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(HANSARD)

**Wednesday, March 29, 1995**

**Speaker: The Honourable Gilbert Parent**

# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, March 29, 1995

The House met at 2 p.m.

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*Prayers*

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*English*]

### GENERIC DRUGS

**Mr. Jim Jordan (Leeds—Grenville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, residents of my riding of Leeds—Grenville have expressed grave concern about skyrocketing health costs.

Approximately 40 people from the community of Merrickville have signed a letter to me indicating their support for an increased availability of generic drugs as one way of reducing health care costs.

It has been estimated that Canadians now have 36 per cent of their prescriptions filled with generic drugs. On average, generic drugs are 40 to 50 per cent less expensive. This saving is achieved without compromising the quality of health care.

The greatest concern of seniors in today's economy is that they will not be able to afford proper health care when they get sick.

Citizens of my riding are asking the drug manufacturers to respond to dwindling resources in health care by putting more prescribed drugs on the generic drug list.

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[*Translation*]

### CITY OF HULL

**Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday, when Marcel Beaudry, chairman of the National Capital Commission, appeared before the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage, I made some exaggerated comments about the City of Hull to make the point to Mr. Beaudry that the NCC invariably passes over Hull in favour of Ottawa in the choices it makes.

Taken out of context, my remarks offended the people of Hull. I would like to apologize to them in this House. It really was not my intention to hurt anyone.

The tendency to inflated language, which sometimes afflicts those involved in politics, surfaced in my attempts to ensure that Mr. Beaudry, who makes no distinction between a Liberal Party fundraising dinner and a committee for a no vote fundraising dinner, really understood my explanation.

To the people of Hull, I again offer my most sincere apologies.

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[*English*]

### BOB'S BIRTHDAY

**Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the constituents of Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt to congratulate film makers Alison Snowden and David Fine for winning an Oscar at the Academy Awards on Monday night for their film "Bob's Birthday". Their success demonstrates that Canadian film projects can compete effectively in the global marketplace.

Reform members believe it is high time for the federal government to get out of the way and allow Canadian entrepreneurs to take their place as the producers of Canadian film projects.

Canada has proven that we can win Oscars. Let us do it without federal funding. Canadian taxpayers want to know why the Liberals continue to spend dollars to make films. Our film industry can stand on its own two feet and should be supported by the investment from Canadian entrepreneurs, not government subsidies.

This side of the House wants to congratulate "Bob's Birthday" for proving once again that Canadian film productions can prosper in a global marketplace.

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### GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY

**Mrs. Eleni Bakopanos (Saint-Denis, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this past weekend a sea of Greek, Canadian and Quebec flags flooded my riding of Saint-Denis as over 50,000 Canadians of Greek origin celebrated Greek Independence Day.

It was a tremendous turnout with people from every generation dressed in national costume in celebration of their rich

*S. O. 31*

heritage. It was also a day to be proud that we live in a country that recognizes the significant contributions that Canadians of Greek origin have made over the years.

We live in a country that celebrates its diversity and for which it has become the envy of the world.

[*Translation*]

We are all lucky to live in a country where diversity is something to celebrate. I think I speak for all Canadians of Greek extraction who want to continue to live and participate fully in the development of a country like Canada, an example to the world of generosity and open-mindedness.

[*Editor's Note: Member spoke in Greek.*]

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[*English*]

#### NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY

**Ms. Beth Phinney (Hamilton Mountain, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, today in the Ottawa *Citizen* a former adviser to Ed Broadbent stated that the NDP must either be revived or declared dead. I would like to respond by stating that it is my sad duty to declare the NDP dead.

The New Democratic Party in the past has made valuable contributions to Canadian political debate. However its recent performance is showing it to be increasingly divided and irrelevant.

The current NDP seems bereft of ideas for dealing with the challenges of the global economy. As the article stated, it has been a long time since a member of the NDP has had anything innovative to say about Canada's economy. To quote: "They project no civic mission for the country as a whole, no intelligent reflection on the consequences of their mumbblings and no credible grappling with contemporary issues".

Those hoping for renewal of the NDP are going to be disappointed. A party with no visionary candidates for its leadership is not in a position to begin to renew itself. No ideas, no leadership, no renewal, no party.

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#### LAND MINES

**Mrs. Jane Stewart (Brant, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, one of the greatest barriers to international development efforts comes as a result of the devastating impact of buried land mines. I would like to draw to the attention of the House the fact that there are 110 land mines buried in 62 countries across the world. Each month 800 people, many of them children, die as a result of stepping on one of these.

The problem is getting worse because the international community can only clear about 100,000 mines in a year. In the same time frame nearly two million more are buried.

Land mines obstruct post-war reconstruction. In Angola, 25 per cent of the food production capacity is lost because farmers cannot get into the fields. In Mozambique, a serious drought has been exacerbated.

Land mines do not stop for foreign aid. They do not stop for development and they do not stop for peace. They are always at war. I call on our government to work carefully and closely with our international partners to find the solution to this modern day plague.

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(1405)

[*Translation*]

#### ALGERIA

**Mr. Michel Daviault (Ahuntsic, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Mohammed Abder Rahmani, the chief editor of the Algerian daily *El Moudjahid* was buried yesterday in Algiers. He is the 35th journalist to be assassinated in Algeria in the unending struggle between Islamic and government forces.

Mr. Abder Rahmani, the dean of the country's journalists, openly criticized the actions of armed Islamic groups. Intimidated and fearing for their lives, over 200 journalists have already fled the country.

These murders of people who have the courage to express their opinions, their ideas and their values, risking their lives in doing so, is an affront to us all. All too often, we remain silent and unmoved in the face of obscurantism and intolerance. We must denounce Mr. Abder Rahmani's assassination and see to it that his killers are brought to justice.

Voltaire said: "I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it". Freedom of expression is a fundamental value in our society. May all Canadians—

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[*English*]

#### THE DEBT

**Mr. Herb Grubel (Capilano—Howe Sound, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, recently I received numerous suggestions for getting Canadians to buy government debt now held by foreigners. While tax concessions or special interest rates can bring home the bonds, Canada's vulnerability to falling and fluctuating exchange and interest rates will not be eliminated.

First of all, the purchase of these government bonds from foreigners will crowd out other domestic securities. Therefore, net foreign indebtedness will not change.

Second, the existing vulnerability would exist even if foreigners held no Canadian obligations at all. Both foreigners and Canadians could still speculate in spot and futures markets.

The simple fact is that Canada's exchange and interest rates respond to news about the government's ability to service the debt. The downward trend in exchange rates will end, interest rates will stop rising and fluctuations will become less severe only when government deficits are eliminated.

As much as we all wished it were true, financial gimmicks cannot alter this basic truth.

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**MONEY SPECULATORS**

**Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it was interesting to note the governor of the Bank of Canada said he was opposed to the Tobin tax. He did not think there was anything wrong with the effect that money speculators were having on national and regional economies.

I wonder whether this reflects the real position of the government. Over the last little while I have been asking the government to show some leadership at the G-7 in Halifax in trying to bring about a tax that might dampen speculation and in making some proposals for a new financial world order. It would be a sort of second Bretton Woods that would prevent money speculators from doing this kind of thing to our economy, to our dollar, or to anyone else for that matter.

What is it the governor of the Bank of Canada has in common with the money speculators? I think it is this. We could ask these questions of both of them: Who elected them? Who elected the governor of the Bank of Canada to make the policies he makes? And who elected the money speculators?

It is a democratic question. Who really runs the world, the money speculators and the banks or democratically elected parliaments like this one here?

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[Translation]

**FEDERALISM**

**Mr. Nick Discepola (Vaudreuil, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, a new study by two economists from the University of Calgary, soon to be published in the *Canadian Business Economic Journal*, shows that the Province of Quebec is the biggest winner in Canadian federalism.

The researchers compared the total amount of money that each province paid to Ottawa in the form of taxes, etc, with the amount of money directly transferred to each province over the last 32 years.

Between 1961 and 1992, Quebec has gotten \$168 billion more out of the federal government than it put in in taxes and other

payments to Ottawa. The province has netted an average annual bonus of \$803 per person.

Quebecers are not gullible. And the polls prove it. The opposition's lame arguments are not winning over flocks because federalism is working in Canada, despite its imperfections, and Quebec benefits from it.

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**MEMBER FOR RIMOUSKI—TÉMISCOUATA**

**Mr. Raymond Lavigne (Verdun—Saint-Paul, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the people of the Outaouais, in particular Hull residents, are still reeling from the shocking statement made by the Bloc member for Rimouski—Témiscouata yesterday.

(1410)

Her statement was as follows: "Behind the wall, in Hull, which is the ugliest town I have seen on the face of this earth, if you look beyond the shadows of the buildings, all you will see are tenements". Obviously, the poor performance of the sovereignist propaganda machine is slowly making this Bloc member take leave of her senses.

Instead of continuing her bitter tirade, she decided to offer her apologies to the people of Hull. For this, I thank her.

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**MEMBER FOR RIMOUSKI—TÉMISCOUATA**

**Mr. Denis Paradis (Brome—Missisquoi, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in making her comments about the City of Hull, the hon. member for Rimouski—Témiscouata probably got carried away. She apologized and we thank her for that.

It is unfortunate that the radicalization of political options compels some elected officials to make such comments or take that kind of attitude when people—and, in this case, a whole region—do not share their vision of the future.

Must we remind Bloc members that not only local residents but the whole region take pride in the city of Hull.

The hon. member for Rimouski—Témiscouata was wrong. The region does not come under the responsibility of the national commission on Quebec's future but under the mandate of the National Capital Commission.

I proudly salute its chairman, Mr. Beaudry, for his commitment to his city, his region and his country.

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**CANADIAN FEDERATION**

**Mr. François Langlois (Bellechasse, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, never in Quebec history have we seen Quebec members, in this case Liberal members, reject a motion to protect Quebec's political weight within the Canadian federation.

*Oral Questions*

Yes, Mr. Speaker, Liberal and Reform members joined forces yesterday in an effort to defeat a Bloc Québécois motion recognizing Quebec's right to a minimum of 25 per cent of seats in the House of Commons.

This Bloc motion would have guaranteed a quarter of the seats to one of Canada's two founding nations and met Quebecers' historical and legitimate demands to maintain a minimum amount of political weight within the Canadian federation.

The attitude displayed yesterday by Liberal members is an example of double talk in that—

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[*English*]

**MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT PENSIONS**

**Mr. Cliff Breitzkreuz (Yellowhead, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the Liberals just do not understand. Their promise to reform the big bucks for life club, euphemistically known as the MP pension plan, has gone by the wayside. Despite the token changes to the plan, MPs' pensions still have unlimited protection against inflation and will grow in value at a rate twice the legal maximum in the private sector.

If the Deputy Prime Minister retires in three years, she will stand to collect a cool \$2.7 million until age 75. She fought to maintain her cushy pension plan, which comes courtesy of hard working Canadians.

Perhaps she fought so hard for her pension because she thought she would be forced to keep her promise and resign. We all remember when the Deputy Prime Minister said she would quit if the GST was not scrapped by her government. Lucky for her, she has an understanding boss who will let her keep her job, despite the millions of Canadian taxpayers who despise both the GST and the outrageous MP pension plan.

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[*Translation*]

**MEMBER FOR RIMOUSKI—TÉMISCOUATA**

**Mr. Mauril Bélanger (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the hon. member for Rimouski—Témiscouata displayed her good taste in urban planning, and her appreciation of urban beauty in particular, a science the popularity of which would no doubt have increased dramatically following her statement, had it not been for her apologies today, apologies that the people of Hull graciously accept.

What the hon. member did not realize is that, in the Hull neighbourhood she referred to, we find "matchstick" houses, a style apparently unique to Canada.

Reporters must be very grateful to the hon. member who, time after time, week after week, has managed to make the news and shock at the same time. In a recent radio interview, the hon.

member indicated she had considered an acting career. Well, in this case, she gave us a fine example of her talent as a comedian.

If the hon. member for Rimouski—Témiscouata did not already exist, she would have to be invented.

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**CITY OF HULL**

**Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let me tell you a thing or two about one of the most important towns in Quebec: the City of Hull.

With its numerous parks, the Museum of Civilization, the Maison du Citoyen, its golf courses and fine restaurants, Hull is a very nice place where very nice people live. Just to show how great a place it is, Hull even has a street named Boudria.

(1415)

I encourage Bloc members to cross the river once in a while and visit the town where my ancestors and myself were born and take a good look. They will see a great community to live in.

[*English*]

**The Speaker:** Before we get into question period, generally speaking the Chair has always given a great deal of latitude in the statements made. I would encourage all hon. members to keep that in mind. It seems to me, as we come closer to individual attacks, that whatever words we use, we use them judiciously.

Also, I would like to remind you that you cannot reflect in the statements on a vote that has been taken. I just bring that to your attention for future reference.

**ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**

[*Translation*]

**PEARSON AIRPORT**

**Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Leader of the Opposition, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Prime Minister, my question will be directed to the Deputy Prime Minister.

The number of accusations is growing concerning the role played by the Liberals in the process of privatizing Pearson airport, including allegations that appeared recently in the *Financial Post* about a possible involvement of the Prime Minister himself. Today, an influential newspaper, the *Globe and Mail*, is demanding a public and independent inquiry to get all the facts on this murky business.

In view of the troubling allegations that question the integrity of the Prime Minister and of his government, does the government intend to establish a genuine commission of inquiry into the contract for the privatization of Pearson airport, something

*Oral Questions*

the official opposition has been requesting for over a year and, in a major editorial, the *Globe and Mail* is asking for today?

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Prime Minister himself made it clear that the allegations reported in the *Financial Post* were absolutely false, and there is nothing more to be said.

**Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Leader of the Opposition, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, it could not have been that clear since it did not convince the *Globe and Mail*, which today responded with an editorial on the subject.

I want to ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether she agrees that only a public inquiry, a genuine public inquiry, would make it possible to clear up any doubts about the circumstances around the contract to privatize Pearson and also about the decision of the government and of investigator Robert Nixon to keep under wraps, in other words, hide, an important report drafted in November 1993 by senior officials of the Department of Transport?

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Minister of Transport gave the facts on all the events that led up to this report. And if the Leader of the Opposition is so interested in the opinion of the *Globe and Mail*, why does he not call the referendum, as requested by this newspaper?

**Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Leader of the Opposition, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, we are not playing games here. The government's ethics are involved, and this is a very fundamental issue.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Bouchard:** Any government should be ashamed of using the Quebec referendum as a diversion, to prevent the truth from coming out.

My question is straightforward, a question all Canadians and Quebecers are asking: Why does the Prime Minister stubbornly refuse to establish a commission of inquiry, if he or his government have nothing to hide?

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I think the Leader of the Opposition has always been known as a man of honour. If he has any accusations to make against the Prime Minister, let him make them here in the House. And if he does not, it is dangerous to claim that certain facts were hidden, and coming from him, it is absolutely and totally irresponsible.

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### MONETARY POLICY

**Mr. Yvan Loubier (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, allow me to start with a quote: "Economic policies

must not merely attack an individual problem in isolation from its costs in other areas. The Conservatives' single-minded fight against inflation resulted in a deep recession, three years without growth, declining incomes and skyrocketing unemployment".

(1420)

My question is for the Minister of Finance. Are we to understand from this excerpt found in the Liberals' red book that the Minister of Finance does not agree with the statement made yesterday by the Bank of Canada governor, to the effect that fighting inflation through interest rate increases is the one and only priority of the Canadian monetary policy?

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that, when it formed the official opposition, the Liberal Party criticized the policy of the Bank of Canada governor of the day.

