croatia and so forth. It does not seem to be in the cards. I do not know why we do not seem to be able to curb the desire of Mr. Milosevic to cleanse that country. I know his policy is Serbs for the Serbians and the way to do that is simply to remove that element within his population that is not homogeneous.

• (1545)

That is why we cannot let Mr. Milosevic be successful. The fifth point of this is the one that is bothering everybody, which is the continuation of some kind of force after the conflict has been resolved. It is clear we must resettle these people in their homelands. It will be very expensive because their homes have been destroyed. Their businesses are gone. It will take significant amounts of capital. It will not simply be expending money on the military or peacekeeping forces within the former Yugoslavia. It will also require capital assets to rebuild businesses and so forth. It has to be done because there is a fundamental human point here. We cannot allow ethnic cleansing to be successful.

When I was in eastern Europe I was surprised when I talked to people, for instance in Poland. Poland before the war was a multi-ethnic society. Today it is homogeneous. Mr. Hitler's policy was successful in Poland. It is a homogeneous ethnic group. We must not let this be successful in the eyes of the world.

Furthermore, having the Russians on board is a good idea. When I got to the conference, the Russians moved a motion condemning Canada and the NATO forces for their aggression. Mr. Speaker, you would be surprised to know that none of the countries, in spite of the fact that they dislike the military conflict going on, not one country bordering on Yugoslavia supported the motion, other than Russia itself.

It is regrettable we have had to come this far. We are trying to find a diplomatic solution to the problem. The Russians are not nearly as significant a force as some people would like to believe. Remember that Russia is likely to declare bankruptcy as a nation this year. It has defaulted on significant amounts of its government debt. I question how much of an asset it would be to resolving this matter for us. It is always nice to have friends on side.



*Supply*

Canada has never said that only a NATO force can occupy the area but we have to have a force. It has to be armed so that we ensure this conflict does not start up again and a long term peacekeeping solution can take place.

To resolve these conflicts will take at least a generation. A lot of the skills that our armed forces have in the area of peacekeeping will be very much in demand in that part of the world. I am happy to be part of a country and part of a government that supports this humanitarian effort. I can only hope it ends in success shortly.

**Mr. Jim Karygiannis (Scarborough—Agincourt, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest to my hon. colleague talk about the Ottoman empire, the ethnic cleansing that is happening today and the ethnic cleansing that has happened over the years.

I am sure he realizes and supports my view that this ethnic cleansing is not something that is just happening today. It has happened for the last 700 to 800 years, since the Ottoman empire was formed and resettlement back and forth of Christians and Muslims has taken place.

Does my hon. colleague agree with me that we should recognize that the ethnic cleansing is not only occurring today but it occurred back in the early 1900s when the Ottoman empire was falling apart and was disengaging? There was ethnic cleansing at that time with genocide of the Armenians, the Pontians and so forth.

Will my hon. colleague support unanimous consent in the House that we realize that ethnic cleansing did not just take place today but it occurred in 1914 to 1922 with the Pontians and Armenians?

**Mr. Alex Shepherd:** Mr. Speaker, I will not answer the specifics of that, but the issue of ethnic cleansing, whether it has been holy wars or whatever the case, has been with humanity as far back as history books were written. The point is that we have to move beyond that.

We are approaching the 21st century. Surely we have developed at least a degree of a civil society that would say this is ridiculous and it has to stop and we will not allow people like Slobodan Milosevic to be successful. He will have to learn to live with ethnic diversity, just as we do every day in the House and in our country. It is something we have to promote.

• (1550)

We must resettle the Kosovars to their original homeland. As far as I am concerned, every single one of them has to be put back. We have to set that up as an example for the world and say that it cannot happen any more.

**Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have this opportunity to participate in debate and dialogue on the war in Kosovo. Unfortunately I did not

have that opportunity during the take note debate on April 12 because the time available was not sufficient to ensure that every member of parliament who was interested in having a dialogue on the issue was able to participate.

Some would question why we need another debate. What is the purpose of today's debate? I can only say to all those individuals that this is an issue that is consuming Canadians everywhere across this country. It is an issue that deserves our utmost attention. It is an issue around which we have to be consumed and giving of our time and energy.

We are here today with this motion because we know we have to find a solution, a peaceful solution, a diplomatic solution, a political solution to a crisis that has gone on far too long. We are here today because it is day 35. It is now 35 days since NATO began its air strikes over Yugoslavia. It is 35 days of seeing images of bombing, of death, of destruction every time we turn on the TV or open a newspaper.

These images are not just being seen by all of us in this chamber. Canadians everywhere are experiencing those images and asking questions. Why? Was there any other way? How long? Where will it go? What does it mean?

We started grappling with this issue shortly after the bombing began, when we knew there was no immediate resolution and quick expedition of an end to this crisis as we were promised and as was suggested by the government. Shortly after that we all had to start asking those questions. We had to hold ourselves accountable to constituents and Canadians everywhere about what it meant.

Many Canadians at that point were starting to ask if this was possibly another Vietnam. The news media started commenting on the possibilities of World War III. Originally I thought that I was being paranoid, that this cannot be, that it is not reality. But as the days have progressed, those thoughts have come to dominate the dialogue in this country.

We know and understand, and I am sure all members in this House understand, that it is absolutely imperative for us to keep searching for a peaceful diplomatic resolution of this crisis.

All of us in one way or another are forced to answer the questions of young children who see the images on TV and wonder what it means and where it is going. It is getting harder and harder to answer those questions. It is getting harder and harder to offer assurances to young children about the hope and prospect of a peaceful world.

Many today have talked about what we have been hearing and feeling over the last number of days and weeks. Some have talked about the images of hundreds of thousands of refugees living in squalid conditions without any hope of returning to their homeland.

*Supply*

• (1555)

We have heard others talk about the images of people left stranded, starving and without hope within Kosovo. We have seen and heard about the impact of the bombing and all of its devastation in terms of the economy, the environment and people's very lives. Over and over again we are taking in this news, trying to digest it and to figure out what we can do.

The member for Durham suggested that we have tried peaceful solutions, that there are no peaceful solutions, that we have to live with what we have got. We are here to say, as we have said clearly every day since parliament returned on April 12, that there has to be a peaceful, political and diplomatic solution.

Today there were signs and we received some news that there is a little bit of progress. The Prime Minister announced today that Canada would be sending in 800 troops to be part of a peacekeeping effort in the region.

Mr. Speaker, before I continue, I want to indicate that I am dividing my time with the member for Sydney—Victoria.

Today there was a little news that we could take some comfort in. However, at the same time that an announcement was made about Canada participating in a peacekeeping force in the region, we heard that the government was as determined as ever to participate in accelerated and expanded military actions and activities in the region.

We heard the Prime Minister say today absolutely and unequivocally that the oil embargo will happen. He said that notwithstanding the possibility of accelerating the conflict because of the situation involving Russia. We heard no suggestion by the Minister of National Defence or anyone else in the government that they will put a hold on sending more CF-18s into the region.

At the same time the government talks about putting in peacekeeping troops and searching for diplomatic solutions, there is no sign that the government is showing the kind of leadership on the diplomatic front which is absolutely required. This motion is here today to say stop accelerating military action and start accelerating diplomatic alternatives.

There has to be an option. Thirty-five days of death and destruction and the possibility of the aggression spreading and of this war continuing for any length of time are enough to make all of us say that we have to find that diplomatic peaceful solution. The government has to keep trying to find that peaceful alternative.

We said as early as March 31 that there had to be reinvigorated efforts on the part of the government to call for a suspension in military operations at the same time as calling for Milosevic to stop the atrocities on the ground. We stood in the House and called for

the government to stand up and show leadership around the uniting for peace alternative. We are here today to urge the government to show that leadership at this critical time in this long and drawn-out conflict.

I want to reflect a concern of my constituents and Canadians about the future. While we grapple with this situation, while we are searching, pleading, urging and working toward peaceful diplomatic solutions to the crisis in Kosovo, we also know it is not too soon to begin thinking about the future and ensuring that this never happens again.

I want to mention a quote from Marcus Gee, as did the Liberal member for Scarborough East. This is in the context of the kind of dual role the United Nations is expected to fulfil and the obligation it imposes on all of us as we go down the path to the future.

• (1600)

Those two roles combine the old idea involving the integrity of nations with the newer idea involving the integrity of the individual. Based on that idea, it shows that the UN holds responsibility for promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all. It is in the fulfilment of those dual objectives that we must learn lessons from the Kosovo crisis.

As a parliament, as a country and as a member of the international community, we must now seek solutions of a diplomatic, peaceful nature that will ensure that we are able to address any atrocities against human beings anywhere.

I am faced with questions daily from constituents who say, "Do we as a country have a double standard? Does NATO have a double standard? How did we respond as a nation, as an international community to the Kurds in Turkey? How do we respond to the situation in East Timor? What is our record on Guatemala?" Those questions keep coming back to us.

It is imperative that we end that double standard and put all of our energy and resources into finding a mechanism at the international level for combining our dual responsibility around the integrity of nations and the integrity of the individual.

**Mr. Peter Mancini (Sydney—Victoria, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to follow my hon. colleague after her well chosen remarks on this particularly sensitive, important and, in some ways, dark debate that we have to have in the House today.

It is important for us to understand and review the history a bit. In these kinds of debates and in these critical times, we sometimes forget where we came from.

A month ago in the House, the government, as a partner with NATO, recognized that there were atrocities being committed or about to be committed in Kosovo. The government and the country, as a partner in NATO, felt that we had an obligation as the peace

talks in France fell apart to do what we could to protect the ethnic Albanians in Yugoslavia.

There was no question that there was mounting evidence that those people were in a dangerous situation. We know the history of the Balkans and we know that there is an unsettled political situation there. We also know that there is, as in many parts of the world tragically, ancient grudges and ancient hatreds.

To that end, with all party support, the government through NATO participated in a bombing campaign. No one, I submit, believed a month ago that we would still be bombing Serbia today. That is not to be critical of anyone. I do not think the parties in the House who supported the government in its resolution believed that 30 days from that date we would still be bombing those cities.

No one thought that NATO would move outside the selected bombing targets which we thought, and I think everyone concurred, would be military targets. No one thought that 31 days after the bombing began, instead of bombing military targets we would be bombing the president's home, rightly or wrongly. No one believed we would be bombing television stations. No one believed we would bomb every single bridge across the Danube River. No one thought that we would collectively wreak the kind of destruction that has happened in the last 31 days. No one in any of the NATO countries—so as not to be overly critical here—and I think no one in the House foresaw the immense tragedy that would result in the movement of the ethnic Albanians across the border in such mass numbers, or the slaughter that would take place in their communities.

• (1605)

The evidence of that is in the simple fact that the international community was unprepared to help the refugees. It is a testament to the United Nations Refugee Commissioner that we have since been able to contain some of the tragedy.

However, for the first week across this country and across the world people were asking “What are we going to do about the refugees crossing the border”. I think there is evidence that no participating member of NATO, including Canada and the members of the House, foresaw the kind of long term campaign that has been ongoing.

Time began to change things a little bit and positions began to change. I am proud to say that in this party when Kofi Annan, the Secretary General of the United Nations, laid down what he thought would be five conditions that might bring the parties back to the table, this party urged the government to respect the historic position of Canada as a peacemaker, as a peace invoker and as a diplomat in the world.

### *Supply*

We urged the government to go further than that and to say “Look, perhaps we can even drop those demands. Perhaps we can even weaken those a little bit to bring Milosevic to the table. Perhaps if we say, stop the atrocities that are taking place on the ground and come to the negotiating table, then perhaps NATO could stop bombing”. We pressured the government in that direction, all the while maintaining our support because it is important for this sovereign nation to work with the support of the House. The Prime Minister alluded to that today.

However, I think we have to measure the changes in the international climate against a tone that I get uncomfortable with in the House. Sometimes when I hear us talking, I think of us as siblings in the family of man saying we have a problem with another of our siblings. Today, there is a paternalistic tone entering the debate where we say that we will ensure that things happen in Kosovo, that we will ensure that our rules, our demands and our five conditions are met. That is not the historic role of this country. The historic role has been to brokerage between peoples and nations who have those paternalistic attitudes.