The country was going through a period of high unemployment and economic decline, so we certainly had to comment on the monetary policy of the time. But Canada is now first among the G-7 countries in terms of growth, and it has just created 433,000 new jobs. Clearly, the situation is now drastically different.

I do support the statement made yesterday by the governor of the Bank of Canada.

**Mr. Yvan Loubier (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance is providing the very same answer as his Conservative predecessors, and he is implementing exactly the same monetary policy. The minister kept tearing up his shirts when the Conservatives applied the medicine which he is now pouring down Canadians' throats.

Does the minister realize that, by supporting a policy which is only geared to fight inflation, he is deliberately hurting job creation, and, consequently, he accepts unemployment rates of 9.5 per cent in Canada and close to 12 per cent in Quebec, where 417,000 people are without work?

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, again, many new jobs were created in Quebec, during the months of January and February. In fact, even the Premier of that province confirmed that job creation in Quebec was very strong, thus contradicting the comment which the hon. member just made.

However, the issue is whether or not the Bloc Québécois accepts the fact that we must set objectives in the fight against inflation. Our objectives are in the one to three per cent range. If the hon. member is not happy with them, then let him tell us which inflation rate he is prepared to accept.

## Oral Questions

[English]

## NATIONAL DEFENCE

**Mr. Preston Manning (Calgary Southwest, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, Anne-Marie Doyle may be gone from the Somalia inquiry but a serious unanswered question remains about how she ended up on the panel in the first place.

The Minister of National Defence has told the House that he personally named Ms. Doyle to the panel after reviewing the résumés of potential commissioners. Therefore, he should have no trouble in answering my question.

Who put Anne-Marie Doyle's name on the minister's list of potential commissioners?

**Hon. David M. Collette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I had occasion to review the transcript of *Hansard* and this question was put yesterday. I felt that I had answered it to the best of my ability. Perhaps I was not explicit enough for the hon. member for Calgary Southwest. I will attempt to clarify the situation so that he is satisfied.

I said yesterday that the name of Anne-Marie Doyle had come to my attention as someone who had served with great distinction at the OECD. It was I who put her name forward. I felt that she was a good choice.

Before I gave that answer, the hon. member asked if I could assure the House that the former deputy minister, Bob Fowler, had nothing to do with framing the terms of reference of the inquiry and played no role whatsoever in proposing the name of Anne-Marie Doyle as a possible panel member. I answered those questions but perhaps not clearly enough for the hon. member. In both cases the answer is no.

**Mr. Preston Manning (Calgary Southwest, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the minister just said that this name was brought to his attention.

My question is, who brought this potential commissioner's name to the your attention?

**The Speaker:** Colleagues, I would remind you please always to address questions to the Chair rather than directly to one another and your answers the same way.

(1425)

**Hon. David M. Collette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I said yesterday and I say again today, quoting from *Hansard*: "The name of Anne-Marie Doyle had come to my attention as someone who had served with great distinction at the OECD".

As ministers, we are aware of many distinguished public servants working for the government now and also past public servants. I thought it would be good for the composition of the inquiry to have someone from the bench as the chair; someone

from the field of journalism who was retired but who had some credibility as a member, and also someone who knew the workings of the government but specifically how foreign policy and defence policy were discharged by the government. I started looking at those kinds of people within the public service as well as former public servants.

I knew of Ms. Doyle's previous involvement in the Privy Council office as someone who had that particular dossier. When I asked for greater details about her career, it became obvious that she was someone of outstanding reputation who could discharge that position.

Had she continued to serve, I believe she would have discharged her obligations fully to the best of her abilities and as a credit to the commission.

**Mr. Preston Manning (Calgary Southwest, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the minister's refusal to answer the question undermines confidence in the inquiry.

Yesterday the minister also stated that the Judge Advocate General helped him to draft the terms of reference of the Somali inquiry.

As the minister knows, the Judge Advocate General works with, and some would say for, the chief of defence staff and the deputy minister of defence. In effect the Judge Advocate General is part of the same military hierarchy that the inquiry is to investigate.

How big a hand has the national defence hierarchy had in drafting the terms of reference of the Somali inquiry? How can Canadians be assured that this involvement has not already prejudiced the inquiry?

**Hon. David M. Collette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Calgary Southwest displays a profound ignorance of the National Defence Act.

First, the Judge Advocate General is appointed by the Prime Minister of Canada. It is an order in council appointment because that person must be independent in the advice he or she gives to ministers. That person is the chief legal officer in the Canadian Armed Forces.

Under the terms of the National Defence Act that person reports on a day to day basis to the Minister of National Defence. It was quite appropriate for me in the course of the last year to discuss aspects of the Somalia case with the Judge Advocate General, as his role under the National Defence Act explicitly says that he should be the one giving legal advice to the minister.

I verified certain aspects with the Judge Advocate General this morning because I wanted to make sure that anything I say on the floor of the House of Commons is absolutely and totally the truth. The government has the interests of all Canadians in mind in getting to the bottom of the events in Somalia in 1993.

The Judge Advocate General confirmed that the former deputy minister had nothing whatsoever to do with the drafting of the terms of reference. They were submitted to the Privy Council office. They were reviewed by the Department of Justice and everyone stands by them.

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[Translation]

### AIR TRANSPORT

**Mr. Michel Guimond (Beauport—Montmorency—Orléans, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, on Monday, in reply to a question in the House from the Leader of the Opposition, the Minister of Transport said that his decision to delay Air Canada's access to Hong Kong market was connected to a similar decision involving Canadian's access to the German market. These are two separate issues. In the case of Hong Kong, negotiations were successful. Air Canada said it was ready to start operations this summer and has even negotiated landing slots.

My question is directed to the Minister of Transport. In the case of Hong Kong, could the Minister tell us what other reasons, aside from Canadian's access to the German market, would prevent him from letting Air Canada start its operations on this market in the summer of 1995, since everything is in place?

**Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member knows perfectly well that negotiations with the Hong Kong airport authorities were concluded only a few days ago.

(1430)

When we decided to establish a level of 300,000 passengers before identifying a second destination, we made sure that there would be two locations on this planet where this rule would come into force this year: in Germany and Hong Kong.

As I have already pointed out, for the past 14 months Air Canada has had access to Japan, a market this airline has coveted for a very long time. It is now able to prepare for its arrival in Hong Kong, another very important market. For Canadian Airlines International, which needs landing rights in Germany and other destinations in Asia, it is also very important to be able to plan ahead and have some certainty when agreements are negotiated, not only with these countries but also with the financial institutions that support these airlines.

I still say that, after all, Air Canada president Hollis Harris said publicly that he appreciated the work done by a government that opened these markets to Air Canada for the first time in its history.

### Oral Questions

**Mr. Michel Guimond (Beauport—Montmorency—Orléans, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, would the minister not agree that it was his eagerness to accommodate Canadian that led him to delay Air Canada's access to the Hong Kong market, in the process delaying the creation of 500 jobs with this airline, including a large number of jobs at headquarters in Montreal and at the Dorval maintenance centre?

[English]

**Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Canadian aviation industry would explain to my hon. friend that the progress we have made in the last 14 or 15 months is unparalleled in Canadian aviation history.

We have been able to arrange a situation in which as of the end of this year every allocation of an air route in this country will be absolutely transparent. There will be conditions and criteria that allow for Canadian Airlines International and Air Canada to plan, to purchase aircraft, to lease aircraft, to do their marketing in an atmosphere of certainty unheard of in the aviation industry in Canada.

The proof of that is even before we announced the second designation based on the 300,000 passenger level, Air Canada had already indicated it was in the process of hiring nearly 1,000 new employees: pilots, attendants and people who work in maintenance and on ground activities.

I understand the hon. member's distaste for the progress we have been able to make. The airline industry in Canada is in better shape today than it has been for the last 20 years.

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### PEARSON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

**Mr. Ed Harper (Simcoe Centre, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, more unanswered questions have surfaced surrounding the Pearson airport deal. A Transport Canada report dated November 4, 1993 contradicts the Nixon report. A Deloitte & Touche report and a Price Waterhouse report contradict the Nixon report.

Questions have been raised concerning the Prime Minister's private meeting with Jack Matthews and Charles Bronfman, two key players in the Pearson deal.

It is time to lift the fog over Pearson. Will the government order an independent judicial inquiry into the cancelled airport deal?

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister spoke to the allegations very clearly in the House yesterday.

I want to challenge the hon. member, as I challenged Leader of the Opposition. If they have allegations to make, stand like a man and make them here in the House instead of hiding behind some scurrilous newspaper claims that have absolutely no foundation in fact.

*Oral Questions*

**Mr. Ed Harper (Simcoe Centre, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I challenge the government to stand in the House and answer the questions the Canadian people want answered.

If the government has nothing to hide, why is the Prime Minister's former law office refusing to give Mr. Matthews documentation of his meeting with the Prime Minister? The only thing clear in all of this is that Canadian taxpayers are again paying the price for political games of Tory and Liberal insiders.

I ask the Deputy Prime Minister again, for the sake of integrity will she order an independent judicial inquiry? Will the Deputy Prime Minister give this commitment now to the Canadian people? They demand it.

(1435)

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, logically speaking, if the Prime Minister was supposedly in the pocket of these companies involved, why had he the guts to say no to the deal?

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*[Translation]***CRIMINAL CODE**

**Mr. Michel Bellehumeur (Berthier—Montcalm, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Minister of Justice stated that, if anti-gang legislation would give the police the tools they needed to combat criminal gangs, he would introduce one. Experts from the SPCUM, the Quebec police force and the Quebec unit of the RCMP have been calling for such legislation for a year.

Rather than simply pay lip service, as he did yesterday, how can the Minister of Justice hide behind the current provisions of the Criminal Code and refuse to incorporate anti-gang provisions, as Italy, France and the United States have done?

*[English]*

**Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the important thing is to get the job done; to provide the tools to the police and the prosecutors to detect, prosecute and punish crime.

We have had a request for an amendment to the code with respect to gangs involved in criminal activities. As I told the House yesterday in response to a question on the same subject, I am looking at the question, as is the Solicitor General.

Our departments are examining amendments to the code that might be of help. When we conclude that assessment we will respond. In the meantime, I have invited the hon. member if he has a proposal to put in respect of specific amendments to let me have it. He assured me he will.

*[Translation]*

**Mr. Michel Bellehumeur (Berthier—Montcalm, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, are we to understand that the Minister of Justice is rejecting measures that would make the work of the police easier because he is unable to deliver the goods, as was the case in other matters such as genital mutilation, support payments and discrimination based on sexual orientation?

*[English]*

**Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this gamesmanship is both tedious and uncharacteristic. I wish the hon. member would focus on the answer to the question he has put. It is a serious matter.

The police have asked us to consider an amendment to the code which would provide for criminalizing certain organizations. That is not something one does with the snap of a finger or without taking care with the language.

We also have to be concerned about motorcycle groups, for example, that are not criminal, that are quite legitimate. We also have to bear in mind that police already have some 800 sections of the Criminal Code to deal with today.

We will look at the question seriously. We will do the responsible thing. If the hon. member has a specific proposal for language, I have already asked him to provide it to me. I will give it due consideration.

\* \* \*

**PEARSON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT**

**Mr. Jim Gouk (Kootenay West—Revelstoke, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday brought to light a covered up government document stating cancelling the Pearson development contract would cost the taxpayers of Canada up to \$2 billion.

Another secret document provided to Robert Nixon in October 1993 states: "Crown rate of return considerably better than the crown construction option and the PDC return on investment endorsed as reasonable rate of return by both the finance department and an independent financial consultant".

My question is for the Minister of Finance. If all these documents are wrong, where is the documentation showing this? When will the minister table this documentation in the House?

**Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the document the hon. member refers to as being covered up is one that obviously was covered up as far as he was concerned. He has not bothered to take a look at the documents made public in December of last year dealing with the case before the courts.

One thing the hon. member would want to refer to in looking at the documents and the opinions expressed therein is that the people who determined that Paxport was the appropriate offer to

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accept on the basis of the privatization plans for Pearson would also have to take into account that only a few months after that recommendation was made, those people were unable because they were financially incompetent to proceed with the deal.

**Mr. Jim Gouk (Kootenay West—Revelstoke, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, in response to my question yesterday the minister suggested I talk to the ADM who was not privy to this report.

(1440)

Not only was the ADM privy to the report, he provided the October report to Mr. Nixon. The facts do not substantiate the remarks made by the Minister.

When will the minister stop hiding the truth in this matter and come out with a full public inquiry? What is he—

**The Speaker:** Order. In question period we refer to the word truth. I would ask the hon. member in this instance to please rephrase his question.

**Mr. Gouk:** Mr. Speaker, I will withdraw it from the way it was phrased and simply ask the minister when will the full truth be brought out—

**The Speaker:** It is out of order. The hon. member for Verchères.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**TURKEY**

**Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister.

With Turkey continuing its military offensive against the Kurds in northern Iraq, the Canadian government still has no official policy on the matter. Moreover, as the government embarks on negotiations with Turkey for the sale of CF-5s, Germany is suspending delivery of military materiel destined for Turkey.

My question is very simple: Does the government intend to follow Germany's example and suspend all deliveries or sales of military materiel to Turkey and to break off negotiations on the sale of the CF-5s to Turkey?

[English]

**Hon. David M. Collenette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have answered in the House a couple of times that there are no formal negotiations going on. The Turkish government has expressed some interest in the disposition of the CF-5s. This is not unusual since a number of years ago it received surplus planes from us.

As a NATO ally we have to entertain at least its interest. There are no formal negotiations going on. There is no deal pending.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs has given the House every assurance that should we at any time sell any armaments, those sales will be under the strictest of controls.

[Translation]

**Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, you would agree with me that there is something questionable about the minister's statement that negotiations are being held, but not formally.

In view of the seriousness of the present situation, and rather than continue waffling about how to treat the Turkish offensive against the Kurds, will the government not acknowledge that it should submit this delicate matter to NATO and to the UN Security Council?

[English]

**Hon. David M. Collenette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on the ongoing actions of the Turkish government with respect to the Kurdish minority in northern Iraq, the Minister of Foreign Affairs has addressed that in the House and has well established Canada's position on it.

With respect to the disposition of the CF-5 fighter planes, it is somewhat premature to discuss this because there is no deal pending. There is no sale pending. There has been only an indication of interest on the part of the Turkish government.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**THE OUTAOUAIS**

**Mr. Bernard Patry (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, and concerns both the statements made by the hon. member for Rimouski—Témiscouata regarding the City of Hull and her apology in the House. Will the minister confirm in this House that the Outaouais region is not a victim of economic discrimination?

**Hon. Marcel Massé (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister responsible for Public Service Renewal, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, while the Parti Québécois refuses to invest in western Quebec and only allocates 0.4 per cent of its budget to that region, the National Capital Commission invests 30 per cent of its resources in the Outaouais.

According to a 1993 survey conducted by the magazine *L'Actualité*, Hull has the second highest standard of living in all of Quebec and ranks first in terms of economic indicators. People who live in Hull or have businesses there will tell you that they are proud of their city, justifiably so. By making such a statement, the hon. member only betrays her own lack of knowledge of the City of Hull and her arrogance towards people

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who do not share her political convictions and who believe in Canada.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

\* \* \*

(1445)

[*English*]

**IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE BOARD**

**Mr. Art Hanger (Calgary Northeast, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the chair of the Immigration and Refugee Board admitted yesterday that public works had installed one or more surveillance cameras in the ceiling panels at the Montreal office of the IRB.

Yesterday she said, and the minister repeated it, that it was part of an RCMP investigation. However the RCMP denied installing the cameras.

I have a question for the immigration minister. If the RCMP did not authorize the camera installation, did the minister himself or the chair of the IRB? Or, if neither one of them, who did?

**Hon. Sergio Marchi (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, a formal complaint was registered with the IRB. The chair of the IRB subsequently consulted both public works security that has responsibility for the building and the RCMP for a normal police investigation. The monitoring device was approved.

The criminal investigation is ongoing and I think it would be inadvisable to comment any further.

**Mr. Art Hanger (Calgary Northeast, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday the minister said that the cameras were part of an RCMP investigation. The director general of the IRB said that the cameras were installed to investigate improper relationships between staff and somebody interested in IRB's business.

That could mean that someone on the outside was influencing refugee decisions or there was an attempt to restrict information flow from the IRB.

What was the specific nature of the investigation that required the installation of the cameras to watch someone for four months?

**Hon. Sergio Marchi (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. critic used to be a police officer. I thought he would appreciate some of the finer details involved in any criminal investigation. Suffice it to say that a public servant is being investigated. It is not a board member appointed by the government. It is not an RHO official. It is not to spy on any officials in terms of how they do their business.

Proper consultations have taken place. It is a criminal investigation. I do not wish to second guess the professional police authorities and will allow the investigation to continue as it should.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

**CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION**

**Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for—

**Mr. Young:** Welcome to Hull.

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

**Mrs. Tremblay:** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Canadian Heritage.

Last week, Bloc members questioned the heritage minister about the CBC's prospects for the next three years. In responding to each question, the minister refused to confirm the budgets disclosed to Mr. Manera by his deputy minister, Mr. Rochon.

Now that the CBC has an acting president and that the minister has had the time to make inquiries, can he confirm the extent of the cuts that his government intends to impose on the CBC over the next three years?

**Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, all the figures are in the budget and they are for one year. I said so before and I am pleased to repeat it. I hope that our colleague will understand the message.

**Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, does the Minister of Canadian Heritage confirm that the extent of the cuts he intends to impose on the CBC is such that they will again bring about the closure of regional stations?

**Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I cannot, of course, confirm the impact of figures I did not put forward.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

**JUSTICE**

**Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, on Monday, in response to a question about a court decision regarding the legality of orders in council used to prohibit firearms, the justice minister twice stated that the Alberta court decision was wrong. That was the Simmermon case. Other ministers have repeatedly told the House that they cannot comment on cases before the courts.

(1450)

Why is he commenting? Is he trying to influence the courts in the matter?

*Oral Questions*

**Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the fact is that the judgment has been appealed. We are taking the position in the Court of Appeal that the judgment was in error.

With great respect to the hon. member, there is nothing at all inappropriate about the government saying that it disagrees with the court judgment, and it is appealing it.

We will be making our arguments to the appellate court and we are confident that those arguments will prevail.

**Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, this confirms what I am saying.

The decision is being appealed by the Alberta government, not the federal government. It is my understanding that the federal government has not even applied for intervener status. Yet the minister says and continues to say: "We will pursue the appeal with every confidence that we shall win it".

The Attorney General of Canada has publicly vowed to pursue and win the appeal. How can the defendant ever get a fair trial?

**Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, to begin with, what is at issue is the validity of an instrument created under federal jurisdiction. I am very confident that the federal interpretation of the law will prevail.

Second, the Alberta government, as the hon. member has just pointed out, agrees with the position. It is taking the appeal. It will argue the appeal and it will contend that the judgment should not stand.

Third, there is a world of difference between commenting on the facts of the case implicating the guilt or innocence of the accused person, which would be improper, and commenting on the legitimacy of a piece of legislation before the court on a legal argument as to validity. There is a world of difference and nothing improper at all has occurred.

\* \* \*

**HEALTH**

**Mrs. Dianne Brushett (Cumberland—Colchester, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health.

A recent Statistics Canada study indicates that women in Cumberland county have the highest rate of hysterectomies in the country. Because the rate is two to three times higher than the national average, because it is a costly invasive surgery removing the uterus, will the Minister of Health investigate to determine if these alarming statistics are unnecessary surgery?

**Hon. Diane Marleau (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, phenomena such as this occur across the country. While the issue of medical practice is largely a responsibility of provincial

governments, the federal government has taken some initiatives in this regard.

In collaboration with provincial governments as well as national medical groups, Health Canada has developed guidelines for Canadian clinical practice. As well, the National Forum on Health is taking a close look at why patterns of medical practice differ across the country.

We are launching and have launched centres of excellence that will be looking at the entire issue of women's health. The government is determined to address issues of women's health that have been ignored for a very long time.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**PUBLISHING**

**Mrs. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Canadian Heritage. In the midst of the Ginn Publishing controversy, the heritage minister, we will recall, proved to be incapable of adequately looking after the interests of Canadian publishers. One year later, the minister does it again, announcing cuts in excess of 33 per cent to Canadian publishing development assistance and 71 per cent to grants for the distribution of new publications.

How can the minister justify such extensive cuts, which will hurt publishers, after his gross mishandling of the Ginn Publishing issue?

**Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let us not get ahead of ourselves here. We are in the process of reviewing programs, to see how they can be amalgamated to increase efficiency, and the stakeholders will be consulted in the process.

**Mrs. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, how can the minister claim to protect publishers when he is chopping programs specifically designed to offset losses resulting from the elimination of the postal rate on books and the introduction of the GST, two measures that are still in effect?

(1455)

**Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, these measures were taken by the previous government. What I am saying is that we are looking at ways to replace these various programs with new and more efficient programs.

\* \* \*

**CANADIAN ARMED FORCES**

**Mr. Bob Ringma (Nanaimo—Cowichan, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, given the Somali incident, the Petawawa videos and the low morale in the armed forces and the fact that the members of our armed forces are being forced to do more with less, what does

*Oral Questions*

the Minister of Defence intend to do about the ten armed forces suicides at Valcartier? What is he doing to get to the heart of this distressing situation?

[English]

**Hon. David M. Collenette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, when the matter of suicides in the armed forces was raised some months ago, I looked into the matter and discussed it with the chief of defence staff. We have found that the rate of suicides is lower in the armed forces than it is for the population as a whole.

There has been some concern recently about a number of suicides, specifically with troops coming back from Bosnia and Croatia. I have asked for more information on it to see whether or not there is a disturbing trend.

Any suicide, any death is tragic. The hon. member talks about morale and leadership in the armed forces. As a former distinguished general officer in the armed forces, I would hope he would discuss with his colleagues ways in which they can help to assist with morale and leadership in the armed forces, not by the comments in their questions.

The morale and leadership in the armed forces are a hell of a lot better than they are in the Reform Party.

**Mr. Bob Ringma (Nanaimo—Cowichan, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I would be more than delighted to help him or the troops directly in any way I can.

In the meantime my question through you, Mr. Speaker, to the minister is: What are you doing specifically?

**The Speaker:** I am sure the member would want to rephrase his question.

[Translation]

**Mr. Ringma:** In that case, Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary. Canadian soldiers and their families know that death is an occupational hazard. It is expected in the course of duty, but when it takes the form of ten suicides, some sort of explanation is necessary.

What steps will the minister take to reassure the families of the other soldiers that he has the situation in hand and will initiate a plan of action to resolve the problems in the armed forces?

**Hon. David Michael Collenette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the suicide rate is lower in the armed forces than it is in the general population.

[English]

**THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Mr. Len Taylor (The Battlefords—Meadow Lake, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, world leaders are beginning to meet in Berlin. I believe the Minister of the Environment will be travelling next week to Berlin to participate in talks aimed at stabilizing levels of greenhouse gases now threatening the earth's climate.

Most of the world's largest per capita emitters of greenhouse gases including Canada have filed shameful reports indicating that they will not meet the commitments they agreed to at the Rio Climate Summit in 1992.

Given that it is clear the world is facing an issue with uniquely large and irreversible consequences and the delegates in Berlin cannot afford to waste the opportunity to begin turning the ship around, why is it that Canada's wimpy actions on climate change are not as forceful as our resolve to preserve the fish stocks off the Atlantic coast?

**Hon. Sheila Copps (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, first I thank the hon. member for the question. It happens to be one of the few opposition questions on an issue which actually threatens the planet far more greatly than any threat for even the fish stocks.

(1500)

In fact, the death of the cod stock is partly as a result of the global warming effect which has seen the level of the planet's temperature increase by three degrees since the beginning of time. We expect another three degree increase in the next 50 years.

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

**Ms. Copps:** Members across the way may not be interested, but the member is right. We need a stronger position and we need a stronger international position.

We are hoping that with the forward thinking proposal we are bringing forward on technology twinning we will be able to achieve the dual goals of helping developing countries meet their global warming reductions utilizing Canadian technology, but above all making sure that we meet our goals not only for stabilization but also for the reduction of this deadly problem.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**TRIBUTE TO JEAN-CLAUDE DEVOST**

**The Speaker:** This concludes question period, but I would like to mention this afternoon that Jean-Claude Devost, table officer and deputy principal clerk at the journals branch, will be leaving this week to take his well earned retirement.

[English]

Jean-Claude is at our table right now. Jean-Claude, will you please stand for a moment while I read this to the House.

Jean-Claude retires this week after 28 years of loyal and devoted service to the House of Commons. He began his career working for the caucus of the Social Credit Party under R al Caouette, and went on to work in various capacities in the House. He became a table officer in 1991.

[Translation]

I know, my colleagues, that you would like to join with me in recognizing Jean-Claude's long and successful career. I want to wish you, Jean-Claude, and your wife, Suzanne, good health and much happiness in the years to come.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

\* \* \*

[English]

**POINTS OF ORDER**

PEARSON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

**Hon. Jean J. Charest (Sherbrooke, PC):** Mr. Speaker, my point of order relates to question period. During question period the hon. member for Kootenay West—Revelstoke referred to a document relative to the Pearson development issue. I wonder whether with the consent of the House we could ask the member to table the document in the House of Commons.

**The Speaker:** Colleagues, it is somewhat unusual to have a paper tabled by a private member. However, with unanimous consent this House can make any decision it likes. Is there unanimous consent?

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Speaker:** There is not unanimous consent.

LAND MINES

**Mrs. Jane Stewart (Brant, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, earlier today in a statement to the House I inadvertently and mistakenly mentioned that there were 110 land mines buried in 62 countries across the world. In fact, there are not 110 and there are not 110,000. There are 110 million. I want to make it perfectly clear to the House the magnitude of this terrible plague.

**The Speaker:** I am sure the record will be corrected.

FIREARMS

**Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to correct a mistake which I made in response to a question put on March 23 by the hon. member for Yorkton—Melville.

The hon. member asked me about the registration of firearms. In response, I referred to Statistics Canada numbers. I said that in Saskatchewan the fatality rate from firearms is 50 per cent higher than the national average and the suicide rate from firearms is twice the national average. I was wrong.

*Routine Proceedings*

The statistics are, when correctly stated, that the firearms suicide rate is one-third higher than the national average in Saskatchewan. It is the rate of death from accidents with firearms that is twice the national average. Overall, firearms fatalities in Saskatchewan are 25 per cent higher than the national average. I shall furnish the hon. member with a copy of these statistics which bear out those numbers.

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

(1505)

[Translation]

**GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS**

**Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 31 petitions.

\* \* \*

[English]

**COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE**

PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

**Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present the 70th report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs regarding the selection of votable items in accordance with Standing Order 92. This report is deemed adopted on presentation.

\* \* \*

**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

**Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I think you will find unanimous consent for the following motion. I move:

That, notwithstanding any Standing Order, immediately following the completion of Private Members' Business on Wednesday, March 29, 1995, the House shall continue to sit for not more than three hours for the purpose of considering a motion "That this House, in light of the UN Security Council consideration of renewed mandates for UN forces in the former Yugoslavia, take note of the rotation of Canadian forces serving with UNPROFOR in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia".

[Translation]

That the first three speakers during debate thereon shall not speak for more than twenty minutes and no speaker thereafter shall speak for more than ten minutes;

That, during debate thereon, the Chair shall not accept any dilatory motions or quorum calls; and

That, at the end of three hours' consideration of the said motion, or when no further Members wish to speak, whichever is earlier, the Speaker shall adjourn the House until the next sitting day.

*Routine Proceedings*

**The Deputy Speaker:** The House has heard the terms of the motion. Does the House give unanimous consent to introduce this motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

(Motion agreed to).

\* \* \*

[English]

**PETITIONS**

## GRANDPARENTS RIGHTS

**Mr. Andy Scott (Fredericton—York—Sunbury, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I rise today to present two petitions on behalf of constituents. The first is on behalf of 63 constituents of Fredericton—York—Sunbury who request Parliament to amend the Divorce Act to offer protection to grandparents in the case of a divorce action.

## DANGEROUS OFFENDERS

**Mr. Andy Scott (Fredericton—York—Sunbury, Lib.):** The second petition, Mr. Speaker, requests that changes be made to the charter of rights to enable residents to be notified when repeat sex offenders are released into our communities in order to protect the safety of children. This petition was signed by 500 constituents.

## TAXATION

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing 36, I wish to present a petition signed by a number of petitioners from the national capital region.

They would like to draw to the attention of the House that managing the family home and caring for preschool children is an honourable profession which has not been recognized for its value to our society. They also state that the Income Tax Act discriminates against families who make the choice to provide care in the home to preschool children, the disabled, the chronically ill, or the aged.

The petitioners therefore pray and call upon Parliament to pursue initiatives to eliminate tax discrimination against families who decide to provide care in the home for preschool children, the disabled, the chronically ill and the aged.

(1510)

## DRUNKENNESS DEFENCE

**Ms. Susan Whelan (Essex—Windsor, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I hold over 6,000 signatures from the residents of Windsor and Essex county asking Parliament to repeal the Supreme Court of

Canada's decision to include extreme drunkenness or incapacity as a defence to indictable offences.

These petitions, launched by the Victims for Justice Coalition of Windsor—Essex County, further request that Parliament recognize that society is obligated to punish those who of their own free will render themselves intoxicated and harm others.

I want to commend the coalition for its efforts in this regard. I am pleased to present these petitions. I am also pleased that this government has responded to the concerns of all Canadians on this issue with the introduction of Bill C-72, which is moving swiftly through the House.

## CABLEVISION INDUSTRY

**Mr. Dan McTeague (Ontario, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I am pleased to present 667 signatures from Calgary, Toronto, Ottawa, Ajax, Pickering and Whitby.

These petitioners call upon the CRTC to review the entire matter in which the cable TV companies introduced the new specialty channel service.

## HUMAN RIGHTS

**Mr. Herb Grubel (Capilano—Howe Sound, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to present four different petitions signed by constituents of Capilano—Howe Sound.

The first group of petitioners request that this House oppose amendments to the Canadian Human Rights Act or the charter of the rights and freedoms which provide for the inclusion of the phrase of sexual orientation.

## BILL C-41

**Mr. Herb Grubel (Capilano—Howe Sound, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the second group of petitions signed by constituents of mine call upon Parliament to oppose the passage of section 718.2 of Bill C-41.

## TAXATION

**Mr. Herb Grubel (Capilano—Howe Sound, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the third group of petitions signed by constituents of Capilano—Howe Sound request that Parliament reduce government spending instead of increasing taxes and that it implement a taxpayer protection act to limit federal government spending in the future. It is my pleasure to support this request.

## HUMAN RIGHTS

**Mr. Herb Grubel (Capilano—Howe Sound, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the fourth group of petitions signed by residents of Bowen Island in my constituency call upon Parliament to amend the Canadian Human Rights Act to protect individuals from discrimination based on sexual orientation.

**Mr. Ed Harper (Simcoe Centre, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I have three sets of petitions to present today on behalf of the constituents of Simcoe Centre.