We have to stop and examine the history regularly in the debates in the House to ensure that we are proceeding on a direct course to where we wanted to go in the first place, which was to ensure that the humanitarian crisis in Kosovo was met. Whether that meant assisting in the creation of an independent Kosovar state, whether it meant peacekeeping forces as a buffer, whatever it was, that was our goal. It was not to bring Milosevic to his knees. It was not to wreck the Serbian economy. It was to ensure that the Kosovars, the ethnic Albanians, could live in some peace in their homeland.

Rigorously and every day, we in this party have fulfilled our obligation under the Constitution of Canada. Under our parliamentary obligation and responsibility, we have suggested alternative measures to the government. We pursued vigorously in question period, in debate and in all-night debates in the House various other options that the government might pursue. Those included ensuring that the United Nations play a significant role in the peace negotiations in this international crisis.

It is not now and has never been the role of NATO to usurp the United Nations as a governing world body. We must be clear on that. Granted, NATO had to act in this situation because the UN was in some ways paralyzed and we could not afford to turn a blind eye and say that because of bureaucratic situations we simply could not act. Let us be clear when we talk about peacekeeping forces. Let us be clear as we move toward the negotiating table that it is the United Nations and not NATO that is the international force that all countries respect. This party pushed and encouraged the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Prime Minister to bring that message to the NATO table.

I am pleased to say that over the weekend we have seen, I hope, some significant results because of that kind of pressure. Canada

*Supply*

should be proud that it has been singled out in NATO as the country to try and talk to the Russians, who play a crucial role in this debate.

• (1610)

Canada is now pursuing two aspects. We are still fully participating with NATO, but we are aggressively pursuing a diplomatic effort.

We introduced this motion today because we are now caught in a strange case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. Canada has a kind of potion that we drink. On the one hand, we are telling Russia that we are the country that can help bring peace, and on the other hand, we are laying down conditions that can impede that very progress by saying that we will support an embargo, which Russia has adamantly refused to recognize. We are saying that we want to bring peace to Serbia, but at the same time we are saying we will supply more planes if we have to, to continue bombing the very people we want to come to the negotiating table.

In the last minute that I have, I want to review the resolution that my party has proudly brought into the House of Commons, and that is that we call on the government to intensify and accelerate efforts to find a diplomatic solution. That is our history and that is who we are.

There are nations that are very good at making war. We are not one of them. There are nations that are very good at bringing about peace. We are one of those.

We urge the government to accelerate and find a diplomatic solution to the crisis in Kosovo through the involvement of Russia, which everyone recognizes has to be a key player in this, and the United Nations, the governing world body. As signatories to the convention on Human rights, we have a role to play. Surely we cannot ignore the very body that we look to, to enforce that.

We are asking the government to ensure the involvement of Russia and the United Nations to urge NATO not to impose a naval blockade or take any other actions that expand the conflict and stand in the way of a diplomatic resolution. That is our motion. That is our role as a nation.

**Mr. Jim Karygiannis (Scarborough—Agincourt, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have listened to my colleague from the New Democratic Party with great interest. He made some interesting comments.

I was just wondering if he could make something clear to me. Is he asking that NATO stops bombing or is he asking that NATO continues bombing? Does the motion that his party brought forward today support stopping the bombing of Yugoslavia?

**Mr. Peter Mancini:** Mr. Speaker, we are saying that at this point we stand by our support of the government in its initial phase, and we understand that includes bombing.

However, we are very hesitant to support any further acceleration of military activity. I think the hon. member knows what I mean by that. That is why it is included in the resolution. We have very real concerns about the imposition of a naval blockade that can only accelerate hostilities among the very people that we are trying to bring to the table.

We have very real concerns about bringing in more Canadian troops. The Prime Minister talked about 800 troops today being ready to go to Kosovo. We assume that is in a peacekeeping role, but we view that with very grave concern.

I know that the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Prime Minister and the hon. member who asked the question, do not take the support of the other parties in the House for granted, but that support is always contingent upon the absolute diligent pursuit of diplomatic efforts. Movements that will accelerate hostilities will not help bring about the diplomatic solution that Canada so desperately wants.

We are saying at this point that we will continue to support the government and our initial commitment to NATO. We also understand that means bombing today, but it does not mean increasing planes and setting up blockades that will lead to further hostilities.

**Mr. John Bryden (Wentworth—Burlington, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member for Mississauga West.

Earlier in this debate, the member for Regina—Qu'Appelle recounted how he visited Biafra during the Biafran war in the late 1960s. He told of the horrors of seeing the people starving and the people suffering in Biafra, and just generally the horrors of war.

• (1615)

There is another side to that equation because at the time of the Biafran conflict I was in Britain at Leeds university doing post-graduate work. I chummed around with two other young men of my age, in their mid-twenties. One was a Jewish fellow from London and the other was a fellow by the name of Bennett Okuwosa. When I first met Bennett he was a Nigerian. When I last met him at the end of my two year term he was a Biafran.

The relevance of the three of us and my friend being Jewish is that in the two year period that I knew these two young men both the six day war occurred in Israel and the Biafran war broke out in Nigeria. One young man was, shall we say, on the side of the winners and the other young man, my friend Bennett Okuwosa, was on the side of the losers.

*Supply*

Before these tragic events came about we were very much the three musketeers. We used to shoot pool together and drink beer together and go to dances and sometimes we studied and, though we came from very diverse backgrounds, we had as much in common as young men around the world would have in common.

But then my friend, who we used to call Bennett, confronted the problem of the Biafran war. What happened there was another case of ethnic cleansing. The Biafrans had spread out of Biafra, which is a province of Nigeria, into the rest of Nigeria and had taken over many of the positions of responsibility in the Nigerian economy and political society. This created a great deal of resentment among the Muslim population.

Biafra was a classic situation, as so often occurs, where religious strife breaks out which is really only a guise for economic competition and economic resentment. So it was in Nigeria. The Biafrans were expelled from all positions and were basically driven out of all of Nigeria and back into Biafra. In Biafra they decided that they would form a break-away state, which led to the Biafran civil war and all its horrors.

Communications stopped with Biafra basically. My friend Benno had a very large family. He endured the time when his brothers, who had various positions of authority, were picked up by the Nigerian police and disappeared. Of course, throughout the Biafran war he had to endure the knowledge that his people were suffering terribly.

Ironically, his contribution to the war, because he was in the agricultural sciences, was to try to raise rabbits for Biafra because, of course, there was a terrible shortage of protein and terrible starvation in his home country. In the end, I do not think he ever went back. The last I heard of him was a letter from Berlin. I think he settled in Germany in the end and raised his family there.

I will jump from that to events of just a week ago Monday. I held an open town hall meeting in my riding to which I invited everyone to come and express their feelings on Kosovo. My particular riding, Wentworth—Burlington, and the whole area around there has a very high percentage of Serbian Canadians. We had an open meeting and it was a very emotional event because, while one might have expected much anger, in fact there was much anguish, much hurt.

I held the meeting because I wanted to give the opportunity for the Serbian Canadians to come and express their feelings because this is a democratic country. Although there were some remarks on the causes of the war and the fact that the ethnic Albanians had taken over society and Kosovo and all of that kind of thing, and many of them were there illegally, those arguments did not ring with as much weight as the terrible anguish that these Serbian Canadians had, not only for their kinfolk, but for what was happening in Kosovo, in the former Yugoslavia. Or in Yugoslavia, I suppose it is called still.

For instance, one man asked me “What will happen if Canada actually declares war on Serbia? Will it mean that I will be interned?” Another woman worried about her son in the Canadian forces. What is going to happen if he is sent over in a combat contingent and winds up in combat with his kin? One can imagine the situation.

• (1620)

Many people were worried about the young people of military age who had left the country a few months before the actual bombing started. They knew that their children would be called up. Indeed the call is now for anyone of 14 years of age or over to join the military forces in Serbia to combat the invasion. One can imagine the terrible fear.

These were my fellow Canadians suffering. They were hurting and they were hurting because of what was happening in the homeland that they had left. There is no doubt that they are Canadians now, but they still have strong ties to where they come from.

When thought of that way we have to realize that this is not just a matter of stopping the bombing and coming to a diplomatic solution. This is not a matter of partitioning Kosovo or making it independent. This is a matter of making sure that as we lead up to a settlement of this conflict we leave the door open for forgiveness so that Kosovars and Serbians can live together once more.

I think that Canada has an indirect role to play in this because we are the classic example of a country with all kinds of ethnic diversity and of people who come from conflicts in other parts of the world who can live together.

To this end I think it is very important on the part of the government and on the part of all of us to make sure that we are very careful in the distinctions we make when we talk about what is happening in Kosovo. Biafra was a clear case of ethnic cleansing. The Biafrans were driven out of the rest of Nigeria because they were Christians and the others were Muslims, although I say to members that religion was only an excuse. In 1915 in the former Ottoman empire I believe that the Armenians were driven out of Turkey primarily because Turkey was at war. This was another case of ethnic cleansing. But these are not necessarily cases of genocide. Genocide is probably the ultimate horror and the Holocaust was genocide. It was not just a matter of ethnic cleansing but a matter of destroying the very ethnic memory by killing everybody.

Almost every nation in the world has been guilty of ethnic cleansing at one time or another. I will give an example of our own Canadian experience in the 18th century with the Acadians. The British expelled all the young Acadian men from Nova Scotia and distributed them down the shores of the American seacoast. The Boer War began in the 19th century. The British were at war with

*Supply*

the Boer farmers in South Africa. Women and children of the farmers were rounded up and put in concentration camps where they died and had terrible experiences. If we want to go back to a case of genocide we can go back to the American west. Here the American authorities systematically destroyed the food supply of the aboriginals, resulting in their death. We could go to the Ukraine between the wars and we will find Stalin who systematically destroyed the food supply of the Ukrainians. This is genocide.

Genocide is a terrible word, but when it comes to civil war, and the expulsion of an ethnic population, almost every nation in the world has been guilty of it to some degree or another. We have to bear in mind that we have to make these distinctions. If we do not make these distinctions, the people I saw at my town hall meeting will feel that they are branded with a guilt, with a stain, which they do not deserve any more than the Americans, the British, the French or anyone else who has been in colonial power who has engaged in some kind of civil war or repression, however terrible. Some kind of repression is involved in the expulsion of an ethnic, religious or racial group. We have to make those distinctions very clear.

We have to think now in terms of how we are going to find a way to bring the Serbian community, the Serbs and the Kosovars back together. I believe this is the country that can lead by example. As long as we as members of parliament, and we as Canadians everywhere are prepared to go out into our communities and listen to one another, no matter what our backgrounds, our religions or our languages, we set an example that hopefully can be followed after this war.

• (1625)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jean-Guy Chrétien (Frontenac—Mégantic, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest to the hon. member for Wentworth—Burlington, and I must even admit that I was touched by his comments. I was touched when he talked about his days as a student in London with two former colleagues, one a Jew and the other a Biafran.

However, he digressed quite a bit from the NDP motion calling on the government to intensify and accelerate efforts to find a diplomatic solution to the crisis in Kosovo—if we do not want, at this point, to talk about a war—and to involve Russia.

I want to ask the hon. member if he personally intervened in the Liberal caucus. If so, what proposal did he make to bring the Prime Minister, the Minister of National Defence and the Minister of Foreign Affairs—who, incidentally, is leaving this evening to meet his Russian counterpart—to find a diplomatic solution? What personal action did the hon. member take to convince his government to try to find a diplomatic solution?

We have lost a great deal of our ability to act as peacekeepers, because in this union with NATO, Canada is acting just like the United States and the other countries by sending aircraft that are not there to maintain peace but to strike and destroy.

Did the hon. member for Wentworth—Burlington act in a positive way within his caucus?

[*English*]

**Mr. John Bryden:** Absolutely, Mr. Speaker. I will on a very rare occasion break caucus secrecy. In fact, at the last national caucus I did rise and go to the microphone, in front of the Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and all of my colleagues, and I urged them very strongly to look to Russia to help us out of this impasse that is occurring in the Balkans.

One of the golden opportunities that is presented here is that Russia can become involved. If Russia can be part of the peace plan, then it will help Russia feel a restoration of confidence of its important role in the world.

I talked about countries and peoples hurting, and we have to realize that the Russians are hurting now as well. They are not hurting just economically; they are hurting because the end of the century has been hard on them. We have to give them the opportunity to find their dignity. They can find their dignity by taking an important role in bringing peace to this region. That is what I said in national caucus last Wednesday.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Daniel Turp (Beauharnois—Salaberry, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to tell the hon. member that these distinctions between ethnic cleansing and genocide are perhaps helpful, but I still marvel at his description of the Armenian situation the other day in the House. I would like him to tell us whether or not he feels that a genocide took place in Armenia at the beginning of the century.