*Routine Proceedings*

The first group of petitioners request that the Government of Canada not amend the human rights act to include the phrase sexual orientation. The petitioners fear that such an inclusion could lead to homosexuals receiving the same benefits and societal privileges as married couples.

## BILL C-41

**Mr. Ed Harper (Simcoe Centre, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition involves section 718.2 of Bill C-41. The petitioners are concerned that naming some groups in legislation will exclude other groups from protection and that sentencing based on the concept of hatred is very subjective and will undermine our justice system.

## TAXATION

**Mr. Ed Harper (Simcoe Centre, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the third and final petition from my riding contains 474 signatures. It was collected by small businessmen from my riding including Mr. Garry Valley, Mr. John Ough, Mr. Barry Bertram, Dr. Devon Smith, Mr. Bryan Greig, Mrs. Jean Baker Pearce, and Mr. Paul Jamieson.

The petitioners request that with Canadians already overburdened with taxation due to high government spending, Parliament reduce government spending instead of increasing taxes.

## THE DEFICIT

**Mr. Jag Bhaduria (Markham—Whitchurch—Stouffville, Ind. Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36 I am presenting a petition signed by petitioners in the Markham—Whitchurch—Stouffville area.

These petitioners call on Parliament to reduce the deficit by cutting wastage and reduce the overall expenses in every government department by at least 5 per cent.

## CANADIAN ARMED FORCES

**Mr. Leonard Hopkins (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have a petition signed by approximately 200 people. They are concerned about the morale in the Canadian forces.

The decision to disband the Canadian airborne regiment brought the forces under intense media and public scrutiny.

They would like a thorough and fully disclosed investigation. They feel that this would result in the public being better informed about the Canadian military's condition and contribution to our country's internal and external stature and well-being.

They petition Parliament to initiate at the earliest time a wide ranging public inquiry into the problems facing the Canadian forces today.

## ARMENIA

**Mr. Sarkis Assadourian (Don Valley North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, it is my pleasure to

present to this House petitions signed by 100 Canadians living in North York, Scarborough, Richmond Hill, in the metro Toronto area.

These petitioners ask the House to recognize and condemn the Turkish genocide of the Armenians. This year they will be commemorating the 80th anniversary of the genocide and they ask this House for similar recognition as was done by the Israel, Russia, France and Uruguay parliaments. As well, the parliaments of Quebec and Ontario recognize this crime against humanity.

(1515)

## JUSTICE

**Mrs. Jan Brown (Calgary Southeast, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise again to present another petition in this course of action I have undertaken on behalf of constituents who wish to halt the early release from prison of Robert Paul Thompson.

The petitioners I represent are concerned about making our streets safer for our citizens. They are opposed to the current practice of early release of violent offenders prior to them serving the full extent of their sentences.

The petitioners pray that our streets will be made safer for law-abiding citizens, their families and the families of the victims of crime.

## YOUNG OFFENDERS

**Mr. Charlie Penson (Peace River, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions I would like to present today.

The first petition is signed by 788 people and deals with the subject of young offenders. Canadian citizens from coast to coast are calling for changes to the Young Offenders Act. They want an act that is serious enough to deter young people from committing crimes and tough enough to provide real justice.

Therefore, the petitioners request that Parliament undertake a complete and thorough review of existing legislation to address their concerns.

## INCOME TAX

**Mr. Charlie Penson (Peace River, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition is signed by 88 people from my riding. The petitioners believe they are already overburdened with taxation due to high government spending.

Therefore they request Parliament reduce government spending instead of raising taxes. I endorse that petition.

## GUN CONTROL

**Mr. Leon E. Benoit (Vegreville, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I am delighted to present four petitions on behalf of 1,880 constituents of Vegreville constituency.

In all four petitions, it is recognized that public safety is the number one priority of the criminal justice system. It is also

*Routine Proceedings*

recognized that the existing controls on law-abiding, responsible gun owners are more than enough.

The petitioners request that Parliament support laws which will severely punish all violent criminals that use weapons in the commission of a crime, support new Criminal Code firearms control provisions which recognize and protect the rights of law-abiding citizens to own and use recreational firearms, and request that Parliament support legislation that will repeal and modify existing gun control laws which do not improve public safety or have proven not to be cost effective or have proven to be overly complex so as to be ineffective and/or unenforceable.

**Mr. David Chatters (Athabasca, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, in accordance with Standing Order 36 I would like to present a petition from the residents of my constituency of Athabasca, mainly from the Westlock area.

The petition requests that Parliament support laws that severely punish all violent criminals who use weapons in the commission of a crime; support new Criminal Code firearms control provisions which recognize and protect the right of law-abiding citizens to own and use firearms; and support legislation which will repeal or modify existing gun control laws which have not improved public safety or have proven not to be cost effective or have proven to be so overly complex as to be ineffective or unenforceable.

## HUMAN RIGHTS

**Mrs. Carolyn Parrish (Mississauga West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, it is my duty to present a petition on behalf of Mrs. Dorothy Polhill of Mississauga West.

In it the petitioners call on Parliament to oppose any amendments to the Canadian Human Rights Act or the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms which provide for the inclusion of the phrase sexual orientation.

## EUTHANASIA

**Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise pursuant to Standing Order 36 to present three groups of petitions.

The first group deals with euthanasia and is signed by 151 people in my riding. The petitioners pray that Parliament ensure the present provisions of the Criminal Code of Canada prohibiting assisted suicide be enforced vigorously and that Parliament make no changes in the law which would sanction or allow the aiding or abetting of suicide or any activity designed to terminate human life.

## JUSTICE

**Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC):** Mr. Speaker, the second group of petitions deal with the release of repeat sex offenders.

The petitioners pray and call on Parliament to enact legislation that would enable residents to be notified when repeat sex offenders are released into the community.

This legislation would make the safety of our children a priority.

## HUMAN RIGHTS

**Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC):** Mr. Speaker, the third and final group of petitions is signed by 209 people from my riding and other parts of New Brunswick.

The petitioners pray and request Parliament not to amend the human rights code, the Canadian Human Rights Act or the charter of rights and freedoms in any way which would tend to indicate societal approval of same sex relationships or of homosexuality, including amending the Criminal Code to include in the prohibited grounds of discrimination the undefined phrase sexual orientation. I concur with all of these petitions.

## INCOME TAX

**Mr. Paul E. Forseth (New Westminster—Burnaby, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present two petitions today from constituents in B.C.'s lower mainland and the riding of New Westminster—Burnaby.

(1520)

In both petitions, the petitioners make it known that they are overburdened with taxation due to high government spending.

Therefore they pray and request that Parliament reduce government spending instead of increasing taxes and implement a taxpayer protection act to limit federal spending.

## HUMAN RIGHTS

**Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley East, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I have three petitions to present to the House today.

The first one asks that the government not amend the human rights code to include in the prohibitive grounds of discrimination the undefined phrase sexual orientation.

## FIREARMS

**Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley East, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition is from a group of people from across British Columbia who request that Parliament support laws which will severely punish all violent criminals who use weapons in the commission of crime.

They support new Criminal Code firearms control provisions which recognize and protect the right of law-abiding citizens to own and use recreational firearms and support legislation which would repeal and modify existing gun control laws which have not improved public safety.

## INCOME TAX

**Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley East, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the third petition contains 753 names to add to the tens of thousands of names I have tabled over the last few weeks.

It asks Parliament to reduce government spending, not to increase taxes, and to implement a taxpayer protection act in order to ensure that future tax increases will not afflict the Canadian public.

## LIGHTHOUSES

**Mr. John Cummins (Delta, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I have one petition to present today and it says in part that the Minister of Transport has directed the Canadian coast guard to proceed with detailed plans for a program of unmanning all west coast light stations. The savings to the coast guard will be insignificant and the impact on the users of these services will be considerable due to the loss of local weather services, assistance in search and rescue and the manned presence on this remote rugged coastline.

Therefore, the petitioners humbly pray and call on Parliament to revoke this directive immediately and request a complete and thorough public inquiry in the province of B.C. into the need for the manned light stations on the west coast.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

## QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

**Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all remaining questions be allowed to stand.

[English]

**Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC):** Mr. Speaker, I have a point of order pursuant to Standing Order 39.

I placed a question on the Order Paper on October 4, 1994. That was 179 days ago. I am seeking information on financial assistance provided to each federal riding in Atlantic Canada by ACOA.

It is my understanding that the government tries to answer all Order Paper questions within the 45-day period. However 179 days is an unacceptable length of time to respond to my question. It indicates either an inability or an unwillingness to answer.

Would the hon. member please advise me when I will receive an answer to the question I asked over five months ago?

**Mr. Milliken:** Mr. Speaker, I know the question concerns the total amount of financial assistance provided by ACOA for each federal riding from November 4, 1993 to date.

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I know the Minister of Supply and Services has been working diligently on preparing an answer to the hon. member's question. I understand that if the answer is not yet ready it is close to being ready and that I will be in a position to answer the hon. member soon.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Shall the remaining questions stand?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

\* \* \*

## MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

**Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I ask that the notice of motion for the production of papers stand.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is it agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

## ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES READJUSTMENT ACT, 1995

**Hon. Raymond Chan (for Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.)** moved that Bill C-69, an act to provide for the establishment of electoral boundaries commissions and the readjustment of electoral boundaries, be read the third time and passed.

**Hon. Ethel Blondin-Andrew (Secretary of State (Training and Youth), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise in the House today to speak to Bill C-69, an act to provide for the establishment of electoral boundaries commissions and the readjustment of electoral boundaries.

(1525)

I greet this bill from a different perspective than has been presented to the House before. I would like to speak specifically to clause 30(a) which directly impacts on my riding of Western Arctic.

Once this legislation is enacted, four more communities will be added to my riding. The population of my riding will increase by over 1,700 people. The land mass will be increased by approximately 200,000 square kilometres. The increase in land to the Western Arctic is larger than many of the ridings in Canada. This makes my riding the second largest in terms of land mass.

It is a riding with very few roads. As a matter of fact, 90 per cent of my riding is not accessible by road. In the summer people can commute by boat along the Mackenzie River, but in the long winter the only forms of travel are by plane or on a sometimes rather treacherous winter road in very inclement conditions.

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I am not here today to speak on the enormity of my riding and the difficulty in travelling from one area to another. Those concerns go without saying. It is what people would call part of the turf.

However, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the four communities of Sachs Harbour, Holman Island, Paulatuk and Tuktoyaktuk into my riding and to encourage greater participation by aboriginal people, women and youth in the electoral process in both the north and in Ottawa.

The four communities which will be entering Western Arctic are Inuvialuit communities. They are represented by the premier of the Northwest Territories in the legislature. The riding is named Nunakput. It is with great enthusiasm that I will be working closer with her to best represent these areas. All four of these communities are on the coast of the Arctic Ocean, the third great ocean in Canada.

These communities are currently within Nunatsiaq. Once the redistricting is done they will be within Western Arctic riding. However, they have been well served by my colleague, the member for Nunatsiaq, who has served the communities since 1988 when he was first elected to Parliament.

The population of these four communities is composed largely of Inuvialuit people. Inuvialuit are western Inuit. They are distinct from the Inuit of the eastern Arctic. The Inuvialuit are descendants of the Karngmalit or Mackenzie Inuit who lived in a rich hunting territory containing woods, barrens and seas. This area contains much of the original Thule culture with its emphasis on the beluga as the main source of food, bone, fuel and hide.

Young people make up at least one-third of the population in all of these communities. They are a very young, growing set of communities. The cost of living in these communities, as with all northern communities, is very high. The living cost differential between Edmonton, Alberta in the south and these communities is between 185 and 190. This means that an item of food which costs \$1 in Edmonton will cost between \$1.85 and \$1.90 in these communities.

Although there are many similarities between the four Inuvialuit communities, each has its own distinctive history. One of these communities, Sachs Harbour or Ikaahuk, is located on the most westerly island of the Canadian Arctic archipelago, Banks Island. Archaeologists have found Thule house ruins in several places on Banks Island, indicating that Inuit lived on those islands for hundreds and hundreds of years.

Sachs Harbour was named after the ship *Mary Sachs* of the Canadian Arctic expedition in 1913. Permanent occupation did not begin until 1929 when three Delta Inuit families sailed in their schooners to Sachs Harbour. The major attraction of the island was white fox. For more than 50 years the island has been

considered one of the best trapping areas in the entire North American Arctic. The Banks Island people were particularly well off and well educated during the Delta fur trade boom of the thirties. The first Inuk doctor was a member of the well known Banks Island Carpenter family. Education has remained a powerful source in Sachs Harbour.

(1530)

According to the 1991 census, with a population of 85 people over the age of 15, 30 had a university education or non-university education with a diploma. The people of Sachs Harbour have remained very self-sufficient in comparison to many Arctic communities. They have continued to trap. Outfitting for big game hunts for polar bear and musk ox also takes place. Sachs Harbour has an 88 per cent participation rate in the labour force and has the largest average income of the four communities which in 1991 was \$25,000 plus.

Holman Island, another community to be added to my riding, is situated on the Diamond Jenness Peninsula on the western side of Victoria Island. Victoria Island was the ancestral homeland of the Copper Inuit. During the winter they hunted on Banks Island and in the summer travelled to the centre of Victoria Island to hunt caribou. The people of Holman were taught print making by Reverend Henri Tardi, who came from Viviers, France to the settlement as an Oblate missionary in 1939.

In 1961 the Holman Inuit Cooperative was formed to retail the output and print making is now a major source of the community's income. Among the Holman artists the late Helen Kalvak is the most well known. Holman has a participation rate in the labour force of only 59 per cent.

Paulatuk is another community. This is interesting for all Canadians. Canadians seldom ask questions about the north. This is a great opportunity to let them know the constituency in which we exercise a democratic franchise is one that includes these wonderful communities. Paulatuk, the other community to be added to my riding after the redistricting, is located between the seashore and an inland lake on the Arctic coast. The name Paulatuk derives from the Inuktitut term for soot of coal. Coal is found in the vicinity and was used by the Inuvialuit inhabitants for heating.

The original inhabitants of the Paulatuk area suffered greatly from the effects of many of the outside influences brought in by some of the outside whalers. However, the early and extensive contact the people had with many of the European cultures meant they were more independent of trader and missionary influence than Inuit to the east. Many could do business in English and read and write their own language in Roman script.

Paulatuk is known for its carvers. The largest segment of the population in Paulatuk is between zero and fourteen years of age. There is a 14 per cent rate of participation in the labour

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force. Of those who are in the labour force 30 per cent are unemployed. The average income in Paulatuk is about \$17,000.

The fourth community is Tuktoyaktuk. It is the final community which will be added to my riding. Tuktoyaktuk means resembling a caribou. Legend has it that when caribou were plentiful a woman looked on them as they waded into the water and the caribou were petrified. Reefs resembling caribou have been seen at low tide.

Tuktoyaktuk was traditionally the home of the whale hunting Mackenzie Inuit. This community is the largest of the four communities and the most ethnically diverse, although the Inuvialuit make up almost 90 per cent of the population.

Tuktoyaktuk is now the sea edge base for oil and gas exploration in the Beaufort Sea. I have many fond memories of Tuktoyaktuk. As a young teacher in the early seventies I spend three years teaching there. Over half of the population, 15 years and over, have not completed secondary education.

These communities are diverse. The land around those communities is awesome, serene and wonderful. The sea life, the animal life and the marine make-up and the ecosystem of that area are a tourist's dream. It is actually an eco-tourist dream. It is something that people from all around the world pay a lot of money to see. It is worth every penny.

(1535)

In winter and late fall we can see the aureole borealis that everyone talks about. In the summer we can stand in some of the communities and see beluga whales from houses facing the Arctic Ocean. It really is quite a sight to behold. In winter the land is covered with snow and people go out throughout that season to enjoy the community.