My question, however, has to do with the UN's role. Since he is willing to talk about what went on in his caucus, could he tell us to what extent the UN's role was discussed? What is his personal position on the importance of involving the UN in any resolution of this conflict in Yugoslavia?

[*English*]

**Mr. John Bryden:** Mr. Speaker, I can only talk about what I said. I cannot talk about what others said.

I would like to pick up on the ethnic cleansing. It is so very important to make the distinction between ethnic cleansing and genocide. It is very difficult to forgive genocide under any circumstances.

*Supply*

• (1630)

Because so many nations historically, going back to the ages of the Greeks and the Romans and even before, have been guilty of one form of ethnic cleansing or another, after the war the Serbians, Serbian Canadians and Kosovars can at least appreciate that nothing has happened in Kosovo, however horrible, that is any different than what has been going on in nations and societies across the world since the beginning of recorded history.

It is when we apply too big an epithet that we make it almost impossible for the people to communicate after the war. Then we entrench hate. There is enough hate in the Balkans. We have to find a way to get people to stop hating one another.

**Mr. Steve Mahoney (Mississauga West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will refer to the last comment about getting people to stop hating. I heard Henry Kissinger, I think it was, say that was probably not a possible scenario in these parts of the Balkans. Hate is deeply ingrained in the souls, hearts and minds of the people in that region. I wish it were so that by holding up Canadian values or values which we hold dear we could communicate in some way that they should stop hating. I wish it were that easy but I fear it is not.

I congratulate the member for Halifax and the New Democratic Party for putting forward what I frankly consider to be a responsible position in a responsible use of an opposition day. We have had scenes in this place where motions have been put forward that frankly would be seen as nothing more than grandstanding for the purpose of perhaps espousing certain philosophical viewpoints or somehow trying to embarrass the government. I do not think the motion does that at all.

The motion states that the government should intensify and accelerate efforts to find a diplomatic solution. Who among us would not want that to happen? Who among the population of this great country would not want that to happen?

The mission being undertaken by the minister later this week, with meetings being set up in Russia and meetings with the Secretary General of the United Nations, is an effort to do exactly that, to find a way to answer a question I have some difficulty answering when constituents call me: How did this happen?

We have to look at history to find out how and why this has happened and why we are debating it today. It is responsible of an opposition party to suggest that the government should increase efforts to find a diplomatic solution. I agree with them that it should happen. I also think it is responsible for us to urge NATO not to accelerate the campaign beyond what is currently going on in an effort to try to find a diplomatic solution.

Having said that, we cannot stick our heads in the sand. I was very interested to hear my colleague from Hamilton—Wentworth

say that he had held a town hall meeting. I wondered what it would be like to have a town hall meeting in Kosovo. I wondered how people who have been driven out of their homes and who have watched their fathers, their husbands and their sons assassinated in front of them would feel about participating in a town hall meeting. This is not media hype; we have heard testimony from refugees who have stood by and watched their mothers and their daughters raped in front of their families.

I think they would be so shocked at the democratic process which my colleague held in his riding that they would not know what to say. They could not imagine describing the horror and the pain.

While we strive to find diplomatic and peaceful solutions, we have to take a look at why we are in this position in the first place.

• (1635)

In 1949 former Prime Minister Lester Pearson, whom I think all Canadians and members of this place would consider one of the great men of this century, won a Nobel prize. He signed an agreement with 11 other countries to form an alliance called the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. That membership has expanded to 19.

What was the purpose? Was it just some kind of window dressing following the war, that we should all get together once a year and have a barbecue or something like that? I do not think so.

These were 12 and now 19 countries that recognized a number of different threats existed in the world. The most obvious would have been the spread of communism in 1949. We saw what happened with the wall. We saw it go up. We saw it come down. We saw a country divided. We saw what happened economically and philosophically, or from any aspect of society we want to look at, to a country that could have been, should have been, might have been and might still be again a great country, Russia.

This may be a bias but I happen to think it is one we all believe in, the bias of democracy. This is a people who have been put in a terrible position because of the spread of communism and because of the militaristic attitude that occurred in that country. They wound up in a destitute situation. NATO was formed to monitor the spread of communism.

Tito was in charge in Yugoslavia and the army was there. I witnessed firsthand in 1990 when I was part of a parliamentary delegation as a member of the provincial legislature the first free elections in Croatia since the end of the second world war. Yet there were still armed soldiers standing over the ballot boxes intimidating the people as they came in. They stood there and did not move.

*Supply*

I remember how incredulous some of the Croatian people were when I went up to the armed soldiers and put a Canadian pin on their lapel. They were quite astounded that I would do that. Thinking back I was a little nuts to do it. In any event I was being friendly and extending a friendly hand to those people. We could see tears in the eyes of the Croatian people as they lined down the street to vote for the first time since the war. It was truly one of the most amazing and moving political opportunities that I have experienced.

Like most of us in this place I am really rather spoiled. Think of where we live. Think of the fact that I have often said in this place that our weapons are hopefully our minds. Our ammunition are the words that we hurl at one another. We do not kill one another. Hopefully we do not. There may be days when some would feel that way but generally speaking we are not a violent people.

Yet we see what is happening and we are partaking in what can amount to nothing other than a military action, or call it whatever we want. It is war against a regime. I do not consider this a war against the Serbian people as a nation. Although I have to openly admit obviously Serbs will be injured and killed in this exercise. That is a terrible tragedy, but we cannot sit back and do nothing.

I wonder what the Canadian people would say if Canada, a participant in NATO for the last 50 years, was to step back and say that we will not be involved in this situation; we were there for the good times and liked the conferences, but we will not participate in this action. I do not see how we could in any moral conscience take a position that we would not participate.

I pray and hope, as do all Canadians and members of the House, that what we have seen today will not escalate into the use of our soldiers in active combat. It may yet happen, but we hope it will not. They are there. They are being positioned to go in to implement a peace settlement. I hope that our minister and our Prime Minister can meet with the Russians and do what the NDP is talking about and what we would all like to see, to see if Russia can implement a peace settlement with this regime to end the fighting and the killing.

• (1640 )

Then our people could do what they have been trained to do, that is keep a sustaining peace in that part of the world and help the Kosovars readjust, go back in and rebuild their lives. I know we all pray for that, and hopefully we will see it in the not too distant future.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Daniel Turp (Beauharnois—Salaberry, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask our eloquent colleague whether he could answer the question I asked the member who spoke before him regarding

the role of the UN and what was said about this role during their caucus meetings, or what their supporters say at public meetings.

How important does he think the UN's participation is in any solution and what does he think should be the relationship between the UN and NATO in resolving the conflict in Kosovo?

[*English*]

**Mr. Steve Mahoney:** Mr. Speaker, the UN should be involved. As a result of the meetings our minister will be having in Russia and with the UN secretary general, I hope we will be able to bring them in.

We have to be realistic as well and realize that NATO serves a very specific role that is somewhat different from that of the United Nations. The theatre for the United Nations is the entire world. That is not true with NATO. The theatre for NATO is Europe and the Americas. It is not Asia, Africa or the Middle East.

If NATO could come in, and China and Russian were prepared to come in and co-operate in negotiating a peace settlement, that would be entirely appropriate. Hopefully the movement by our minister to go there and meet with them will see that happen.

It would more appropriate, if it is possible, to have NATO forces enforcing a peace settlement. However we have to get a peace settlement first. As long as Russia stays on the outside and is not prepared to come in to the negotiations, I fear the UN is marginalizing itself because of one or two of its members. Hopefully we can see some serious involvement by the United Nations over coming weeks.

**Mr. Jim Karygiannis (Scarborough—Agincourt, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like my hon. friend to make one or two comments regarding not what is happening in Serbia or in Belgrade but what we are doing to our own population.

I bring to his attention the plight of a mother and a father, Zorka and Milan Lavrnja who visited Canadian immigration at Bucharest. Their son was applying to immigrate to Canada. They are Canadian citizens; they hold Canadian passports. They went into the embassy and were told: "You are Serbian Canadians. We do not want to look after you".

Are we in the House fostering better relations and better communications within our own communities? What happens when a Canadian official overseas, such as the embassy in Bucharest, says that to a Canadian citizen? Could my colleague from Mississauga give his reaction to exactly what we are doing to our Canadian citizens if they are of Serbian background?

**Mr. Steve Mahoney:** Mr. Speaker, if anybody in the employment of this country were to make a statement like that, and it could be proven, he or she should be fired. It is plain and simple.



*Supply*

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Daniel Turp:** Mr. Speaker, I have another question for the hon. member, who seems to take a great interest in NATO's role in this conflict.

Today, the American defence secretary, William Cohen, said that the international military force should be NATO-led. What does the Liberal member think?

• (1645)

[*English*]

**Mr. Steve Mahoney:** Mr. Speaker, I know there is an attempt by some to somehow demonize the role of the Americans in this conflict. Let me simply say that NATO has a constitution and a mandate. In that mandate it is very clear that the responsibility of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization is that it is one for all and all for one if a member is attacked.

The fact that the Americans happen to be the largest and perhaps the most dominant player because of their economic clout and their military clout I think is a given. The role that Canada can play and should play is being rightly played out on the international scene by our Minister of National Defence and our Minister of Foreign Affairs in trying to do exactly what this motion is calling for; that is, trying to find a peaceful solution and working with Russia, which can indeed be a catalyst in finding a solution.

It would seem to me that while the Americans would have little if any influence over Mr. Milosevic, the Russians do have some influence. We know that the Russian military has provided arms and weaponry to the Serbian military over the years. That is fine. That is a legitimate arrangement, a commercial contract. We know that they have a relationship.

Rather than trying to demonize the Americans and turning this into either a partisan issue or some kind of conflicting issue—and if the hon. member did not mean that I apologize, but that is how I interpreted it—I think our role as the Canadian government is to work alongside the Americans as a partner in NATO and to try to find a solution by our meeting with Russia and the United Nations.

[*Translation*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland):** It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the Hon. member for Vancouver East, Housing; the Hon. member for Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, International Trade.

[*English*]

**Mr. Norman Doyle (St. John's East, PC):** Mr. Speaker, first let me indicate that I will be sharing my time with the hon. member for South Shore.

As immigration critic for the PC party, I want to make a few comments and remarks on the human tragedy that is Kosovo. Every day on television we see a tide of Kosovar Albanians fleeing to refuge outside their homeland, leaving behind their burning villages, leaving behind their friends and relatives who have been spirited away or even executed by the Serbian security forces.

Over the past number of years we have seen similar scenes in Croatia and in Bosnia, but the sheer speed and magnitude of the current exodus has riveted the world's attention.

Today's motion talks of a possible diplomatic solution to that crisis. I think it is safe to say that our party would support the motion. It is a very good motion indeed and I sincerely hope that it is possible. In the meantime, I would like to comment on two aspects of the crisis, the refugee situation and the military situation.

With regard to the Kosovar refugees, we are very pleased that Canada went on record as willing to accept and made preparations to take in about 5,000 of these unfortunate people. As a nation whose involvement is driven by humanitarian concerns we could do no less.

The other situation about which we are concerned is our military position in all of this. It is indeed regrettable that we did not debate this matter before our air force was committed to fight. The bottom line now is that we are embroiled in a military conflict overseas. Many military experts feel that this will inevitably lead to the involvement of our ground troops as well.

Our party is concerned about the way we seem to have become involved in this conflict without a long term view of the consequences. I know that war has not been formally declared, but people are shooting and people are being shot.

• (1650)

I need not remind the House that this region of Europe tied down many Nazi divisions during World War II, in a grinding war of attrition, with terrible atrocities committed on all sides.

We have already seen examples of how ethnic cleansing in Croatia and Bosnia came about, with enough blame and enough blood to go around for everyone involved.

We all have every confidence in the professionalism of our armed forces, but I fear that the government has presided over our military being reduced in numbers. As well, it is sadly lacking in the equipment to do the kind of job that we will probably be called upon to do.

We cannot play at war. NATO is now committed. It has very little choice but to follow through on those commitments. In Vietnam, for instance, we saw what it was like to fight a war wherein the daily targets were decided in the White House and not in the Pentagon. The result was a war that dragged on for years. No

*Supply*

matter if we call this a conflict or a war, we had best be clear about our objectives and have the will to do what is necessary.

We cannot forget that the Yugoslav leadership will be ruthless in the use of their military and paramilitary forces, so we must not send our soldiers and airmen into harm's way with one arm tied behind their backs.

It is sad that Canada, once a leader in world affairs, a champion of United Nations peacekeeping, is now caught up in this conflict. However, the die has now been cast and we had best get very, very serious about our diplomatic, our humanitarian and our military roles in Kosovo.

The Canadian nation has the stature and the reputation to influence events, as it did in the gulf war and more recently in Croatia. However, those events took place when Canada had will as well as stature. There is no evidence that this government is able to supply that level of leadership. From what we have learned of NATO discussions, other members decided to launch an air war and Canada merely decided to go along.

According to the Prime Minister, if others decide that ground troops are necessary Canada will not be the one to say no. That is not a muscular foreign policy. It is no foreign policy at all. The announcement that we are sending 800 peacekeeping ground troops to the region is another escalation of our involvement. Our possible involvement in a naval blockade also complicates our situation, especially if the Yugoslavian navy decides to fight back.

In the meantime, we can take a number of steps to try to reassert our leadership with regard to the Kosovo situation. The first is to work seriously with Russia, which is the only power with open lines to the Serbian leadership. We must not forget that internal forces in Russia are pushing it to become involved as well. No other nation is better placed than Canada to help Russia find a constructive role, yet we have no evidence that Canada has actively played a role in that regard.

It is a good sign that the Minister of Foreign Affairs will now go to Moscow, but does he have specific proposals to make, say, on the proposed naval blockade or on a UN resolution on the type of international security force that would allow refugees to return home in safety?

Second, Canada is a member of most of the international organizations which will be involved in developing the political settlement in Kosovo when the war is over. We should be at work now on humanitarian and reconstruction issues and on security issues as well. Once this conflict is over our aim must be to have a southern Europe that is a more stable place than it was before this conflict started.

Third, the government should be clear about ground troops. It has not yet been clear on that issue. Short of a diplomatic solution, it seems to me that ground troops will be necessary to finish what has already been started by air attacks. The Prime Minister,

however, has been coy on that issue and this undermines confidence in Canada's position on the issue.

• (1655)

Finally, the Government of Canada should lead the way in dealing honestly with the public and the parliaments of NATO countries. This is likely to be a long conflict, with unsettling images and unsettling news. It began with significant public support because the issue was seen as a humanitarian issue. However, once there is killing on both sides questions will be raised about NATO's strategy, especially with respect to ground troops. There is a difference between support for humanitarian goals and support for NATO's strategy.

The best road to public confidence is openness, clearness and truth. The Canadian people are a good people and they deserve good leadership in this crisis, better leadership than we have seen so far. It is time for government to hold parliamentary debates on these matters before our troops are put in harm's way. It is time for government to make clear our objectives and our ways and means of carrying out the various roles that we will have in this escalating conflict. In short, we should discuss our duty, define our duty and fulfill our duty with all of the determination and pride which have served us well in crises past.

In relation to today's motion, I would certainly support continued and vigorous diplomatic activity on Canada's part. I also think it is crucial that Russia, a long time Serbian ally, be involved in finding an end to this conflict. However, any solution must involve the refugees being allowed to return home under the protection of an international and, hopefully, a United Nations peacekeeping force.

Kosovo is burning. Parts of Serbia are in ruins. NATO cannot walk away from what it has started. However, at the same time, no country is eager to get involved in a protracted ground war. Therefore, I am sure that all NATO countries would welcome a reasonable solution that would end the fighting and restore the refugees to their homes and to their homeland.

**Mr. Jim Karygiannis (Scarborough—Agincourt, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest to what my hon. friend across the way had to say. On one side he said that ground troops are unavoidable and we have to send them in. On the other side he said that the United Nations may be an international peacekeeping force. I am a little confused as to whether or not he is supporting ground troops. I am confused as to whether the hon. member is suggesting to the House that we should send in ground troops at this stage of the game when there have been 35 days of bombing with no result. We do not see Milosevic backing away. We have heard the Yugoslav deputy prime minister, who is from the opposition party, saying that we need to do something.

My colleague across the way says that we are in a war. He is a little ignorant about the history of that part of the world. He should study it.

*Supply*

I would ask him to first open his book, learn what has been done in that part of the world and then come to the House and try to tell members what the government should do. Sending ground troops over there will result in body bags coming home. I am just wondering if the hon. member across the way wants to volunteer the first body bag that comes back.

**Mr. Norman Doyle:** Mr. Speaker, I should make it clear that I do not think the member was involved with me in that debate, but somebody else.

First of all, let me say that we support our role in NATO. We are one of 19 member nations of NATO and we support the bombing campaign that is currently going on. We support our eventual involvement in sending in ground troops, should that be necessary. Obviously we would first support diplomatic efforts being made by this government to ensure that we do not have to involve our soldiers in a ground troop force.

However, I think it is very important indeed that the government lay out what its objectives are with regard to this war. What is the long term view of the consequences involved? What is our strategy, for example, in participating in a naval blockade should the Yugoslavian navy decide to fight back? These are questions to which we have not received answers.

• (1700)

As I pointed out to the hon. member, there is a difference between support for humanitarian goals and support for NATO's strategy, but I think this government is sadly lacking in leadership. It has not yet laid out its long term views and objectives regarding this war and what our strategy would be should ground troops become necessary. When the time comes, we will support ground troops if there is no other alternative.

**Mr. Gerald Keddy (South Shore, PC):** Mr. Speaker, I am tempted to get into the questions and comments part of the earlier debate but I will stick to the speech I very carefully wrote out. I hope the parliamentarians in this room will have some intelligent questions to ask at the end of it.

Yesterday Prime Minister Tony Blair addressed the British parliament for one and one-half hours and during that time took questions from British MPs on Britain's role in Yugoslavia. Today the Prime Minister of Canada had a press conference to inform Canadians and Canadian parliamentarians that we would be sending peacekeepers to the Balkans. Canadians should reflect for a few moments on that comparison, a one and one-half hour information session versus a press meeting.

This government has deliberately left parliament out of the briefing process and has not been forthwith and open to parliamentarians. At least today the Prime Minister has made some

attempt to correct that imbalance. I commend this Liberal change of tact because it puts the government in a position where it is more responsible for its actions.

There are many questions that must be raised over this government's handling of this critical issue. It is time the Prime Minister clearly defined Canada's objective in this campaign and more important the role we have occupied in NATO, and the Prime Minister's involvement and interaction with our NATO allies. The question begs to be asked as to what has happened to Canada's former leadership in these areas. I would submit that Canada is not only not being listened to by its NATO allies but worse yet, is following blindly.

Canada's objectives are not clear. Our strategy is not clear. And now by the looks of things, this Prime Minister is sending our soldiers into battle with no clear concise objective and no strategy to accomplish this vague goal. Surely the Prime Minister is finally going to be held responsible for such ill conceived and blatantly anti-military decisions such as "I will take the contract and write zero helicopters across it". As a representative of Canadian soldiers and airmen, I hang my head in shame that we would irresponsibly consider sending Canadian pilots to war in planes and helicopters that are older than the pilots who fly them.

Recently the minister of defence stated that he was close to procurement. I would like to state for the record that vague phrases such as "we are close to procurement" will be meaningless to pilots forced to fly unsafe helicopters. I dare say it will also be meaningless to troops who will depend upon these helicopters.

The objectives of this war are unclear, the strategy is flawed and Canada's role of having any significant say in decisions that will eventually cause the death of Canadian soldiers is in question.

NATO entered this war with the president of the United States declaring that the U.S. would not send in ground troops. Where was Canada's respected position? How well was Canada listened to? Did we complain about the outright stupidity of such tactics? Canadians know that Canada's voice has not been heard. Canadians also know that Canada's opinion is not requested. Our soldiers are at war against a veteran military power while our government is at best anti-military and at worst irresponsible in terms of our soldiers' lives.

For me this debate is not about what Canada should be doing. This debate is about whether Canadian lives will be sacrificed because their government is sending them to a war without proper training and worse yet, without proper equipment.

• (1705)

As a parliamentarian, I accept the responsibility of parliamentarians and governments making difficult decisions. I can even

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accept the government being led blindly by the nose. What I cannot accept, and what no parliamentarian should accept, is giving our soldiers a job to do, albeit a job they are trained to do, but a job they do not have the tools to complete.

Tens of thousands of Canadian soldiers have died in foreign wars to assure Canadians that decisions that are made which affect our troops will be made by Canadian generals and by Canadians themselves. I hope these soldiers did not die in vain.

**Mr. Ted White (North Vancouver, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I have not had the opportunity to speak on this issue in the previous days of debate. Unfortunately I did not make it on the list of speakers.

I thought I would take it from a different tact today by talking about the concerns expressed by my constituents on both sides of the issue.

I have a letter from an elderly gentleman who was concerned about the Aviano air base and whether or not there was protection in case Milosevic lobbed some missiles. I have letters claiming that this NATO action is completely illegal and should not be happening.

A few people have become very emotional about the issue, but I must say that overall there has not been a lot of public reaction to this despite the serious nature of the issue. Last week while monitoring radio talk shows in the Vancouver area, we did not pick up a single call on this issue. Despite the serious nature of this issue and the fact that Canada is involved in this international conflict, it would seem that the average person on the street considers it too far away and something that is not important enough to worry about. I receive more letters about the taxes families are paying and the difficulties with the immigration system or justice issues than I receive about the situation in Kosovo.

Nevertheless there are some strong feelings out there. I want to put on the record some of the input I am getting. It is frustrating for me as a person who is reasonably well travelled that I have never been to the region where this conflict is taking place. All of the constituents who have written to me have not been there either. Sifting through all the information can be frustrating in trying to make sure that we have the correct impression about what is going on in Kosovo.

Perhaps the one thing that everyone agrees upon is that the conflict has been there for a long time. Without making judgments as to who is at fault or who is doing what to whom, the conflict has been there for a long time. Perhaps there is a lot of truth in the argument some constituents are presenting that doing what we are doing will not solve the problem, that it may actually exacerbate it.

It is frustrating not to have been there. It would have been valuable and interesting to have heard from any members who had

lived there or had relatives there. They could have given us some inside information about the way people feel in that country.

I asked a question at one of the military briefings at the defence committee last week regarding the number of refugees and how much that problem had escalated. Were there ten times as many refugees now as there were six months ago? The answer was that there had been a large increase in the number of refugees but it was not related to the bombing but rather to the police activities of driving people out of their homes. That is indirectly related to the bombing. Because of the bombing going on police were getting more enthusiastic and driving people out of their homes.

I had no opportunity to cross-examine and pursue this further to get deeper into the question. This relates to the frustration of not having intimate knowledge about the area and being certain that the information we are getting is 100% correct.

I will read a couple of excerpts from some of the letters I have received. These reflect some of the concerns coming from people in my riding. Mr. Ken Moir wrote to me and said in part of his letter:

These people are in greater disarray as the bombing attacks continue. The objective of the bombing attack is not being achieved—may turn the war into an infantry assault at very great cost, and should not be considered in any way whatsoever.

It is my opinion an infantry assault would be a preamble to WW 3. Let our MPs ponder this unthinkable probability, and think wisely as to how Canada is to proceed either in NATO or out of NATO. It is my opinion that (the Prime Minister) is not the leader that we so urgently need at this time. . . . Where is Lester Pearson when we need him? My views have some input from my time in Europe in WW 2 1943-45.

• (1710)

That is a concerned person writing in with his feelings about the situation.

A lady who writes to me quite often, Victoria Hogan, sent me an e-mail addressed actually to the defence minister:

My opinion is not reflected in the alleged 78% of Canadians approving of our bombing of Yugoslavia. If asked, I most certainly would have said NO, and so would hundreds of people of my own personal acquaintance. In fact, today on national TV Vancouver *Sun* Columnist Barbara Yaffe said that the media has been giving a very one-sided account of events in Yugoslavia, and that this could well account for this so-called majority opinion. I had thought so right from the start, but Barbara was courageous enough to say it on national TV.

Ms. Hogan goes on to express her opposition to what is going on, much in the way that Ken Moir did, asking us to concentrate much more on diplomatic efforts.