The member of Parliament who represents the area, the hon. member for Nunatsiak, has been very honoured and very gracious in representing the area. I look forward to having these additional communities added to the western Arctic riding once the whole issue of redistribution and readjustment has been completed.

Historically the electoral boundaries were drawn without any consideration of how they would impact on the aboriginal communities in the area. The western Arctic was no different. The Inuvialuit who lived in the most northwestern area of Canada were split between two federal electoral districts. In 1984 the Inuvialuit became the first aboriginal group north of the 60th parallel to sign a comprehensive land claim agreement.

However, the Inuvialuit who reside in the six coastal communities remain split in two different federal electoral districts. After recently having celebrated the 10th anniversary of the

signing of the historic final agreement and the passage of Bill C-69, the Inuvialuit will finally all be included in the same electoral district.

There is a very interesting point in the documents put forward about the impediments to electoral participation. They noted the Inuit did not receive the right to vote until 1950. No ballot boxes were placed in Inuit hamlets until 1962. That was unfortunate. It is unthinkable in this day in age that any citizen of this country would not be able to exercise the right to vote in a democracy such as we have, in future elections. However, that was the case.

These communities will provide a positive contribution to the already diverse riding of the western Arctic. Now the Inuvialuit people from Inuvik and Aklavik will be together with the other four Inuvialuit communities of Sachs Harbour, Paulatuk, Holman Island and Tuktoyaktuk. They will be together in one federal riding of the western Arctic.

In years past we had the Lortie commission look at a number of issues regarding electoral reform. One I was much seized with, along with some of my colleagues, was in the names of Senator Len Marchand, former member of Parliament Gene Rheame, and someone who is very capable and who has helped us, Mr. Marc LeClair, who worked with the aboriginal Liberal commission in looking at the impediments that faced aboriginal people systemically and structurally in terms of the districts and the distribution of seats in the House, and in looking at some of the historical impediments. It made for a very interesting exercise.

We undertook a subcommittee for the royal commission and were successful in meeting a number of groups across the country that spoke to the issues. It was quite extensive.

In the world wars aboriginal people were able to fight for their country. They loved this country and wanted to contribute. They made a great sacrifice. Upon their return to this country they did not have the right to vote until the 1960s. They could lay their life down for their country, they could honour their country, but they were not given the opportunity as other Canadians to exercise their democratic right to vote.

(1540)

That was a great inequity. These were some of the things we dealt with. It should be of interest to some of the people in the House that there have been 13 self-identifying aboriginal people elected to the House of Commons, including myself, the member for Nunatsiak and the member for Churchill.

These 13 out of over 11,000 members have been elected since Confederation. Ten of the aboriginal people were elected this century. Only three have been elected in districts where aboriginal people do not constitute a majority.

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Six have come from my part of the territory where aboriginal people are a majority, in the Northwest Territories. The selection came from Churchill with an aboriginal population of 42 per cent.

It is astounding to think only 11 out of 11,000 people have been aboriginal. This is the home of the first peoples along with all other Canadians.

It is an esteemed privilege as a member of Parliament to be able to speak on behalf of the people who put us here, to come forward with a conglomeration of their views, with their convictions, their passion, their vision, their beliefs about this country.

Only 13 people of aboriginal descent have been able to do that since Confederation. One of those people was Louis Riel and that is a whole other story. We will not get into that. It is quite an interesting set of circumstances to think about.

My reason for standing is to address Bill C-69 and encourage more aboriginal people, more women and more youth to get actively involved in the electoral process.

Aboriginal people make up to 16 of the 24 seats in the Northwest Territory legislature. Unfortunately the representation of people in the House of Commons is not nearly anywhere as representative. There are only three members, ironically. They are all in the Liberal Party.

That does not stop the other parties from including aboriginal people. Look at the membership of the opposition. It has huge aboriginal populations in the north of its province. In James Bay there are some of the most outstanding aboriginal leaders in the name of Billy Diamond, Matthew Coon-Come, Ted Moses and Chief Violet Pachanos.

A lot of aboriginal people in that area could stand with any other member of Parliament from that province and be proud. In other areas, northern B.C., we have predominant members from the Liberal Party as well as from the Reform Party. We have many New Democrats. We could easily elect in those areas, in the upper places where we have the Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en and where we could have aboriginal people represent not just themselves and their people but non-aboriginal people.

There cannot be a false assumption that because one is of this race or this background one cannot represent fairly other people from other races as well. The doors are open. The opportunities are there.

I encourage the participation of youth, women, people from ethnic minorities, the disabled. There is in this House of democracy, in this community of communities, in this home for true democratic practices and vision a home and a seat for everyone who wants to put their name forward who is capable of being able to come here and speak on behalf of the people who elect them.

Women who make up 52 per cent of the population are not representative in either the territorial legislature or the House of Commons. In the Northwest Territories there are only three female members of the legislature, one of whom is the premier. What a premier, what an outstanding member of the government we have in the name of the premier of the Northwest Territories.

(1545)

We in the Northwest Territories are proud of the premier when she goes around the world, when she goes to parliament or wherever she represents us. There is no gender barrier to the competence of an individual who thinks well, who speaks well, who presents her views and who has a passion to represent people.

There are only 53 women members of Parliament or 18 per cent of the MPs in Ottawa. The way to ensure greater representation of women and aboriginal people is to become involved in the process. I urge all aboriginal people, in particular the people of the four new communities that will be added to the western riding, to get involved in the political process to ensure that there are good people who will bring the issues that concern them to Ottawa or to Yellowknife, whatever level of government they want representation at.

The youth are an integral part of any political process. Youth have the energy and the enthusiasm to bring victory to any individual seeking office including one of their own. We can look at the list of young people elected to the House of Commons over the years. I believe Father Sean O'Sullivan was elected when he was 21 years of age. My baby is 21 years old, the youngest child in my family. It is wonderful someone like that could be elected to the House of Commons.

Richard Cashin was elected when he was 21 years old; the hon. member for Sherbrooke when he was 24 years old; Lorne Nystrom when he was 22 years old; the Hon. Perrin Beatty when he was 22 years old; the hon. member for York North when he was 28 years old; and the Prime Minister when he was 29 years old. They were all young people. They are people who have contributed. They have given the best years of their lives to this honourable process. It is quite possible. Young people out there who are listening should know that this can belong to them, that a seat in the House of Commons can be theirs.

We are here but for a short time. It can be for years or it can be for a lifetime but we are not here forever. Young people, women, disabled people, visible minorities and other capable and competent people have to be encouraged to get involved and participate. The north with its young population has an abundance of vital energy. I encourage Canadian youth to organize and participate in the electoral process to ensure that their concerns are heard.

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Over the last while we have heard many concerns about post-secondary education, employment, and programs and services for young people. We have heard the concerns of disabled people. One way of advancing views is by participating, by being here. There is something to be said about being here; about having a voice, a true voice; and about standing in the highest court in the land to represent people. That is one way to advance views.

It is my hope that Bill C-69 will encourage more people to become involved in the electoral process and that in the future, when electoral maps are being drawn, greater care will be given to ensure that aboriginal communities like the Inuvialuit do not have to wait 10 years to be joined together in one federal electoral district.

I should like to take the time remaining to discuss the main components of Bill C-69 which will impact Canadians living south of 60. First, Bill C-69 eliminates unnecessary decennial redistributions in provinces where there has not been a significant population shift which leads to unacceptable deviations from the provincial quotient.

The committee's bill provides that boundary commissions will no longer be established in provinces where as a result of the decennial census the number of seats to which the province is entitled remains the same and where none of the ridings vary by more than 25 per cent from the provincial quotient. This will eliminate unnecessary redistributions and result in savings to the taxpayers.

(1550)

Bill C-69 also provides for quinquennial readjustments in addition to the current decennial redistribution. Quinquennial redistributions would take place in provinces where following a quinquennial census more than 10 per cent of the constituencies varied by more than 25 per cent from the provincial quotient.

It would not affect the total number of seats, in layman's terms, in the House or the number of seats allotted to the provinces. It would only allow for the boundaries of ridings within the provinces to be redrawn. By allowing for the riding boundaries within a province to be redrawn more than every decade, the effects of major population shifts in certain provinces would be minimized.

The appointment of boundaries commissions will be more transparent. The chair of each commission will continue to be appointed by the chief justice of the province. In appointing the two other commissioners, the Speaker will have to publicize openings, solicit applications for positions, and consult widely before making appointments.

Another change is that the Speaker's appointments can be reviewed and voted down by the House. The new requirements

of public notice, solicitation of applications and consultations will make for a more open and transparent process.

The boundary adjustment process will be a more open and transparent process. Bill C-69 requires that at the beginning of the readjustment process commissions publish a notice of population figures and of their work plans and invite submissions from the public. I am certain it will encourage more public participation in the readjustment process.

Bill C-69 will ensure more informed public debate. The committee's bill requires commissions to prepare three alternate maps instead of only one, as is the current process, showing how riding boundaries could be divided within the province. Although commissions would still indicate their preference, they would have to justify their preferred option. The two additional maps would assist members of the public who wish to make submissions. I believe these new requirements will favour more informed public debate and encourage more public participation in the process.

Bill C-69 provides for the possibility of a second set of public hearings to be held where necessary. When in response to public comments a commission makes changes to the proposed boundaries of a riding that would affect 25 per cent of that riding's population, Bill C-69 provides that a second set of public hearings would have to be held. The change recognizes and reflects the importance of public participation in the process. After all, people are what the electoral process is all about.

Bill C-69 sets out the circumstances in which the boundary commission's current discretion to create exceptional ridings is to be exercised and requires the commission to justify the decision in its reports. This is very critical. Recognizing there may be some need for ridings to vary from the 25 per cent provincial quotient, the committee maintained the boundaries commission authority to create exceptional ridings. The country is diverse. There are exceptional circumstances such as the massive land track in my area that we have to cover; it is huge. It is a very cumbersome exercise for an elected member to traverse the huge land mass, for instance.

However, the committee's bill limits the exercise of that discretion to extraordinary circumstances where the population is more than 25 per cent under the provincial quotient and where the riding is isolated or not readily accessible from the rest of the province. In addition the bill requires the commission to indicate the reasons for this determination in its report. I believe it will favour a responsible and consistent exercise of the discretion.

The bill eliminates the current requirement that the commission's proposals be tabled in the House.

(1555)

Considering that MPs should participate in public hearings like all other Canadians, the bill does away with added scrutiny by a parliamentary committee of the boundaries commission

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proposals. In any event we have seen that the interventions of MPs did not have much of an impact on the commission's final reports. MPs will have the same rights as any other citizen to make representation in the course of public consultation.

This is consistent with the intent of conferring the boundaries readjustment process on independent commissions rather than Parliament and ensures that the boundaries readjustment process remains non-partisan and independent.

Bill C-69 sets out detailed criteria for commissions to consider in drawing constituency boundaries. The committee's bill establishes clear guidelines for commissions in terms of the criteria to be taken into account in drawing constituency boundaries including the community of interest, manageable geographic size and probability of future population growth. Hence the boundaries and finally the boundary commission.

The new boundaries would come into force in less time than under the current act. Under Bill C-69 it is estimated that the boundaries readjustment process will take a total of two and a half years, which is three months shorter than under the current process.

I hope aboriginal people would take advantage of the commission's requirements as would all other people. It is noted that the whole electoral exercise is quite costly. The administration of an election involves 450,000 people and costs approximately \$100 million. It is no small or pretty penny to get members of Parliament elected. It is a major undertaking and it should be noted that very few aboriginal people participate in the process.

This is particularly the case with senior positions such as returning officers who are responsible for administering the electoral machinery within the person's electoral district and for subdividing the district into polling divisions. Research was unable to identify any past or present returning officer of aboriginal descent.

The lack of experience is no viable or legitimate excuse. Elections Canada has noted in the impediment to electoral participation that 253 of the 295 returning officers appointed for the 34th general election had no previous experience managing elections. In a sense I am pleading for participation on the part of the government, individuals and communities to organize and get involved in the public process.

The commission is required to publish its plans and hear submissions from the public. This is one way to get involved in the electoral process but, more important, to ensure that electoral boundaries are drawn with more respect to the ties of neighbouring communities. It is my hope that in future aboriginal people will be able to elect members of Parliament from their areas where aboriginal people are the majority.

I congratulate the committee for the hard work it has done in reviewing the current process and in proposing improvements. It could not have been simple.

I also hope that aboriginal people, women and any other group, in particular the youth who are not adequately represented in the House of Commons, will take part in the public consultations on electoral boundaries to ensure that the boundaries are fair and respect the binding ties of neighbouring communities, in particular aboriginal communities but in fact all communities across the country.

(1600)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. François Langlois (Bellechasse, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the process the final stage of which is being undertaken today started yesterday, more than a year after the introduction in this House of Bill C-18, which suspended the electoral redistribution process then under way and provided for a 24 month waiting period before starting a new debate on redistribution.

Unfortunately, the Reform Party then opposed Bill C-18 and the 24 month delay initially provided under this bill. However, the House of Commons passed the bill suspending the whole electoral redistribution process for 24 months.

Later, in considering Bill C-18, the Senate did exactly what the Reform Party wanted to do in this House. It moved an amendment to Bill C-18 providing that a new bill had to be tabled by June 1995; otherwise, the old law would apply again, reviving the commissions suspended under Bill C-18.

When the bill came back from the Senate, the government should have stood up and affirmed the will of the people represented by the hon. members in this place by approving the bill as presented and with the relevant amendments adopted in this House.

Yet, the government then chose to go along with a Senate amendment that put us in a tight squeeze by reducing the amount of time available to do our work. It was, in my opinion, an unacceptable concession, which the Reform Party managed to secure through the Senate.

Following final passage and Royal Assent of Bill C-18, the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs was given the mandate to draft a bill to be submitted to the House. We worked on this for a very long time. I attended all the sessions, including those in the summer of 1994, in July 1994, in which we heard a great many witnesses, including political party representatives, hon. members of this House who came to testify, university experts and others. While working on this bill, we enjoyed the continuous collaboration of the Chief Electoral Officer and his staff.

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Although we spent a lot of time on this bill, we have precious little to show for it. Of course, the bill before us, Bill C-69, contains a few sweeteners. These sweeteners are improvements compared with the present situation.

For instance, the provincial commissions will now be able to hold hearings before proceeding with their task, which is clearly an improvement on the current situation. The commissions will have to produce three maps for the regions they cover, three electoral redistribution proposals. If there is sufficient popular demand, the commissions will have to hold new hearings. Granted, the process was improved in this regard.

The bill also sets out the factors to be considered by the commissions in establishing electoral ridings.

(1605)

These considerations or factors are described in subparagraph 19(2)(b), which states that, in determining reasonable electoral district boundaries, the provincial commission shall consider the following: first, the community of interest; second, a manageable geographic size for districts in sparsely populated, rural or northern regions of the province; third, the probability that there will be a substantial increase in the population of electoral districts in the next five years. And finally, the commission shall recommend changes to existing electoral district boundaries only where the above-mentioned factors are sufficiently significant to warrant such a recommendation.

It is all fine and well to make a policy statement like that, making community of interest a guiding principle for every commission. However, we inevitably come across another provision, which sets the maximum variance from the provincial electoral quota at 25 per cent. For example, if, in Quebec, the provincial quota was 100,000 voters or a population of 100,000, the commission would be entitled to make electoral districts with up to 125,000 voters but no less than 75,000 or equivalent population.

The commission may observe a community of interest, but note that the number of voters is not significant enough. Let us not take an hypothetical case, but a real one. At present, the population of the electoral district of Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine is 43 per cent below the provincial quota of 50,000 or 51,000, but encompasses a huge area. This district is at risk; it may actually be eliminated. While this bill allows the commissions not to apply this 25 per cent rule rigidly, the considerations are so restrictive that I wonder if they will ever be able to do so.

The only time a provincial commission can depart from this rule is when, as mentioned in paragraph 19(3), an electoral riding or district is geographically isolated from the rest of the province or is not easily accessible. Who will define "geographically isolated"? The commissions, to start with, and of course the courts. No definition was provided. I consider the Magdalen

Islands geographically isolated. No one will deny that. Will the population factor apply? I suggest that the commissions consider this factor. Magdalen Islanders had their own electoral district up until 1968. Under Quebec law, they are guaranteed their own district. It is not that the hon. member for Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine is not doing a good job at representing the district, but I think it would be highly desirable to have a member of Parliament just for the Magdalen Islands.

Magdalen Islanders will argue that they are geographically isolated, and I think that they can qualify under that factor. Then it will be a matter of satisfying the provincial commissions that the population of the islands does not vary too greatly to justify the creation of a separate district. But I can see a downside to this. While the new electoral district of Magdalen Islands gains a member of Parliament, the district of Bonaventure shrinks in terms of voters ratio. What will happen to the Gaspesian Peninsula then?

(1610)

What becomes of the ridings of Gaspé, Matapédia—Matane, Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine and Rimouski—Témiscouata? What do we do? There is a problem in the Gaspé peninsula. Does clause 19(3) allow us to deal with it globally? I am not sure. We need more information. This is a region with a dwindling population where MPs, whatever their political allegiance, have a large area to cover. They must cope with problems that do not exist, or that take a very different form, elsewhere in the province or in the country. The Gaspé peninsula is the first thing that concerns me.

Maybe clause 19(3) will apply to the riding of Manicouagan, which is indeed geographically isolated and particularly inaccessible, as my hon. friend from Manicouagan argued so convincingly before the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs and again here in the House at the report stage, if memory serves.

Maybe it will also apply to the northern regions of Quebec and Ontario. Last Monday, the ridings of Cochrane—Superior and Nickel Belt in northern Ontario were mentioned.

They cover a vast area and their population, with certain exceptions, is generally on the decline. Will the division be made strictly on the basis of the numbers? Will a greater deviation be allowed?

Clause 19(3) is much too restrictive, in my opinion, for us to give it our approval.

We had suggested maintaining, in the bill before us, criteria now being used by the provincial commissions when deciding whether to waive the rules. What are these criteria?

At the present time, a provincial commission may waive the 25 per cent criterion in any case where any special community or diversity of interests of the inhabitants of various regions of the

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province appears to the commission to render such waiving necessary or desirable. In other words, the provincial commissions now have a much broader criterion when looking at particular cases.

I think that a region like the Gaspé or the Magdalen Islands, even the Lower St. Lawrence, would have benefited much more under this criterion than under the extremely restrictive wording being proposed to replace it. This may not be as bad as the initial suggestion to include a schedule of the ridings in the act and freeze them, thus giving a form of statism to the act and to the list of ridings and making it extremely difficult to work with.

Consequently, the official opposition considers clause 19 to be a major obstacle and cannot support the bill.

Clause 16 is also questionable and even unacceptable, given what it says and what it does not say.

Following the representations made last summer to the Standing Committee on the Procedure and House Affairs—by the hon. member for Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead, by the president of the Progressive Conservative Party of Canada and, previously, on June 21, by Senator Jean-Claude Rivest of the Stadacona senatorial designation—we understood that the government would be receptive to the traditional request made by Quebecers and their government for guaranteed minimum representation in the House of Commons, as is the case for some Atlantic provinces.

As you know, representation for the Atlantic provinces is guaranteed by the senatorial clause, which dates back to 1915 and which we do not question.

(1615)

The senatorial clause allows a population of 120,000 people in Prince Edward Island to be represented by four members in this House. Indeed, that clause provides that a province cannot be represented by fewer members in the House of Commons than senators in the Senate. Since four Senate seats are guaranteed to Prince Edward Island in the senatorial clause, that province can also be represented by four members in this House. The same rule applies for New Brunswick, which is guaranteed ten seats in the Senate, under the Canadian Constitution.

Although the number of residents in that province does not justify such representation, New Brunswick gets ten seats and we accept that. The terms of union between Newfoundland and the Canadian federation, ratified in 1949, also contained provisions guaranteeing adequate representation of the province of Newfoundland, both in the House of Commons and in the Senate. In fact, Newfoundland was guaranteed six seats in the Canadian Senate.

So if we agree with the senatorial clause that provides guarantees for Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, why are we up against a wall when we talk about the same guarantees for the Province of Quebec, when we talk about a minimum level of representation for Quebec?

Quebec, which as a people and as a nation, is one of the two founding peoples of this country. We are told this time and time again. We learned this from our history teachers. It is part of our collective conscience as Quebecers that in 1867, Quebecers were one of the two founding peoples. I may recall that on June 30, 1867, the day before the coming into force of the British North America Act, 1867, Quebec, then known as Lower Canada, was entitled to 65 seats out of a total of 130 in the Parliament of the Province of Canada, that is, 50 per cent.

This was agreed to by the members who were elected to represent us at the time—there was no referendum to ask what the people of Quebec thought and certainly not the women of Quebec, since they did not even have the right to vote at the time and the Fathers of the Confederation were all males—but there were no constitutional provisions that provided for minimum representation for Quebec. The only guarantee Quebec obtained was those 65 seats, but 65 out of how many?

On July 1, 1867, it was 65 seats out of 181. Later, when Canada's territory was expanded with the addition of new provinces including Manitoba, Prince Edward Island, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia and finally Newfoundland, Quebec's share of representation in the House of Commons dropped steadily, stabilizing during the past 20 or 30 years at a level slightly over one-quarter. Obviously, the Fathers of Confederation made a mistake by not including a minimum representation clause for Quebec, which at the time should have been 50 per cent.

We can hardly rewrite history and today insist on 50 per cent. People will say: Who do you think you are? We are not in a country that allows such deviations from the norm. Be that as it may, we are not asking for the representation that we had in 1867, in other words, 50 per cent. We asked for a minimum guarantee of 25 per cent of the seats in the House of Commons. In the next general election, should Quebec participate—my good friend from Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine will agree it is pretty doubtful that we will be able to—when the thirty-sixth Parliament is elected, Quebec, for the first time in its history, will fall below this critical mass of 25 per cent, since it will have only 75 seats out of 301.

(1620)

Hence our proposal, which was akin to the Liberal 1992 proposal. I read on Monday of the pleasure of the hon. member for Papineau—Saint-Michel and Minister of Foreign Affairs at being able to guarantee Quebec minimum representation of 25 per cent, saying that this represented a significant gain for

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Quebec. The hon. member for Papineau—Saint-Michel described the guarantee of 25 per cent for Quebec as an incredible step forward.

Well, as regards our motion which was voted on yesterday, once again none of the Liberal members in this House in 1992, who are still here today, voted in favour. Why did the members change their minds in the space of three years? Why deny Quebec something so minor? I would like, in passing, to recognize the very open-minded approach to the matter taken by the hon. member for Burnaby—Kingsway, who voted with the official opposition to guarantee Quebec minimum representation of 25 per cent, as did the hon. member for Beauce, as if this were perfectly natural.

It was perfectly natural, since the vast majority of members from Quebec present in this House yesterday voted in favour of this minimum guarantee of 25 per cent. We can therefore say that there is very broad consensus in Quebec, which goes beyond party lines, that Quebec should enjoy a minimum guarantee of 25 per cent. When the Progressive Conservative Party, the official opposition, the Bloc Québécois, the hon. member for Burnaby—Kingsway and the independent member for Beauce all support the motion to include guaranteed representation of 25 per cent in Bill C-69, it is obvious that there is broad support in Quebec on this point. I need not add that Senator Rivest had given his support for this provision. Even the support of the governments of Quebec, which had called for the inclusion of this provision in the legislation, did not fail. As far as I know, as well, the present government never shied away from what had been agreed in the past.

It is strange to see the government back away from something it supported in September 1992—the vote was on September 10, 1992—without much justification. Two days ago, on Monday, I listened to the arguments which the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands and the hon. member for Scarborough—Rouge River put forward, arguments which were not convincing. I do admit, however, that under normal circumstances, these two people are extremely convincing, but, for people to be able to convince others, they themselves must be convinced.

It goes without saying that, when people rise to make representations that they are forced to make—because any old reason to vote against the amendment will do—they obviously cannot be convincing. The unconvinced cannot be convincing. This was the impression that I got the other day from the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands, the impression that he did not believe in the things that he was saying and that he was using the pretext of constitutional technicalities as a reason for refusing to support a motion which had already been allowed by the Chair and declared admissible following a procedural debate. It is a little odd that the debate swung in this direction.

(1625)

You will understand therefore, that, at the end of the day, this bill will be incomplete, as I said earlier, because of its stand on the issue of allowable deviations from the boundary rules in special ridings and because of its failure to take a stand on the issue of one of the country's founding peoples. Was this an intentional omission on the part of the government?

We might have asked ourselves this question when debate began on the bill. But, after the vote yesterday on the official opposition's motion guaranteeing Quebec 25 per cent of the seats in the House, it was quite clear that the government had not simply overlooked this detail, but that it was omitted by design. The government does not want to guarantee Quebec fair representation in this House and does not want to accept as a criterion the fact that the nation of francophones in Quebec is a founding people, the cradle of francophones in America. The day we took such a decision was a very sad day indeed.

Would Canadians have been unhappy to see the government finally recognize Quebec's distinct society status, founding people status, status as a nation which built this country? I think not. Yet, yesterday, all it would have taken to recognize this was a majority vote in this House. But it was denied us. It was the most modest demand formulated in the last 50 years.

Without going back to prehistory, we can go back several decades: in the 1930s, there was the Rowell-Sirois commission in Quebec; in the 1950s, the Tremblay commission also studied constitutional issues; the Laurendeau-Dunton commission reviewed what was happening in this country in terms of the Constitution.

I invite our friends from the Reform Party, who think that Canadian history started with their election, to read about the events of that period. It would be a good idea to return to the source to understand that Canadian history started, we are not sure exactly when, with the first people to land on our shores, probably the Vikings who landed somewhere near Newfoundland at the beginning of the millennium. Then there was the arrival of Jacques Cartier in Gaspé in 1534, the founding of Quebec City by Samuel de Champlain in 1608, the founding of Trois-Rivières and Montreal in the following decades. And finally, the establishment of the first government in New France, as Canada was then called.

In the beginning, we had a government of companies. As you probably remember, the King of France entrusted private companies like the Company of One Hundred Associates and the Dutch West India Company with the administration of the territory. The King of England, for his part, gave the Hudson's Bay Company the English part of the territory that later became British North America. Territories throughout the continent were administered by private companies.

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Our first institutions, not democratic but public, were granted in 1663 by the King of France through the establishment of the Sovereign Council of New France. These institutions reflected the values of the time: a governor, an intendant, the Bishop of Quebec City and those co-opted by them for a total of seven people, near the end of colonial times, but without any democratic guarantees.

We, francophones, had a hard time achieving our democratic rights on the American continent. Our motherland never gave them to us.

(1630)

They tried to exercise in New France the same absolute domination as in Old France. Gradually, we stopped being French while, of course, maintaining good relations with what was then our mother or home country and became a more and more distinct nation.

At first, we called ourselves Canadiens or, as we used say, "Canayens". So, on one side, there was us Canadiens and, on the other, the English who occupied part of the land.

From 1663 to 1759, we operated with these institutions. Then, in 1759, the battle that took place on the Plains of Abraham was a victory for some, but for us it was a defeat. It brought about constitutional changes, again, military government in 1759, a royal proclamation in 1763 which ceded the colony of New France to England in exchange for Guadeloupe and Martinique. It is clear that errors of judgment were made somewhere along the way because, while anglophones had won here, in America, when, on the Old Continent, the British won the war against the French and the Treaty of Paris was signed, they got New France, but France kept Guadeloupe and Martinique.

Those are great travel destinations, but in terms of the relative value of the two, I think it was a sucker deal at the time.

Still no democratic institutions. In 1774, the Quebec Act that was handed to us—because we got whatever was left over—nonetheless restored civil law in Quebec, which allowed us to have a legislative council, but not an elected one. They were afraid to give francophones, so peace-loving, democratic institutions in which Quebecers could be represented by the people of their choice. Instead, we were given a legislative council appointed by the governor.

But the Quebecers, Canadiens of those days had certainly demonstrated great pacifism and great open-mindedness because there were 63,000 francophones in Quebec at the time of the conquest and only 3,000 to 4,000 survivors of Wolfe's regiment. With that kind of power relationship, had we been even slightly vindictive, the slightest bit vindictive, we would not have had to go into overtime to decide the fate of these 3,000 or so people. We went along with a de facto situation and, guided

by the elites who governed us in those days, whether we liked it or not—we will not rewrite history—we tolerated this situation.

Finally, in 1791, the Constitutional Act gave us for the very first time the right to have elected representatives and the first House of Assembly in Quebec. Naturally, we did not take any chances. It is like in a car: there is an accelerator, but there is also a brake pedal. The Westminster government allowed us to have a house of assembly made up of elected members, but it also maintained a legislative council, which was appointed by the governor and which could oppose the decisions of the assembly.

In 1791, we gained control over some institutions. The situation evolved rather rapidly and the country was divided into two parts: Upper Canada and Lower Canada. The assembly elected in Lower Canada had no extra-territorial jurisdiction. Consequently, it could not legislate for Upper Canada, nor could Upper Canada legislate for Lower Canada. We then move on to the 1830s with the Patriotes' rebellion and the infamous Durham report, which recommended unifying the two Canadas to finally assimilate and anglicize the French-speaking nation in America, something which was not to happen.

(1635)

For eight years, while English was the only official language in the house of assembly of the Parliament of the Province of Canada, French Canadians fought, in their own language, to have French recognized as an official language. Thanks to their tenacity, justice was finally done in 1848, when they obtained the right to use French, which also became the language used in the legislation. I will end with 1867 and the emergence of new institutions.

You will understand, Mr. Speaker, why I simply cannot agree when I hear simplistic comments such as those made by the Reform Party, to the effect that Canada started to exist in October 1993. Canada has existed for a long time. As a member of one of the founding nations which forged Canada's Constitution, I respectfully submit that, given our long common history, this critical mass of 25 per cent is the breath of life which Quebec needs if it remains, but I hope it will not, part of the Canadian federation.

In any case, it is better to be safe than sorry; it is better to buckle up, even if you do not wish to have an accident. It is from that perspective that I wanted to discuss the 25 per cent rule. This rule is so fundamental that, even though Bill C-69 includes some improvements, the fact that Quebec is not guaranteed a minimum of 25 per cent of the total representation in the House of Commons is reason enough, in fact the only reason, for the Bloc not to support this bill at third reading. Consequently, we will oppose this legislation.

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**Mr. Elwin Hermanson (Kindersley—Lloydminster, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, we are now debating Bill C-69 for the last time in the House. The bill is consequential of Bill C-18 from some time ago and the perceived need to redraw the act which allowed the commissions to redistribute the ridings in various provinces.

The bill is a result of the Liberal fiasco of interrupting the boundary redistribution with Bill C-18. The fiasco was started because Liberal members did not like the new maps produced by the commissions. Making a show out of calling for a fundamental review of the redistribution process, the government ordered new boundary maps drawn under new rules, costing Canadian taxpayers more than \$5 million in wasted commission reports.