To the credit of the NDP, that is the basis of the motion that is before us today. I will read it into the record for members who may have missed it: "That this House calls on the government to intensify and accelerate efforts to find a diplomatic solution to the

crisis in Kosovo through the involvement of Russia and the United Nations, and to urge NATO not to impose a naval blockade or take any other actions that expand the conflict and stand in the way of a diplomatic solution”.

It is hard to disagree with the intent of the motion. I know there has been a lot of support for it today.

Moving back to some of the correspondence I have received, I received an e-mail addressed to the Prime Minister from Nenad Gajic, who I believe is a person from the Yugoslav area, expressing a strong protest toward NATO's and consequently Canada's declaration of war on the federal republic of Yugoslavia.

You have acted unilaterally in this matter. You led Canada into aggression against a sovereign country which did not attack Canada.

That is a different perspective of the situation from someone who has come to Canada from that region and is very disturbed about it. I know other members have received e-mails like that from people who have come here perhaps as refugees or as immigrants and feel that Canada has declared war, that we are doing entirely the wrong thing.

Finally, I would like to mention Mr. Ken Timewell who writes to me regularly on issues of peace throughout the world, or perhaps conflicts throughout the world. I received a letter from him dated April 17:

I have just returned home after a vacation abroad, only to learn that the Canadian government is actively supporting the U.S.-led NATO bombing of “Serb targets” in the Balkans. Worse still, I am told that all five major political parties in Canada support this illegal military action. It is truly a sad time in our history.

Mr. Timewell goes on to mention that he does not support the aggressive military action by NATO members and does not see how it can possibly bring anything but added instability to the region.

He wrote to me again a few days later and we had several discussions on the telephone too. This gentleman was deeply concerned about the issue. He wanted me to get his concern on the record in the House and I am pleased to do that today.

We had quite a discussion about whether or not he had intimate knowledge of the region. When he wrote his second letter he did say:

Perhaps not unlike yourself, my knowledge of the recent history of the Balkans is quite modest, however I am working hard to become informed on the subject.

He then goes on to say that despite his lack of information of an intimate nature about the area, he still within himself is opposed to this type of conflict and really does not want us to be involved. He goes on to encourage us to get involved at a diplomatic level. That relates back again to the thrust of the motion before us today.

That puts on the record some of the concerns which have come through. I must say I have had many more letters against what is

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happening than those for. As I mentioned at the beginning of my speech, listening to the radio talk shows and looking at letters to the editor in the newspapers, there really has not been a lot of public reaction.

● (1715 )

I am not sure if other members have found this in their readings as well. We have certainly received letters from individual constituents, but the public as a whole does not seem to have reacted.

That pretty much wraps up everything I needed to get on the record today. I welcome any input from members as a result of what I raised today. If there are any questions I would be pleased to answer them.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland):** Before we get to comments and questions, could the hon. member for North Vancouver confirm that it was his intention to use a 10 or a 20 minute time slot? Was he sharing his time?

**Mr. Ted White:** Mr. Speaker, I was to use 10 minutes for my speech and 5 minutes for questions and comments.

**Mr. Ken Epp (Elk Island, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, like my colleague from North Vancouver I too have had a considerable amount of input from constituents on this issue. They are very concerned about what is happening. I also have had the full spectrum of responses.

Some have asked “What are you doing using my taxpayer money to bomb my relatives over there?” There is a very genuine concern on the part of people with family there who may not necessarily be on one side or the other of the initial conflict but are in the line of fire of the bombs that come from high.

Then there is the opposite view where others ask “How come when we have an internal conflict in our country we have to take on the whole world in order to try to solve it?” Those are questions that we need to work through by increasing debate. We need to see if we can find a solution to the problems.

I am very concerned that the government is proceeding in a way which I think is perhaps very ill advised. Regardless of what we do in our country, it is very important for us to have the consensus and support of our people. That can only come by having a debate and by having a vote on an issue of great importance.

We know from the government that it does not like to have debate on things which are controversial. A day or so ago we had the unseemly event of the government invoking time allocation on matters that it did not want to have too many people across the country getting upset about. It used time allocation and said “We will not talk about it. We will just do it and we will tell our guys how to vote”.

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I am also concerned about the fact that members are not given the opportunity to cast a vote on Canada's involvement. That is wrong. We should be able to express our support for our troops if we are to send them. Or, we should be able to say we are not sending them for very good reasons. That can only come when there is open and honest debate with a vote at the end.

I am distressed about what is happening in Kosovo. I am certainly supportive of the motion before us today. I believe we should be solving problems like this one with debates and votes. We should not be solving such problems with bullets, body bags and bombs. I know that is the dilemma we face. We have President Milosevic who is hell-bent on promoting this conflict.

Having had family at the brunt end of such dictators and such people who do not value the lives of others, I have a great deal of sympathy for those who are now being forced out of their homes and out of their country. That is exactly what happened to my family a scant 70 years ago. I remember as a youngster hearing my family members, my grandparents and others, talking about it. It is totally distressing.

• (1720)

When I heard of these people and the atrocities to which they were subjected, my first reaction was just like that of everyone else's. What can we do to stop this killing? What can we do to stop this ethnic cleansing, as it is called?

I really think that is a misnomer. Somehow it makes the word clean become a dirty word. I wish we could come up with something better in the English language to describe it. It is devastating and dreadful. Surely it would be good if we could persuade that president to stop this and to engage in negotiations, as we would all love to see.

What do we do with a person who says "I am not talking; we have decided what we are doing and we are just going to go ahead with it?" Does one then put the force of war and attack into his face and have him face the consequences? I suppose that is the only other alternative. In that instance we have to work together with all other countries in the world to protect the lives of the people who are being so unfairly attacked.

My son has spent some time in that part of the world and he had some gruesome stories to tell about some of the atrocities. They were things that we do not like to even talk about because they are so dreadful, things that were being done to women and children.

Again, that is exactly what happened to my family when family members were being attacked. Three of my grandfather's brothers were shot. That is the day that my grandfather said "I think we are going to leave". They escaped the bullets directly themselves. They got out because of the atrocities that were being committed against their friends and family.

That is what is happening in Kosovo. These people are fleeing a dreadful enemy, a dreadful attacker, a ruthless attacker. I have great sympathy for them.

If I had my druthers, what we would do is provide as much help as we could for those who are fleeing. It should be done in the province of Kosovo. Perhaps our troops could secure a part of the country or make arrangements with neighbouring provinces and provide for those people so that their needs are met.

I do not know if the House can imagine it. We take our amenities of life for granted. My son reported that one of the things that amazed him about that part of the world was how similar it was to ours. The homes looked the same. The streets in the towns and cities looked the same. He said the only difference is when one gets close to the homes one sees that they are riddled with bullet holes.

It is dreadful to think that tomorrow we might be pushed out of our homes. We would no longer have our own beds to sleep in. We would no longer have the facilities and amenities to which we are so accustomed. We would just be out. We would be living in tents, if we were lucky. Otherwise we would be out in the open with an uncertain food supply, an uncertain water supply and no shelter.

Some of them are suffering from illness and injury. I would like to see Canada being the leader. We have a reputation as being peacekeepers and providing for people in a humane fashion. I would like to see Canada up its efforts in this area to make sure those who have escaped the ravages of this attack at least have their immediate physical needs met over there.

I know there are a lot of non-governmental agencies working in the area. I encourage our government to support them because I think they administer that type of assistance in a very efficient way, at least the organizations with which I am familiar. They are there. They are reaching out a hand of friendship and help to those people, and that is what we should be doing.

In the meanwhile we should seriously look at what we can do, as the motion suggests, in forcing the hand of Mr. Milosevic to the table, forcing him by demanding that there be negotiation and that he start to talk about what his plans are and what we can do to work this problem out and stop the atrocities toward people.

• (1725)

Whatever that military procedure, it is much beyond my ability because I am not a military strategist, but I believe something has to be done. I would certainly encourage us to up the ante in terms of a diplomatic approach.

**Mr. John Bryden (Wentworth—Burlington, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, while I respect the member opposite and many of the things he said I just have to bring him up on one point. He called for a

debate, and I do believe that we have been having a debate right here. It is a debate where at least this member of parliament feels he is not speaking for the government side, but I am speaking for the nation, speaking for Canada.

Whether there is a vote or not at the end of this debate, the important thing is that we should be here in our privileged positions as members of parliament, as the very few people in this entire country that can actually speak from our hearts and speak for our constituents about the situation in Yugoslavia at this time.

The member alluded to the lack of a vote and I have to also comment on that, even though I do not want this debate to become partisan. Unfortunately, his leader at every opportunity has complained about the lack of a vote in this kind of debate that we are having.

We are not the United States. In the United States the president can unilaterally declare war. He is the chief of the armed forces and he is unreachable by Congress. It is true that in the United States he can go on for a long time until the money runs out and carry on a war; but here in Canada our leader, if he does embark on a military enterprise, be it a declared war or undeclared war, is still subject to challenge in this House at any time in a vote of no confidence. In the United States they cannot get rid of the president except by impeachment if he decides to embark on a military venture of any kind, like Vietnam for example; but here in this House we always have the opportunity to vote the government down and out.

The reality, however, is that if it comes to MPs deciding policy in times of conflict, whether it is a war situation conflict or a diplomatic conflict, we cannot make informed choices in our votes if we are not at the NATO table, if we do not have the same information that the Prime Minister has.

The Prime Minister is plugged into the intelligence services. The foreign minister is having talks with the Russians. All of this pertains to whether or not we will do something tomorrow, be it whether we will send a frigate out into the sea to conduct an embargo or whether we will use combat troops or whether we will use peacekeeping forces.

In this House one cannot ask us, we MPs, to decide on the future of the nation when we cannot be at the table. We cannot be at the table, as we have already seen in the House because of a member of the Conservative Party who rose in this House and asked questions pertaining to the disclosure of covert operations that were occurring in Yugoslavia, theoretically, which could put members of our forces at risk. So long as we cannot guarantee that members will keep the confidences entrusted in them, we cannot have a vote in this House because we can never be entrusted with all the knowledge.

**Mr. Ken Epp:** Mr. Speaker, I somehow still have this belief that the very essence, the very foundation of democracy is the elector voting. All of us have been sent here by people on the basis of a vote and we make decisions in this House based upon a vote. I just

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find it very ironic for us when we are dealing with such an important matter.

One of the things that bears very heavily on me is the fact that those people who are now being deployed to Macedonia to be ready to enter a ground war are soldiers from my riding. I should be able to be here to debate and to vote on whether or not we are committing them at the risk of their lives, their health and their safety. As their representative in the House of Commons, which is supposed to be the supreme body here, I should have the authority to actually express it in a vote. I do not think I will back down on that.

• (1730)

The member certainly made some pretty strong arguments on the other side. If he can convince me that every backbencher over there who votes with the government on command is fully apprised of all the issues, then maybe his argument would have a little more strength.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland):** It being 5.30 p.m., it is my duty to inform the House that the proceedings on the motion have expired.

The House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's order paper.

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## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

### HEPATITIS C

**Mr. Greg Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest, PC)** moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should take all necessary steps to provide a humane and fair resolution for those infected with hepatitis C through the blood supply system, and provide for research, education and support into the identification of other inherited bleeding disorders, in particular von Willebrand's disease.

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is nice to be on my feet again on this very timely topic. I just want to remind the House that it will be a year ago tomorrow that we voted on the compensation package for all hepatitis C victims. I want to read into the record the motion the House voted on a year ago.

That this House urges the government to act on the recommendation of Justice Horace Krever to compensate all victims who contracted Hepatitis C through tainted blood.

The difficulty is of course that the government only recognizes those individuals between 1986 and 1990. That pretty well explains my motion. What we have are innocent victims outside of that time package who are as deserving of compensation as those

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people within that time period. It is a very narrow period of time that the government purposely designed. It has created problems.

I have always figured, and I think most of us have, that Canada is a very fair and generous country. When we are leaving victims outside a package designed to compensate them there is something dreadfully wrong.

I want to go through some of the numbers just to point out how generous Canadians are. We are very supportive as a people, as a group and as a country of compensating all of those victims. These are some statistics. Statistics alone cannot obviously tell the story. I will be the first to admit that no government should operate basically on public opinion all the time because there are other factors that have to be considered. However, I think this gives a sense of what Canadians are thinking.

Statistics tell us that 89% of Canadians support providing financial assistance to all persons with serious adverse consequences as a result of contracting hepatitis C from the blood supply system; 83% of Canadians believe it is unfair that pre-1986 victims are not eligible for financial assistance; and only 9% said it is fair.

In terms of supporting compensation, it is pretty unanimous across the country. For example, in Ontario it is 88%, 93% in Quebec, 87% in B.C., 84% in the prairies and 95% in Atlantic Canada. It is pretty compelling when we take a look at the statistics in terms of public support for compensating all victims.

• (1735)

I want to quote directly from Justice Krever's report, volume 3, page 1029. It states:

The compassion of a society can be judged by the measures it takes to reduce the impact of tragedy on its members.

In Volume 3, page 1045 of that same report, Krever states:

Until now, our treatment of the blood-injured has been unequal. After years of suffering devastating financial losses, many persons infected with HIV from blood or blood products, or their surviving family members, finally did receive financial assistance. Other Canadians—

—and we are talking about hepatitis C people—

—who have suffered injuries from blood therapy have not received any compensation. Yet the needs of those who have been harmed are the same, regardless of their cause and whether or not fault can be proved. Compensating some needy sufferers and not others cannot, in my opinion, be justified.

I think the Canadian people are in complete agreement with Justice Krever. We cannot justify a package that leaves people outside. Think of the dates, 1986 to 1990. It means that if someone became infected because of a blood transfusion on December 31, 1985 they would not be compensated. A day later, New Year's day of 1986, they would be.

What kind of perverse logic would lead someone to believe that type of package would be acceptable to the Canadian people? It is not acceptable. We in the House fought for months on that particular issue.

A year ago tomorrow will be the day when the Liberals stood up and supported a package that discriminates against victims of hepatitis C through no fault of their own. Why would they do it? Why did they do it? They just simply kowtowed or bowed down to pressure exerted on them by the Prime Minister. They all stood in their place and did it.

**An hon. member:** And the Minister of Health.

**Mr. Greg Thompson:** And the Minister of Health. They all knew full well that what they were doing was not right.

**Ms. Elinor Caplan:** That's not true.

**Mr. Greg Thompson:** Mr. Speaker, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Health Minister will have her chance to speak, but I will remind her that it is true. They did kowtow to the wishes of the Prime Minister.

Tomorrow on the front lawn of Parliament Hill a rally will be taking place. It will be led by a man by the name of Joey Haché who criss-crossed Canada by bicycle last year in an effort to raise public opinion on this issue.

I will read from the notice, not that I am using it as a prop, but it states:

Wednesday, April 28, noon on the front steps of Parliament—no rally. . . just a statement. I'm asking all Opposition MPs to join me for 5 minutes to show victims across Canada that they haven't been forgotten! Can we still count on your support against the Liberals?

He can count on our support on this side of the House. I believe he can probably count on support from across the aisle as well, from some of those people who found it very difficult to stand in their place and support a measure they did not believe in. They have now had a year to think about it.

What is so crazy about the government's position is that it is saying it cannot afford to compensate all victims so it will compensate some. I say this position is dictated more by the Minister of Finance than it is by the Minister of Health. On numerous occasions, on questions in the House, I would say "would the real Minister of Health stand up". Do members know which minister would rise on such questions? It was the finance minister because he was the one holding the purse strings. He was the one, more so than the health minister, who dictated who would be compensated. It was so ridiculous when \$1.1 billion was announced only for the victims between 1986 and 1990.



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● (1740)

Some of our people today talked about helicopters. This is the same government that cancelled a necessary helicopter deal. It cancelled a legal and binding agreement which cost the taxpayers of Canada \$750 million. It did not build a single helicopter. The helicopter issue resurrects its ugly head from time to time in this Chamber simply because what is going on in the world today is part of this debate. It cancelled the deal, which just paid its legal costs, to buy itself out of a piece of business. It is unbelievable.

It did the same thing with Pearson airport. The people of Toronto are suffering because of a lack of leadership on the part of the government in the expansion of Pearson airport. What did the government do in that case? It cancelled the deal. It cost the taxpayers over a billion dollars to simply cancel a binding contract it did not want with all the *i*'s and *r*'s dotted and crossed.

If we take those two deals alone, we are talking about \$1.75 billion. However, for the sake of argument, let us say \$2 billion because the government is still adding and counting in terms of the Pearson deal. We still do not yet know what the final settlement will be.

The government is saying that it cannot compensate hepatitis C victims but it can carry out a political vendetta against whatever group at whatever cost. It does not have to talk about compensating innocent Canadians. This falls directly at the doorstep of the Prime Minister. It is not too late to do something.

Logically one might ask why this issue would resurrect its ugly head again in the House of Commons. Did we not have enough to say about it last year? We have not had enough to say about it. This issue will continually resurrect its ugly head until the government deals with it. Members are going to hear this from this side of the House time and time again. We are going to keep throwing in motions and using standing orders to remind the government that it did the wrong thing.

We only have to go through the clippings to realize how poorly the Liberal government handled this. The Red Cross, which has had its own set of problems, said that all victims should be compensated. The September 19, 1998 headline from the *Globe and Mail* said "Payments to blood victims ruled out. Ottawa's enhanced health care offer is met with scorn".

It goes on even into the Senate, that chamber of sober second thought which we sometimes criticize on a daily basis in this place. It even recommended that all victims be compensated. What happened? Some governments acted on their own. They showed some leadership. The Government of Ontario, recognizing an injustice, compensated all victims in that province.

● (1745)

I called upon the province of New Brunswick last December to do the same thing. On December 16, 1998 I met with Premier Thériault and his health minister, Mrs. Breau, on that very issue. I suggested that they should compensate all victims or at least extend the compensation on an interim basis to those people before the package was agreed upon.

The other sad fact about the compensation package that was announced is that not one single victim has received a cent of compensation. Now there is a protracted legal argument because of the mishandling by the present government.

What we are saying is the provinces have to act alone. Unilaterally they should do it as the province of Ontario has done. We would like to see it happen in all the provinces. If they have to take the leadership on this issue, so be it. We do not have a government that will take the leadership or has even shown an inch of leadership on this issue.

In all fairness we are all disappointed with the announcement that only the 1986 to 1990 victims will be compensated. We want to see all victims compensated. I look forward to the debate on this motion.

**Ms. Elinor Caplan (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to debate this motion which was first put before the House in 1997. I say to the member opposite who moved the motion that a lot has happened since then.

I welcome this opportunity to speak about this very important issue and remind the House of the leadership taken by the federal government and in particular the Minister of Health regarding the issue of hepatitis C.

Without question the plight of Canadians who contracted hepatitis C from the blood supply evokes in all of us an overwhelming impulse of concern and sympathy. People who were injured or ill and who needed blood transfusions turned to our blood system in their time of need. Mr. Justice Krever so ably described in his final report that the blood system served to compound their problems because the blood they received was infected with hepatitis C.

In 1998 federal, provincial and territorial ministers of health put \$1.1 billion on the table to settle lawsuits and legal claims for the period between 1986 and 1990. We know from the debate which took place in the House the reason for that time period. There was an acknowledgement both in Mr. Justice Krever's report and among public policy experts in Canada that had different decisions been made in 1986, there might have been a different result. We know that it is always hard to judge those issues, but decisions were made in Canada, decisions were taken in Canada that were different from the international standard that had been established in 1986.

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This past December an agreement in principle was reached by the negotiators. I understand that significant progress is being made to finalize the settlement proposal which will go before the courts for approval. That is enormous progress on this very difficult and important issue. We believe that whatever settlement is proposed, it is the courts that must say that this is fair. That is the foundation of the policy of the government, one of fairness and one of compassion.

Whatever the specifics of the emerging settlement, the government is confident that these negotiations have been the appropriate way to proceed, given that these matters have to be resolved before the courts and Canadians want a full, comprehensive and responsible solution to this issue.

I have had the privilege of serving in public office for almost 20 years, at the provincial level for 12 years, five of those in government, seven in opposition. I say to members opposite that being in opposition affords them a certain luxury of being irresponsible. But being in government, good public policy requires that governments be responsible in the decisions they propose. I believe the government has been responsible and compassionate in its approach on this issue.

• (1750)

Within the Canadian tradition of moderate compromise, we will solve in a responsible way the difficult issues of the past as they relate to hepatitis C.

At the end of the day, this negotiated settlement should in financial terms give a measure of comfort to many of the individuals who were infected with hepatitis C by the blood system.

But the federal government has had to take a longer and broader view. Hepatitis C is still a relatively new disease to the scientific and medical communities. The federal government has taken decisive action.

This past September the Minister of Health announced a comprehensive federal initiative including funding for medical research, community support, public education, improvements in disease surveillance and to work to find those who might not yet know they are infected with hepatitis C. The Minister of Health announced a proposal to the provinces and the territories for a significant transfer payment to be made to ensure that the health system in each of the provinces responds as fast as it can and as appropriately as it can to the health needs of those infected.

This has not been an easy path. We should not forget that it took federal leadership to have this issue receive the attention it has received to where we are today which is trying to settle those lawsuits between 1986 and 1990 and provide health services to those who were infected outside of that window where if other

decisions had been made, perhaps the outcomes and the results would have been different.

Federal investment in hepatitis C is now very significant, in all totalling more than \$1 billion, but it is not only money that measures the level of federal commitment in this area. It is also what these initiatives represent in terms of the commitment to knowledge and scientific development and fostering new productive relationships, all the while preserving and respecting the federal role in health and health care.

I would like to take the next few minutes to review some of those successes in addressing the hepatitis C issue that the federal leadership has brought about in just a few short years. While we all acknowledge that there are things yet to be done, we do not spend enough time acknowledging that which has been done.

First let me start by pointing out that as in all things Canadian, this issue has required interjurisdictional collaboration. Federal, provincial and territorial governments have worked closely with one another to see that the transition to a new blood system, one that Canadians can have confidence in, has gone as smoothly as possible and that blood and blood products in Canada are as safe as they can be.

For its part, the federal government has had a leading role in what has been a very successful transition. A key part has been to ensure that all jurisdictions are of the same frame of mind when it comes to making the safety of the blood system paramount. That is a huge accomplishment. That is a significant and important change.

The additional \$125 million in support of the federal regulatory and disease surveillance role, and up to \$50 million to help the provinces pay for their public health function of finding those people who are infected with hepatitis C are clear indications of the federal government's commitment to ensuring that these functions are sufficiently resourced.

The federal government has acknowledged that people infected with hepatitis C might not always have reasonable access to the health services they might require over time, and that increasing resources would help to address this problem. The Minister of Health has offered \$300 million to the provinces and territories as a way to cover the needed medical care over the next 20 years and to focus our attention on resolving the issues surrounding this disease. The provinces and the territories have yet to fully respond.

We have also moved to meet the needs for more information and more support. We could not wait until the research momentum had built up by itself. For that reason the federal Minister of Health announced dedicated research funding of up to \$50 million over the next five years because we need answers if we are going to help those people.

• (1755)

I am pleased to report that the federal government has been funding efforts to educate medical professionals and the public about hepatitis C. All these indications suggest that our efforts are working.

Finally, we know many people who suffer with disabilities apply for the Canada pension plan as an important source of income. There are people with all kinds of disabilities. We all know from our constituency work that the process of determining eligibility through the Canada pension plan disability benefit is very thorough. That means it is difficult.

CPP adjudicators look at each case to determine if the disability genuinely prevents the person from working at any job. To ensure that adjudicators are aware of hepatitis C, its implications and its impact, Human Resources Development Canada has carried out very specific training for the adjudicators. People with hepatitis C over the years will now have adjudicators who are responsive and sensitive and who understand hepatitis C. That is something we do not talk about, but it is very important.

These are the types of activities that require the kind of commitment we have seen from the federal government. Without this commitment there would not be the momentum behind the comprehensive approach to dealing with hepatitis C that we see today.

The last word I would like to make today on this important motion is that the action taken by the federal government is not only appropriate and good public policy, it was the right thing to do.

**Mr. Gurmant Grewal (Surrey Central, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, Motion No. 273 which we are debating today is a noble motion and one that should enjoy the support of all sides of the House, except the Liberals of course.

As we know, this kind of motion did not receive their support exactly one year ago tomorrow. Joey Haché was here that day. He is a very young victim of tainted blood. He stood in the gallery while the Liberals voted not to compensate him for his sickness. One year ago Canadians witnessed a very important vote in the House on a matter that can only be described as a tragedy.