Although there have been some minor improvements to the process of selecting boundary commissioners and publicizing the process, no substantial change to the composition of the boundary readjustment commissions, no substantial change to their powers and no substantial change to the method of drawing boundaries are proposed by Bill C-69. All the changes made to the redistribution act could have been made without throwing out the maps produced at great cost.

This whole exercise was a crass political manoeuvre on the part of the Liberals hoping to have boundary lines redrawn closer to their liking. There was no requirement for the redistribution process to be suspended and for the expensive work to be thrown out in order to examine the process.

Notwithstanding the minor technical improvements made to the act, the bill should be defeated by the House for two major reasons. Bill C-69 fails to address the problem of a rapidly growing House of Commons and it lays suspect the concept of equality of vote as a guiding principle in the redistribution process. The bill does not move the House of Commons any closer to respecting the mandate of representation by population, the cornerstone principle for a lower House in a bicameral system.

What is interesting about these two failures is that the Liberal members of the procedure and House affairs committee were initially in favour of tighter variances and a capped or reduced number of seats in the House of Commons. Capping or reducing the number was a major part of the mandate the House gave to the procedure and House affairs committee.

(1640)

Witnesses were brought in from all over the country to discuss this issue with us. Many of the Liberals on the committee agreed that the restrictions on the size of the House were a good idea.

Allow me to give members a few examples. Going back to our procedure and House affairs committee meetings of last summer, on July 7 the member for Scarborough—Rouge River, a

very active member during this entire process, said: "I have always been in favour of the view that the House should be taking control of its numbers. We ought to, by formula or in another way, be capping the size of the House of Commons. I am in favour of capping, whether it is 250, 300 or something over 300. It is not a big problem".

It seems pretty clear the member for Scarborough—Rouge River was in favour of dealing with the issue of the growth of the House. He was not alone on the Liberal side of the table. At the same meeting the member for Ontario said: "I too support any initiative that might have the effect of limiting or capping the number of seats".

The member for Vancouver Quadra, very experienced in matters of riding redistribution and constitutional considerations, added: "I have no problem at all with capping". He was clear we had to recognize some of the difficulties in doing it.

The Reform members on the committee were able to satisfactorily answer those concerns. The pattern of support for the idea of a smaller or capped House continued into the fall. In our meeting on October 20 the member for Scarborough—Rouge River again indicated his support for the concept: "I oppose further growth in the House without any restrictions. I tend to be in favour of a capping arrangement at some point and I very much want to see that issue addressed".

It is very strange the member has spoken in favour of and has supported the bill at all stages even though that issue is not addressed at all.

The chairman of the procedure and House affairs committee, the member for Kingston and the Islands, wanted to shirk all responsibility for capping the House and leave the problem to a future Parliament.

The Liberal dominated 51st report from the committee says: "Many members of the committee reluctantly came to the conclusion that a cap or reduction in the size of the House of Commons is not feasible at this time".

I got a very different impression from many of the Liberal members during the committee hearings. Reformers demonstrated that a House based on 265 members plus a few more to account for senatorial limitations is workable. We included this in our minority opinion, an opinion the Liberal brass ordered defeated.

On October 20 the member for Vancouver Quadra added: "I think many of us would like a more compact House. This House certainly architecturally has been stretched to the breaking point".

This is all very interesting but when faced with a vote on the issue in that very meeting, all Liberal members voted against a reduced House or a House frozen at 295 members. They all

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voted for a House that grows to 301, the status quo formula for continued growth.

Their personal support for capping the House continued. As late as November 1 the member for Scarborough—Rouge River said in committee: “We should be addressing the size of the House in our report. I do not think as a committee we have nailed that one down yet”. He added at a later meeting of the committee on November 22: “It would be naive to leave this issue without discussing the size of the House”.

It was at this point that the chair, speaking for the government, indicated that it would be better to leave the problem of a growing House to some future Parliament. This comment seemed to concern the Liberal members who thought that capping or reducing was a good idea.

The member for Mississauga West who also participated in our deliberations wondered why the next Parliament should be asked to investigate the problem: “Is there any good reason why we cannot do it?”

The answer to that is a very loud and resounding no, there is no good reason the bill could not have contained provisions to cap or reduce the size of the House of Commons, other than a lack of political will on the part of the government to deal with a controversial issue that would be acceding to the wishes of Canadians.

(1645)

Her comments that day were reinforced by her colleague from Vancouver Quadra when he agreed with her that the work on the problem of size should start now. All of these comments are in the committee transcripts.

There was a very real level of non-partisan agreement that capping and reducing the House was in order. The Liberal members of the committee wanted it and the Reform members of the committee wanted it. My friend from Mississauga West was absolutely right when she said: “I think the Canadian public wants us to limit the size of the House”. It seems that the only people who do not want it are those in the government inner circle who really call the shots.

It is always interesting to hear what any given government member thinks about a particular issue and then compare their response after a caucus meeting or after the whip has had a chance to talk to them. Time after time we see them mysteriously changing their minds about what is in the public interest.

I noted with interest that the hon. member for Bellechasse was surprised that the Liberals had changed their minds. I do not understand that. Liberals have been changing their minds ever since this country was established in 1867. There is nothing they

stand for and there is everything they stand for; it is whatever is convenient at the time.

It is time that the House and the government acted on principle, on what is right and on what is in the best interests of the Canadian public. It should consult with the Canadian public rather than flim-flamming around from one position to another, depending on the whims of the inner circle of the Liberal Party.

There seemed to be a pretty clear consensus among Liberals that capping and reducing the size of the House was a good idea. Why then was the issue suddenly and strangely dropped from the committee report, the bill which the government introduced, and all subsequent comments from those Liberal members? Suddenly, it was not an issue any more.

The answer is quite clear. They were whipped into line by the party brass. The red book promises of giving ordinary members of Parliament more autonomy and control over committee and House business is demonstrably dead. It is one more example that the red book promises of open government and restoring integrity were nothing more than tricks designed to win support from a public weary of unethical politicians. How else can the Liberals explain the practice of standing firm on an opinion one day and then voting it down on the next?

It was the same with the back to work legislation which the House dealt with last week. Many government members spoke in favour of designing legislation that would prevent costly strikes which damage the economy. Then they voted against the bill introduced by the hon. member for Lethbridge which would have done just that. Then within 24 hours the same members stood in support of the bill legislating an end to the crippling rail strike. It just does not make sense. It is pure partisan politics at its worst.

It is exactly the kind of top-down decision making Canadians from coast to coast are sick of. It is the Charlottetown accord approach to making decisions. They are trying to impose their will on Canadians. The Liberals are demonstrating that they hold a very low opinion of the thoughts of their own backbenchers. They expect them to act like trained seals, to always toe the party line and to vote when and how they are told to.

We saw exactly the same thing when we were discussing the allowable variance from the provincial population quotient, which is also a part of Bill C-69. Several government members expressed support for the idea of making constituencies, as close as possible, equal in population.

The member for Mississauga West went so far as to vote in favour of a Reform suggestion to move to a 15 per cent variance in population quotient. In our committee meeting on October 20 she admitted: “I voted with you on that, if you recall, and got into big trouble”. Big trouble for expressing her own opinion in a committee meeting of this House. The member admitted that

she was censured for voting contrary to party wisdom. That is not open government; it is authoritarian top-down government.

I know the Liberal member for Vancouver Quadra will agree with me when I say that the monarch in Parliament is sovereign and MPs share in that sovereignty. Members of Parliament should not merely be puppets to their party brass. It is bad policy, it is bad for Parliament, and it is bad for Canada.

Canadians elect MPs to represent their interests in Parliament. It is a shame that the government would not allow its members to exercise that responsibility. The support was there to create a redistribution bill that would meet the needs and wants of the majority of Canadians, but the government brass whipped its members into line to enforce its own agenda.

(1650)

The Parliament of Canada should not be run in an authoritarian top-down decision making process. Every vote and every committee should not be considered a matter of confidence. Every member should not be forced by the inner circle to toe the line. That kind of practice reduces the House of Commons to nothing more than a grand rubber stamp for what the cabinet has already decided behind closed doors.

I doubt the government had an open caucus debate on these issues before it determined to add seats to the House of Commons and allow the vast population variance differences that are included in Bill C-69. I doubt very much there was a very open debate in the Liberal caucus about this issue. I suspect the decision was made and members of the Liberal caucus were told that they would support Bill C-69. They were probably given four or five talking points to back them up as they were sent out to sell the government agenda.

There was a rare opportunity here to make a positive change to our redistribution system. The government did not allow its members to make those changes in the area of a capped or reduced House to protect the equality of Canadian votes with a tighter variance.

I want to briefly reflect on some of the observations made by the hon. member for Bellechasse. He took it upon himself to give Reformers a lesson in Canadian history. I want to assure the hon. member that Reformers are very aware of the history of our country. We are very proud of our past. We are very proud of all of those from the past who contributed to this country to make it the great country it is.

I would like to remind the hon. member for Bellechasse and others who might share his concern about our understanding of Canadian history there are reasons that people came to this country. They came particularly to my part of the country, the west, and I believe they came to the province of Quebec, Ontario

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and Atlantic Canada because they wanted to get away from some things in their country of origin. They wanted to escape repressive regimes. They wanted to escape governments that imposed undemocratic principles upon them.

I am a bit concerned about the Bloc members' position on Bill C-69. They want to impose a principle that in my opinion and the opinion of my Reform colleagues is undemocratic. That is, we would put on the floor of the House of Commons 25 per cent of the seats for one province in this country, regardless of changes in population.

That is why a lot of people left their country, to escape those types of oppressive laws and come to a place where the democratic principles of representation by population were adhered to. I believe that is the principle the people of Quebec adhere to as well. I also believe that is one of the reasons many people in the province of Quebec voted against the Charlottetown accord.

Canadians, both within and outside of Quebec, find it abhorrent that we would call for special status for anyone in this country. It is not a principle that was accepted in the Charlottetown accord. It was repugnant back then and it is repugnant to Canadians today.

We have to ask: Why would they want special status? Why would they want to be guaranteed 25 per cent of the seats of the House of Commons whether their population justified it or not?

I think of two or three arguments that might be put forward. One argument might be that somehow their representatives are not as good as the representatives from other parts of the country and they need that floor and need that protection. I do not accept that argument. Quebecers can send qualified and able members to this House who can represent them adequately, just like we can in the rest of the country. I challenge that argument.

Another argument might be that they are superior to other Canadians and deserve to have 25 per cent of the seats in this House. I reject that argument as well. It is a false argument. We need to look upon each other as equals in this country, equal citizens with equal responsibilities, equal privileges and a law that affects us all in the same manner.

There is one other argument that might be put forth. They might say that they are one of two founding races and somehow that bestows some special privilege upon us. All of us know that the native people were here before those of English or French origin.

This past weekend I was at a breakfast where a Metis leader spoke to us. He brought the point home to us again that in most of this country Canadians do not view Canada as being the home of two founding nations. In particular, if they are one of the first people or of Metis origin, they very much doubt that concept.

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(1655)

I want to close by saying I appreciate the opportunity to make my final remarks on Bill C-69. For all of the reasons I have put forward in my speech at third reading, I urge the House not to pass Bill C-69. We are not getting the job done. If we are not prepared to face the issue square on and if we keep wanting to put off the tough decisions into the future, those decisions will become even tougher to make.

If we let this House expand to 320 members, some 20 more people will have a vested interest in maintaining their seats in this House of Commons and not seeing the size of this House reduced. It is going to have a negative snowball effect which is not good for the country. Unfortunately there are too many politicians in this place who have a vested interest and are not able to put the well-being of the country ahead of their own self-interests.

I urge all members of this House to do the right thing, the thing even Liberals argued for in committee, to cap the size of the House, to respect representation by population, and to vote against Bill C-69.

**Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I want to very briefly run over the very positive aspects of the bill before the House today. I am afraid the opposition members, as is their wont, have dwelt on the negative aspects.

We have heard the hon. member for Kindersley—Lloydminster complain about two aspects he feels were not there. We have to deal with what is there. We have a good bill here and the hon. member should have acknowledged that and indicated supported for it in his speech.

[*Translation*]

The hon. member for Bellechasse had several complaints about things that were not in the bill, but what is in the bill is clearly quite acceptable to everyone, and he should support the bill for that reason.

[*English*]

The bill provides a new, and I suggest better, appointment process for commissions and for the commissioners. It puts a limit on the need to appoint commissions in provinces where there have not been significant population shifts. That is a major change. It will save money. We have another major money saving device in this bill. Redistributions will cost less as a result of this bill.

We have established quinquennial review, that is quinquennial redistributions in provinces where there have been significant population shifts within the province. Therefore we will avoid massive changes every 10 years.

We put a new clause with new directions to commissions instructing them on how to do the redistribution within the boundaries they decide on. We have suggested new ways of doing it that in my view are more restrictive than the rules that were there before. We directed them more pointedly to deal with items such as community municipal boundaries and boundaries of existing electoral districts. I think it is a significant improvement. All the members of the committee agreed it was an improvement when we made those changes.

There are limits which I suggest are much tighter on the right of commissions to deviate beyond the 25 per cent limit on the provincial quotients. Now they cannot create a riding that is bigger than the limits, which they could do before. Those are prohibited. They can only create one that is smaller than the 25 per cent deviation. That is circumscribed very tightly because it must be geographically isolated from the province or very remote. Without quoting the exact words, it is significantly different from what it was before. Again, the hon. member for Kindersley—Lloydminster who harps on this point has fewer grounds to complain than he had in the previous bill. He should be supporting this bill.

The publication of plans is different. There will be three of them. There will be an opportunity to comment before the maps are published for the first time. The member for Kindersley—Lloydminster says that the maps presently drawn by the boundaries commissions are thrown out the window. That is not true. They could be used as one of the three maps by the new commissions. There is no reason in the world why those could not be used as one of the three options put forward by the commissions when they publish maps.

Members will have an opportunity to comment with members of the public in advance of publication, after publication and after significant changes in the maps.

This is an improved process. It is more open. We have rid ourselves of the parliamentary review. We have made the process more open, more accountable to public pressure, and more accessible to the general public in that sense.

(1700)

We have abolished the very expensive publication process for the maps. We have made them available to people who want them, not to publish them in newspapers at great public expense. It is saving literally millions of dollars.

The commissions will give reasons for their decisions, which was not the case before. This will help explain to the public why the commissions have drawn boundaries in the locations they have. The period for implementation of redistribution has been shortened under the bill so that it will happen in a faster time frame than was the case before.

Those nine or ten very positive improvements to the legislation are encompassed in the bill. All I hear in lengthy speeches from the opposition are complaints. There has not been mention of any of the very positive aspects. I invite hon. members to look at the brighter side and not dwell on the things that are not there.

I should like to turn to a couple of things that are not in it and say something about them. I will deal first with the complaints of the hon. member for Kindersley—Lloydminster and then I will turn to the hon. member for Bellechasse.

The member complained repeatedly that members of the House were not free to express their views in the committee. We obviously had a very free expression of views. He has quoted extensively from speeches of members, particularly members on this side. I can understand why he would want to quote them. In his remarks he said how they shared a view one day and changed their minds another.

Part of the advantage of committee work is that we get to hear witnesses and study various options. The members of the committee looked at the things we could do. He may have forgotten that we spent three days in July last year, and he was there, hearing witnesses. We worked quite hard with long sessions lasting all day.

Having heard the evidence of witnesses we had discussions. They influenced us in various ways. Some of us were swayed by some witnesses and felt that maybe we should do this one day and then, having read other material and reflected on it, we changed our minds. That was true of many members of the committee.