It was the federal government that controlled the Canadian blood supply that infected about 60,000 Canadians. We forced the House to vote on that issue because of the cold-hearted position of the Minister of Health. In the beginning he wanted to close the file and compensate no one. Today after about a year of holding his feet to the fire, he is willing to compensate about 20,000 of the victims of tainted blood.

Last year 1,200 of the victims died. Many of the victims have already died. It is as if the health minister is stalling so that as many

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of these victims as possible can die before he is finally forced to open up the vaults of taxpayer money he and his pal the finance minister have siphoned off the paycheques of Canadians and then pay off the victims who have successfully struggled to stay alive without any help from the Liberal government.

Many members on this side of the House were very sad, very emotional and very angry when that vote was held in this chamber. We knew that the Liberals would vote against compensating Canadians infected with federal government controlled tainted blood. On this side of the House we were frustrated, but we tried to get the Liberals to allow the House of Commons to do the right thing.

On the other side of the House the tears being shed were of a different nature. Backbench Liberal MPs were weeping openly because even though they and their constituents felt that we should help the people infected with tainted blood, they had to vote against helping those Canadians. If those Liberal MPs did not vote as they were told to vote, the Prime Minister would ensure that they were punished.

There are no free votes in the House as long as the traditional kind of political party like the one across the way holds the majority of seats in the House.

The Liberals will not even agree to televise parliamentary committee meetings. Why? Because they want Canadians to know as little about this place as possible. They want to hide the way they are forcing their MPs to vote and govern.

• (1800)

Canadians know about the dictatorial behaviour of the Prime Minister and the lack of compassion shown to Canadians by the government. We know because it keeps on spending tax dollars and it refuses to give us tax relief even though the budget is in surplus. Canadian families are suffering under the heaviest tax burden by the government.

Right now, outside the House, Canadians are working on an alternative to traditional political parties. The alternative will truly be democratic and will put an end to the government that talks the talk about democracy but fails to walk the walk when it comes to power.

The government has cut \$23 billion in health care and education since it came to power. The government has refused to eliminate waste and duplication in federal spending. It has already spent \$450 million on a gun registry system that is estimated to cost about \$1.2 billion. It appears the Liberals are sucking money out of health and education to pay for the highly questionable gun registration system. In fact, it should emphasize education and health care that would help our children.

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**Mr. Wayne Easter:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Does the member opposite not have to be on topic? I think he must be dreaming that he was in the Liberal caucus when he was in the Reform caucus when all these members were tuned up for their indiscretions.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland):** That is certainly not a point of order. The hon. member for Surrey Central has been on topic and is on topic. The topic goes around in circles and he is part of that circle.

**Mr. Gurmant Grewal:** Mr. Speaker, I am very much on topic and I am exposing what the government is supposed to do and is not doing. In fact, it takes money from health and education which it should spend on our children, on our families. The point I am trying to make is that the government has focused on the wrong target. It spends millions of dollars on things like free flags, for example.

The Liberals spent \$3 billion helping 40,000 fishermen thrown out of work due to the failure of the federal government managed east coast fishery.

Why would the Liberals not spend money to help the surviving 40,000 hepatitis C victims whose lives were thrown into jeopardy by federal government managed blood?

I could go on and on and on. I have little time to describe the shameful record of the government that has caused this motion to be brought before the House for debate. The Liberal government allowed Justice Krever to be held up in court so that he could not report to Canadians what he had found during his inquiry. The health minister withheld vital documents from him, but Justice Krever continued to fight and would not let it go. He submitted his report to the House, but the Liberal government virtually ignored it.

Ontario and Quebec are ready to compensate hepatitis C victims without discrimination. The Liberal health minister by contrast is only compensating his legal beagle buddies by providing them the means to launch lawsuits and have the victims pay the lawyers in order to try to make the federal government compensate them for the federal government's mistake of giving them tainted blood.

The official opposition has been calling for immediate compensation before it is too late for many victims of tainted blood who need help right now. We on this side will continue to call for a no fault insurance fund to compensate all victims. This was one of the recommendations of Justice Krever, by the way, if members on the other side who are heckling have forgotten.

Some 87% of Canadians believe that provincial and federal governments have a moral obligation to compensate these victims, and 72% of Canadians believe it is unfair to compensate for HIV or AIDS while denying the hepatitis C victims compensation.

• (1805 )

Speaking to the second part of the motion, there are a number of diseases on the other hand that we can test for and seek to control, including von Willibrand's disease. We should be concerned about these diseases.

I am sure the member who proposed the motion is aware there is no way that the Liberals will entertain paying heed to this concern. This is a government that lacks compassion and lacks vision.

All these diseases and bleeding disorders should be studied. I am talking about a broader picture. We should do the most and the best research we can to tackle these diseases and screen them out of our blood supply. We could make progress, but we have to prepare a blueprint and a long term vision. We know the Liberals do not have that and do not want to do that.

In conclusion, the motion we are debating today is wishful thinking. Canadians know that Liberals will fight, drag their feet, dig in their heels and be dragged kicking and screaming before they show compassion and compensate the victims of government controlled tainted blood.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Pauline Picard (Drummond, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, it is sad to have to debate this matter again today. Justice Krever's report was tabled over one year ago—its anniversary is coming up tomorrow. Still nothing has yet been settled for the hepatitis C victims.

The motion introduced by the hon. member for New Brunswick Southwest, which dates back to November 1997, just a few days after the Krever report was tabled, is as current as ever, for this motion recommended compensation for all victims of tainted blood.

The motion before us this evening reads as follows:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should take all necessary steps to provide a humane and fair resolution for those infected with hepatitis C through the blood supply system, and provide for research, education and support into the identification of other inherited bleeding disorders, in particular von Willebrand's disease.

So here we are, still debating a motion that is as current as ever, a year after the tabling of the Krever report. That is what is unfortunate.

Following the report, the government, in March 1998, after voting against an opposition motion calling for compensation of all victims of hepatitis C, provided \$1.1 billion in compensation to people who contracted hepatitis C between January 1, 1986 and July 1, 1990, because it did not acknowledge making a mistake either before or after this period.

Over a year later, the motion is still relevant—sad but true—because there exists no fair and just compensation for all victims of hepatitis C, who were contaminated by this blood, as the hepatitis C people put it “This rotten blood we were injected with”.

Motion M-273 calls upon the government to take every possible measure to find a fair and equitable settlement for people infected by the hepatitis C virus. In this regard, an initial step is possible in the form of a transfer to the Government of Quebec of its share of the \$300 million announced last September to compensate all those who became victims, regardless of the date.

• (1810)

If this \$300 million were transferred on a pro rata basis to the people, we could say in Quebec that we had a fair share of this money.

To provide a little background, Quebec and Ontario felt that the government's offer fell short and the two of them announced they would extend the compensation program to include all victims, regardless of the date. In September 1998, the federal government announced \$300 million to pay the medical costs of people infected through the blood supply system.

Since Quebec already has a program to cover medical expenses, the Quebec government asked that its share be used to extend the compensation package to more people because, as members know, the federal government does not recognize victims infected prior to 1986 and after 1990.

Since Quebec already pays for medical expenses and since the federal government announced \$300 million in compensation, Quebec would like to get its share so that it could use it to compensate all victims, that is those infected before 1986 and after 1990.

This request is based on the government's resolution, announced in the 1996 throne speech, to no longer use its spending power to establish programs in areas of provincial jurisdiction without the provinces' agreement. That resolution also included a right to opt out with compensation.

But now, it appears that the formula used to distribute the money between the provinces, which was always based on the population of a province, may no longer be valid. Instead of paying \$75 million, or 25% of the \$300 million, as provided under the established formula, the federal government is only prepared to give Quebec \$45 million, or 15% of the total amount.

This change caught everyone by surprise. Neither the Quebec government nor the victims or the organizations working for them, including the Quebec chapter of the Hemophilia Society, can understand why Quebec's share does not reflect its demographic weight, that is 25% of the overall population.

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The federal government is said to have based this figure on epidemiological studies. This is a very haphazard method, since hepatitis C is difficult to detect. Indeed, many people may be infected without knowing it, because they are still symptom free.

Using this sort of calculation, there is a risk of serious errors that will ultimately penalize the victims, who are waiting for some sort of compensation to improve their condition and quality of life as much as possible.

This is why both the Canadian Hemophilia Society and the Government of Quebec intend to put pressure on Ottawa to keep the population-based formula. Thus, those who contracted the disease before 1986 and those who did so after 1990 will be able to count on \$75 million instead of \$42 million.

It has now been more than a year since the offer for those who contracted the disease before 1986 and after 1990 was announced. We now know what is in the agreement and we are still waiting for the courts to approve it. But, according to the Canadian Hemophilia Society, it is already unacceptable. We are also waiting for the results of the Red Cross's negotiations with its creditors to see how much it will be able to offer victims.

One thing is certain: the issue is far from resolved.

The motion by the member for New Brunswick Southwest also calls on the government to provide for research, education and support into the identification of other inherited bleeding disorders, in particular von Willebrand's disease.

The September 1998 announcement also mentioned \$50 million over five years for prevention, public education and research into hepatitis C and other related diseases. The House will agree that \$50 million is a minimum, and that much remains to be done to fully understand and treat these diseases.

• (1815)

In conclusion, much remains to be done for those whose lives have been turned upside down because of deficiencies in the blood supply system. We are appealing to people to show compassion and ensure that those who have been the victims of this national tragedy are properly compensated. The goal is not to assign blame, but to ensure justice for all victims of this unprecedented tragedy.

This government prides itself on guarding the safety of Canada's blood supply system. It can and it must do what is necessary to ensure that all victims of the contaminated blood scandal are treated fairly.

[English]

**Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (Winnipeg North Centre, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to participate in the debate on the motion brought forward by the member for New Brunswick Southwest, which is very timely and appropriate.

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It is true that it is about one year ago today that we were faced with a most regrettable situation which will go down as a very sorry chapter in the history of this country. Joey Haché and other victims of hepatitis C were in the gallery and observed the proceedings as the government cracked the whip and required all members of the Liberal Party in the House to vote against a motion that would have ensured fair and just compensation for all victims of hepatitis C in this country.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health talks about the successes around this issue. I have a hard time trying to find any successes on this issue. I feel nothing really but much shame and embarrassment that we have a government today which failed to do the right thing in terms of this being a moral issue and to follow the legal requirements, as we understand them to be, ensuring that all Canadians are able to have access to blood products, to drugs, to food and to medical devices that are safe beyond a reasonable doubt.

The parliamentary secretary referred to several measures which she says provide evidence of that success. She points to the \$1.1 billion settlement for compensation cases which fall between the period of 1986-1990. She fails to mention that not one penny of that \$1.1 billion has been paid out.

It was only about a month ago that we received a press release from the hepatitis C organizations on the anniversary of the day when the government made its very arbitrary and regrettable decision to limit compensation to those infected between 1986 and 1990. The Canadian Hemophilia Society reminded us that it has been a year since this compensation was promised. Erma Chapman, the head of the Canadian Hemophilia Society, stated very clearly that there has been no money paid to any of the victims. She stated: "There are seriously ill people who urgently require treatment but do not have the financial resources to pay for it. The hepatitis C virus is one that can cause serious liver damage that can lead to death. We call on the federal government to provide a method to fast-track assistance to those in serious need of treatment and care for their hepatitis C infections. Victims have died waiting for help from their government".

On the first point that the government makes with respect to its so-called success in this area, the government has failed to ensure that any method of compensation is active in ensuring that victims of hepatitis C are receiving some sort of assistance.

• (1820)

The second point which was made concerns the financial commitment of this government to assist provincial governments in meeting the medical needs of hepatitis C victims and in helping community groups support education, as well as ensuring that quality of life mechanisms are in place for victims of hepatitis C. There has been very little movement in that regard. I refer specifically to the fact that on September 18, 1998 the Minister of

Health clearly announced a \$50 million program to ensure that there would be assistance and help when it comes to hepatitis C disease prevention, community based support programs and research. That program is still not up and running. Not a penny of that \$50 million is flowing to community organizations and victim support groups to ensure that the system is in place to provide meaningful support at a time of crisis.

As a part of its so-called successes, the government has also talked about its movement to ensure that proper and active regulatory systems are in place to absolutely guarantee that this kind of tragedy will never happen again. In the year that has passed since we last dealt with this very critical issue we have seen nothing but evidence after evidence that the government has not learned one lesson from the blood tragedy which this country experienced or acted on one bit of advice from Justice Krever who called very clearly for the government to recognize the error of its ways and to move toward an active, not a passive, regulatory approach when it comes to blood, food and drugs.

As an observer watching this government, it would almost seem that it has forgotten the lessons of the past, that it has decided to completely ignore Justice Krever because it has shown not one iota of interest in moving toward a firm, active, intensive regulatory approach in all of these areas around which human safety and health is so much a question.

We just had the experience of going through four months of hearings around the issue of organ and tissue donation and transplantation. It was a major disappointment for us to learn that this government had not learned from Justice Krever and was not prepared to apply the recommendations of the Krever report when it came to organs and tissues. Canadians see that blood is no different than organs and tissues. All are invasive procedures which require extra precautionary methods, yet this government refuses to take a proactive approach when it comes to the safety of Canadians. It has put on the table a risk management framework for the matter of organs and tissues, suggesting, despite everything we have learned from the blood tragedy, that there may be circumstances under which this government may not be held liable. For the first time, despite Krever, this government is actually raising the possibility of indemnification from the responsibility of ensuring the safety of Canadians on all of those issues and matters regulated under the Food and Drugs Act.

I have a hard time pointing to any successes on this issue. My colleagues in the New Democratic Party and I are left with the need to keep raising this issue and to try to convince the government to reopen this sorry chapter in the history of our society.

Many things have actually happened in the year since Joey Haché and others were in the gallery watching developments unfold, not the least of which was a major documentary by the *Fifth Estate* in January 1999 pointing to the serious problems with respect to blood collected from prisoners in the United States

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coming into this country and the government not taking precautions.

It was further evidence to Justice Krever's report about the deplorable actions of this government, the absolute negligence on the part of this government to ensure the safety of blood products. I think that evidence alone should be enough for the government to realize that it must reopen this question and it must look for a way to ensure compensation for all victims of hepatitis C because we are dealing with the failure of this government to uphold its responsibilities under the law of the land.

• (1825 )

I would use the same words that the member for New Brunswick Southwest used in quoting Justice Krever who said "The compassion of a society can be judged by the measures it takes to reduce the impact of tragedy on its members".

With those words in mind, today we are calling on the government to show the compassion and leadership Canadians have come to expect from their national government toward victims of tragedies and disasters. We urge the government to take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that hepatitis C victims in this tragic episode are equally compensated.

It is only through this and putting in place corrective measures to ensure that these circumstances are never repeated that we as a nation can move forward with confidence and a sense of justice worthy of Canada's traditions.

**Mr. Greg Thompson (New Brunswick Southwest, PC):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank all parties and members on this side of the House who support my motion. It is encouraging when the Bloc, Reform, NDP and Conservatives agree. I hope Canadians have noticed that.

We can always tell when the government is nervous in this place. Its members yak continually and try to throw off the speakers when discussing a topic the government is not comfortable with. We started off this debate by reminding the Canadian people that exactly a year ago every one of those Liberal members, including the ones that are presently in the House, stood on their feet and denied compensation to innocent victims of hepatitis C. If I were on that side and did the same thing, I would be extremely nervous. In fact, most of us would be hiding under our desks after having done that.

The Liberal Party is the only party that can swallow itself whole on an issue like this and then come back into the House and defend it. No other party can do that. That is exactly what the Liberals are doing. They have swallowed themselves whole. They always pretend to be the defenders of the underdog, the underprivileged, the poor and the sick, except when it comes to doing something. In this case, they did nothing for a group of innocent victims.

I will not deny that the parliamentary secretary is a pretty good person outside of this House and she probably is a compassionate person, but that speech of hers sounded like it came from an accountant. Why? Because it was drafted by her lawyer. Who is her lawyer? Allan Rock. Who is Allan Rock? The Minister of Health. That is bureaucratic gobbledegook. Is gobbledegook a parliamentary word? I guess in this case it would be because that is all it is.

We can tell by their expressions that the Liberals are not very happy with our having resurrected this ugly issue, because they look bad on it. They still look bad on it and it is not going to go away easily. It is not going to die a natural death. Why? Because on this side of the House we are not going to let it die. We are not going to let the issue slowly fade away. It is an important issue. It is an issue that Canadians want addressed. The victims want redress.

I am going to step through some facts.

It is a fact that the federal government did not properly fulfil its duties as a blood system regulator. This means that it did not keep a close eye on the activities of the Red Cross.

It is a fact that the federal government reacted too slowly to the threat of blood borne AIDS and mistakenly played down to Canadians the risk of the virus contaminating the blood supply.

It is a fact that the provinces which funded the Red Cross blood program did not provide timely and sufficient funds for scientific tests that would have screened out blood contaminated with the AIDS virus and hepatitis C.

It is a fact that the provinces did not do enough to track down infected blood recipients, some of whom were unaware that they had AIDS and unknowingly passed it on to their sexual partners. The same applies to hepatitis C.

• (1830 )

It is a fact that the Red Cross took inadequate steps to implement a screening program that would have prevented high risk donors such as sexually active gay men from donating their blood. It does not end there. It allowed contaminated blood from the American prison system to come into the country.

It is a fact that the Red Cross did not move quickly enough to replace its inventory of contaminated blood products used by hemophiliacs with newer heat treated products that were safe. It has nothing to be proud of in what it did for those victims.

Until all of those victims are compensated we on this side of the House will continually fight for them. At some point the government will have to atone for its sins.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland):** The time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired and the order is dropped from the order paper.

*Adjournment Debate***ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS***[English]*

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

## HOUSING

**Ms. Libby Davies (Vancouver East, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, thousands of my constituents in Vancouver East still face terrible financial and personal losses as a result of leaky condos. Sadly it is a crisis made worse by Liberal inaction at the federal level.

The Liberals continued inaction and lack of concern are unacceptable. Is it any wonder that people in B.C. feel alienated from Ottawa? Apparently there is no help, no care and no real support forthcoming.

I am here today to say that we will not stand for it. Nor will we let up on our demand that the federal government do right by the thousands of people in B.C. affected by this crisis. It is something for which we have been fighting for a long time.

Back in July 1998 and again in December 1998 I wrote to the minister urgently asking the government to support recommendations from both the Barrett commission and the Condominium Owners Association of B.C. for tax relief and GST rebates. To date the federal government has rejected these recommendations.

In March of this year the B.C. municipal affairs minister visited Ottawa to pressure the federal government to participate in the B.C. reconstruction loan program. The answer from the feds was no.

On March 17, I questioned the minister of public works in the House and asked why on earth the federal government would offer federal loans to B.C. with interest rates so high that the province would be better off accessing them on the open market. Instead of admitting that the offer was hypocritical at best, the federal minister's response was that the issue required further study.

Despite all these efforts and despite the heartfelt need of thousands of desperate homeowners, the Liberal government has yet to act. Empty expressions of concern do not contribute one bit to the repairs that are needed to get these homeowners back on a secure footing. The feds have even refused to partner with the province in assisting housing co-ops that are facing the same problems, many of which were built under federal housing programs.

On April 24, the Government of British Columbia announced that housing co-ops could apply for provincial assistance. Clearly the Government of B.C. is helping resolve this terrible situation, but the question remains where is the federal government.

The Liberal government in Ottawa has turned its back on thousands of leaky condo owners in B.C. left stranded as their assets literally drain away. It is a shameful ploy that once again shuffles the interest of western Canadians to the bottom of the deck.

Once and for all I ask the federal government to provide support and to participate responsibly in the program to help desperate B.C. owners of leaky condos.

**Ms. Carolyn Parrish (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Public Works and Government Services, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as the Minister responsible for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation has already indicated in the House, the government is very concerned about the hardships that many owners of British Columbia's moisture damaged condominiums are facing.

It is the responsibility of the provinces to establish building codes and of the municipalities to inspect and enforce these codes.

• (1835)

As the national housing agency CMHC has been working in co-operation with others involved in housing research, design, construction and regulation to determine what improvements need to be made to design and building practices to eliminate these moisture related problems for the future.

Earlier this year the Barrett commission report provided a wide range of recommendations on how to improve the situation for condominium owners. The report called for CMHC to double residential rehabilitation assistance program funding for British Columbia. The Government of Canada did this for fiscal year 1998-99. In addition to providing more RRAP funds, the Government of Canada has also offered \$75 million in bridge financing for the reconstruction fund that was mentioned by the member opposite.

CMHC is also working toward solutions to resolve the issue through our National Housing Act mortgage loan insurance. Some home owners with moisture damaged units have NHA insured mortgages. These individuals may have access to a number of financial options. Applications will be assessed by the approved lenders and CMHC on a case by case basis.

In addition to assisting home owners who currently have an NHA insured loan, CMHC has negotiated with the British Columbia's home protection office to provide mortgage insurance for their provincial program.



*Adjournment Debate*

I should point out that it is the position of the government that tax relief or a tax subsidy as suggested by the Barrett commission would not be an equitable option for all Canadians.

## INTERNATIONAL TRADE

**Mr. Peter Stoffer (Sackville—Musquodoboit Valley—Eastern Shore, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure as a former resident of British Columbia to ask a follow-up question in our late show today. On March 25 I asked:

—for the past year Canadian lumber companies have been able to ship value added, rougher headed lumber products which are used in the exterior trim and finish of building projects to the United States without paying U.S. duties.

Last week U.S. customs announced that it was planning to reclassify Canadian exports of rougher headed products and subject them to strict quota limitations, thereby putting thousands of jobs in British Columbia at risk.

Will the government commit today to fight this blatant attempt to break international tariff rules and to ensure market access for the important products and protect forestry jobs?

Here is the response from the hon. Minister of International Trade who said with crocodile tears:

—we will not accept this American ruling—We will challenge it—

Basically he sounded like Churchill for a second: We will fight them on the beaches. We will fight them in the trenches. We will fight them all the way.

To be completely honest, we could stretch this to Christmas trees exported from Nova Scotia. We could talk about the salmon disputes with Alaska and the United States.

It is quite obvious the United States does not respect Canada when it comes to international trade deals or rulings of any kind. It looks at us like a lap dog and walks over us. The rougher headed lumber is a classic example of that.

The government tried to put through Bill C-55, and look at all the hubbub it caused. It is quite clear that the current Minister of International Trade has absolutely no standing with the United States government because it continuously walks all over us in everything we do.

My suggestion to the hon. parliamentary secretary who will answer this question is that instead of the international trade minister looking after his future occupation, whatever that will be, he should start concentrating on Canadian jobs and Canadian exports in order to protect those jobs, especially in interior and coastal B.C.

When will the government actually stand up for Canadian workers and Canadian towns, especially when it comes to the lumber industry? Being a former resident of British Columbia, I may say it is an absolutely beautiful province. Just like in Nova

Scotia those people have a right to live, work, access resources and export them worldwide and not just to the United States.

We deserve to be respected. Our government should be fighting harder for those people in British Columbia.

**Ms. Eleni Bakopanos (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, for more than 17 years the politically influential U.S. softwood lumber industry has sought action by the U.S. government to restrict Canadian access to the U.S. lumber market. On that point the member was right.

The hon. member, however, may be unaware that Canada won the last softwood lumber dispute with the U.S. in 1994, so we are not lap dogs.

● (1840)

It was this defeat and the subsequent threat by the U.S. industry to file a new countervailing duty case that gave rise to the softwood lumber agreement. The industry and provinces wanted to avoid another long and costly legal battle with an uncertain outcome, hence their advocacy and support for the 1996 softwood lumber agreement with the U.S.

Let me assure the hon. member that the government is very concerned with actions by the U.S. customs service to reclassify lumber products that are currently exempted from the softwood lumber agreement. We are sparing no effort, as was stated by the minister, to counter these reclassifications.

To bring the hon. member up to date, last week Canadian and U.S. officials held a meeting under the softwood lumber agreement dispute settlement mechanism. We outlined our objections to the U.S. proposal to reclassify rougher headed lumber. Moreover, we have already signalled our intention to raise this reclassification at the World Customs Organization.

The hon. member likely knows that we are already challenging the U.S. customs reclassification of drilled studs at the World Customs Organization.

Let there be no misunderstanding. The government will vigorously oppose all attempts by the U.S. to expand unilaterally the coverage of the softwood lumber agreement.

[*Translation*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. McClelland):** The motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 6.41 p.m.)



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