Had I been expressing views in the committee as the chairman of the committee, I am sure he would have been quoting me as having said one thing one day and maybe something else the next. My views changed too as I read up on the subject and was persuaded by various witnesses, by discussions with my colleagues on the committee and by material I read on a subject such as the royal commission report on electoral reform and party financing.

Having seen all that material, having formed our views and having reflected on the matter, many members changed their minds. The hon. member for Kindersley—Lloydminster attributed all kinds of reasons to this that are not really accurate in every case at all and certainly not generally fair to hon. members who made up their minds. He should not indulge in such speculation on the reasons people make up their minds the way they do.

Naturally there are discussions in caucus. Naturally there is a consensus building on issues like this one. On the bill itself there was a significant change that he pressed for. That was the elimination of scheduled ridings and a change to put the power back in commissions to make the decisions that could have been

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made in the House because of various complaints from members. That was the response to complaints that he raised. The members on our side looked at it and decided there was a better way. I think the bill reflects that. I heard no criticism of that aspect of the bill from the hon. member in his speech.

The committee looked at the evidence, weighed the evidence and came to conclusions. We did not all come to the same conclusions. That is quite obvious from the speeches this afternoon. However, we came to conclusions on a bill that has very positive aspects that will have a significant impact on the way we do redistributions in the country and a very positive influence in that regard.

The redistribution done under the bill will be good. It will be better than what we had before, in part because the process is more open, in part because the commissioners will be more responsive to the wishes of the members of the House as they are chosen essentially by the members of the House, and because the opportunity for public input is very significantly enhanced under the bill.

In reflecting on whether or not to support the bill I invite members to consider those items, to look at the positive side and ignore the very negative side.

Another complaint the member made dealt with the size of the House. Frankly that is not a matter for a redistribution bill. It is a matter for changes in the Constitution of the country. The committee was very reluctant to get into constitutional change. The number of seats assigned to the provinces under the Constitution is set out in the Constitution Act. It is a matter of constitutional amendment to change it.

(1705)

The hon. member wanted either to cap or decrease the size of the House. Most members on our side have considered the matter. There was some initial attractiveness to the idea. Last summer there was a lot of media attention focused on the size of the House and whether or not we really needed a House of this size. They reflected and decided that with 295 members for a country the geographic size of Canada we were not significantly over-represented in the House.

Our population is growing. Most of us in Ontario represent about 100,000 people. That is a significant number. We cannot get to meet them all in our term of office; it is virtually impossible to do so.

I am sure the hon. member for Kindersley—Lloydminster knows from his own experience, having been in the House now for a year and a half, how difficult it must be for him to meet his electors. Members of Parliament do not have all the time in the world to be out in their constituencies. When we go to our constituencies it is difficult to go door to door when we are trying to do our work as representatives, meet groups and people in our offices who ask to see us, not just to see the people who

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perhaps would be interested to meet us but do not have the opportunity.

**Mr. Bélair:** Telephones help.

**Mr. Milliken:** As the member for Cochrane—Superior says: “Telephones help”. He has a particular problem given the geographic size of his riding. The country is enormous. Members of Parliament have a particularly difficult role to play, a multifaceted role that involves more than sitting in Ottawa and doing the work demanded of them in this place.

I will continue with the subject of the Constitution.

[*Translation*]

I would like to comment on what the hon. member for Bellechasse said in his speech today and also on what he said Monday in connection with his motion in amendment to this bill.

It is clear that what he wanted to change was really a section of the Canadian Constitution, not a section of this bill. He argued that he wanted a change that would give the Province of Quebec a minimum level of representation or at least 25 per cent of the members. This kind of change would require an amendment to the Constitution Act. Two sections are affected by this proposal, one of which is section 52 of the Constitution Act, 1867, and I would like to read it to the hon. member, although I am sure he has already read it: “The Number of Members of the House of Commons may be from Time to Time increased by the Parliament of Canada, provided the proportionate Representation of the Provinces prescribed by this Act is not thereby disturbed”.

A change of the kind he proposed would clearly change the ratios established by the current legislation with respect to representation of the provinces. This means that to make the proposed change, we would have to amend the Constitution.

The other section that is crucial to this matter is section 42(1) of the Constitution Act, 1982, which reads as follows: “An amendment to the Constitution of Canada in relation to the following matters may be made only in accordance with paragraph 38(1)(a)”. One such matter is “the principle of proportional representation of the provinces in the House of Commons prescribed by the Constitution of Canada”.

So we cannot make changes except “in accordance” with section 38. Section 38(1) provides for “resolutions of the Senate and the House of Commons; and resolutions of the legislative assemblies of at least two-thirds of the provinces that have, in the aggregate, according to the then latest general census, at least fifty per cent of the population of all the provinces”.

(1710)

So, it would be very difficult to make such a change in the Constitution. We tried to during the debate and the referendum on the Charlottetown accord, but the Canadian people did not want it. I am surprised today that the hon. member for Bellechasse and his party supported such a change to Canada’s constitution, after opposing the Charlottetown accord.

The accord would have guaranteed Quebec 25 per cent of the seats in the House of Commons, but they opposed it. What happened? Why are they supporting this amendment to the Constitution in the House today? This is nothing more than a game for them. They are not sincere in proposing such a motion in this House. Oh yes, indeed. And look who proposed the motion: a party that has decided it will not be here after the referendum.

If this party wins the referendum, Quebec will separate from Canada. If it loses, its leader has promised he will resign, and all his members will do the same. How can they propose a change like this to guarantee Quebec a minimum number of seats here in the House, when they do not plan to stay? What is the problem here? I do not understand the position of the Bloc Québécois on this matter. I would also suggest that the remarks of the hon. member for Bellechasse are just another attempt to confuse the issue and give a boost to the separatists’ campaign to help them catch up.

Clearly they have problems, and some other issue must be found for Quebec electors, an issue of no importance to anyone.

[*English*]

Everybody in Canada would be happy to ensure adequate representation for every part of the country, but the hon. member for Bellechasse in his speech criticized the fact that Prince Edward Island had a guarantee of four seats. He used that as an argument to suggest that somehow other provinces should also have guarantees.

If we all had guarantees of a minimum percentage we would never make any changes in the representation. Everybody in the House including the hon. member for Bellechasse supported the notion of representation by population in the discussions in the committee. Clause 19 of the bill provides for effective representation based on population. It is the guiding principle for redistribution and was supported by all members. He supports that principle and he knows it.

By his amendment he is trying to raise a red herring that has nothing to do with the bill. It is really an amendment to the Constitution of Canada that he would like to get and that frankly he opposes in relation to certain other provinces that are very small.

I share his views. I do not think anybody should have a minimum number of seats in the House. We should be dealing

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with fairness and representation and trying to get the very best maps we can so that members have an area they can represent that is manageable and that allows them to do a good job in the House for all the country. That is our aim.

With great respect I invite hon. members opposite to rethink their negative thoughts on the bill, look at the good side of it and support it.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Langlois:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands has made a few errors. At one point, I almost thought I was hearing Flora MacDonald. Now really, we do understand that the riding may remain the same, but we do at least expect the incumbents to change. Indeed, Mrs. MacDonald did once hold the seat; now it is the hon. member and, one day, there will be somebody new there. If voters do not ensure this happens, nature surely will, as it will for me one day too.

(1715)

Something remains to be clarified and corrected. The hon. member for Kingston and the Islands said that the amendment proposed by the official opposition on the issue of minimum guaranteed representation for Quebec would change the Constitution of Canada in an unorthodox way, that we cannot proceed in this fashion and that we should use the 7-50 rule, which is 7 provinces representing 50 per cent of the population of Canada, plus the two federal Houses. This is the way he suggests we do it, even though we clearly indicated that under the circumstances this is not the way to go.

The amendment proposed by the Bloc Quebecois would have changed the text of subclause 16(2) of the bill to the following—I am sure that the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands will be listening to this: “On receipt by the Chief Electoral Officer of a return referred to in subsection (1) in respect of a decennial census, the Chief Electoral Officer shall calculate the number of members of the House of Commons to be assigned to each of the provinces, subject and according to the provisions of section 51 of the *Constitution Act, 1867* and the rules provided therein”. And our amendment would add that: “and, notwithstanding the foregoing, when by application of this subsection the number of members to be assigned to the Province of Quebec is less than 25 per cent of the total number of members in the House of Commons, the Chief Electoral Officer shall assign at least 25 per cent of the total number of members to the Province of Quebec”. That is the amendment which would have guaranteed us 25 per cent of all seats.

Our amendment refers directly to a constitutional amendment; by our wording we are modifying section 51. Did we have the right to propose this amendment from a constitutional point of view? The question has been raised before the courts. I will provide my hon. colleague from Kingston and the Islands with a

copy of the decision in *Campbell vs. Attorney General of Canada*, reported in 1985-49BLR, 4th edition, page 321. Five judges of the British Columbia Court of Appeal ruled that under section 44 of the Constitution Act, 1982, the federal Parliament had the authority to make laws, and that it could make laws with respect to the criterion of proportional representation, bearing in mind that proportional representation must be interpreted in the Canadian sense of the term, not in a rigid, mathematical sense, but in the context of Canadian history. This was the ruling of the honourable judges of the British Columbia Court of Appeal in *Campbell*.

The legislative authority on which the official opposition's amendment is based is section 44 of the Constitution Act, 1982. I would remind members that section 44 does not specify exactly how we in the federal Parliament are to use our authority to amend the Constitution of Canada within our areas of jurisdiction. Are we to change its wording directly or by reference? We are making a reference to the wording. As the Constitution does not specify a method, either, in my opinion, is acceptable.

In concluding, I would like to ask the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands a question of principle. Setting aside the constitutional arguments that could occupy us for hours, why does the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands not wish to see the people of Quebec, as one of the founding races of this country in 1867, retain this critical mass of 25 per cent of the number of members, which gives it the power to influence certain decisions?

**Mr. Milliken:** Mr. Speaker, in my opinion, the position of the hon. member concerning section 44 of the Constitution is wrong. It is obvious that the operative words in this case are “principle of representation by population” and I do not need to quote the section again in this House; the words are quite clear. We can change certain things concerning representation in this House but not the principle of representation by population for the provinces. That can be changed only if census figures warrant it under the regulations if it is in section 51 of the Constitution.

(1720)

[*English*]

I am a firm believer in the concept of the two founding races. I believe fully that the partnership that created our country and has caused it to prosper and develop is a fundamental part of our Constitution. I have absolutely no reluctance in recognizing that principle.

I do not share the hon. member's view that the only way to do it is to accord a guaranteed minimum number of seats to one of the provinces. I do not like the minimum guarantees that we have for seats in the House. There may be other ways to do it,

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perhaps by a minimum number of seats in the Senate or by some other method.

I firmly believe that the House should be elected on the basis of representation by population. I have always been a believer in that principle. I stick by it.

There are conflicts of principles now and again in the way we do things. The hon. member for Kindersley—Lloydminster in his speech referred to the principle of representation by population. I am a firm believer in it and so is the hon. member in his heart of hearts. I know he does not like the minimums that are already there. I do not either. I would prefer to see those changed.

I recognize there are certain political realities in Canada by which we have to abide. I am not anxious to engage in changes to those realities without an overall view of how the Constitution could be changed in various ways.

The Charlottetown accord was an attempt to do that. The hon. member opposed it. I supported it with some reluctance. I did not like parts of it. However in it was the 25 per cent minimum. I supported Charlottetown. I am prepared to support Charlottetown again if I have to. I would prefer not to. I would prefer a better deal. I think we can get a better deal some day.

We are not into Constitution making now. Canadians are fed up with Constitution making. In my view we ought not to be engaging in it here in a roundabout way, as the hon. member suggests, and which I suggest is illegal.

**Mr. Elwin Hermanson (Kindersley—Lloydminster, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, in listening to the member for Kingston and the Islands respond to the hon. member for Bellechasse he was arguing for and against himself. He reiterated what I said in my speech.

He alluded a bit to some constitutional changes that would be necessary if we were to reduce the number of members in the House. We discussed this in committee. As the member for Calgary West very adequately explained to the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands, any constitutional changes would be minimal and could be done within the confines of the House. They do not require the very complicated and difficult amending formula to authorize the changes. It would be necessary to deal with the grandfather clause which prohibits an equitable reduction in the size of the House.

The hon. member for Calgary Centre, who had some input at committee in the bill, used California as an example of a jurisdiction in the United States with a population equal to the population of our entire country which at the federal level only has, if I remember correctly, 56 federal members to represent nearly 30 million people.

His argument that we need 294 MPs at the federal level to adequately administer this country does not hold water. Both our

system and our capabilities are equal or perhaps superior to those of the politicians in the state of California.

I have a concern the hon. member did not address and to which I would like him to respond. We have thrown away \$5 million. We are going to draw new maps after the bill is passed. Given the population shift in the province of Ontario, I am quite sure that the results may be very similar to the results we saw when the maps came out in the former process. In those maps northern Ontario lost one seat. Perhaps now with the population changes it will lose two seats and the hon. member for Cochrane—Superior will have a larger riding and another member will not have a riding at all.

How is the hon. member's government going to respond when the maps come out again? The results could be even less favourable to his members than they were this past time. Will they again demand changes? Is the government going to again delay the process and bring in new legislation to try to get the maps drawn the way those members want them?

(1725)

**Mr. Milliken:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member made some pretty far-reaching assertions in the course of his remarks. I want to go back to the California example he cited, although he did not specifically ask me a question on it.

He suggested that because in California members of the house of representatives represent huge numbers of people that we should do the same. I do not agree that the American experience is one that we necessarily need to follow. We have never done so in the past on major political matters. I do not know why we would today.

The hon. member, in reflecting on this issue, would agree with me that the American political experience has not been all roses either. He points to the parts of it he likes and says this is what we should do. However he ignores the disadvantages that their system affords, which are significant.

Canadians do not expect their members of Parliament to represent huge numbers of people. They feel they are well represented now with a House of reasonable size. Based on population we have always had a fairly large House compared to the United States and I am sure we are going to continue to have for the foreseeable future.

The second part of his question was about the proposals we have here and if the commissions are coming up with new maps are we going to throw those out a second time. I do not think so. I have no reason to believe that would be the case.

However, the member should bear in mind that in dealing with these maps the government is not throwing them out. The commissions will be free to use them as one of the three they put forward for public consideration should they decide to do so. They do not have to redraw every line on every map. This may be one of the three sets they have to do but I remind the hon.

member that they do now have to produce three. So these maps in fact could be quite helpful.

The census figures that were set out on a geographic basis for the entire country will be available to the new commissions as were to the old. All that work will not be duplicated.

For the hon. member to suggest that we have trashed everything by this bill and wasted \$7 million is not accurate. We will have good use for some of things that have happened. Certainly some of the money that was spent on advertising will not be spent a second time. We are not going to trash everything and waste all the money. We are moving to save money with the new redistribution. There will be some loss from the expenses already incurred.

However, had the hon. member been vigorous in supporting our first bill instead of supporting the senators who held it up and cost the taxpayers millions of dollars, we would be away ahead of the game. If those commissions had cancelled as soon as the bill was introduced we would have saved several million dollars. It was wasted because the hon. member and the Senate got into bed together and blocked the passage of the bill and cost us a lot of money as has—

**The Deputy Speaker:** There are two minutes to go. I do not believe the member for Rimouski—Témiscouata wishes to begin her speech. I wonder if we might call it 5.30 by agreement.

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** It being 5.30 p.m., 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]

### STATUTORY PROGRAM EVALUATION ACT

**Mr. John Williams (St. Albert, Ref.)** moved that Bill C-289, an act to provide for evaluations of statutory programs, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am glad to speak to this private member's bill. Unfortunately, it has been designated a non-votable bill and will not be referred to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts.

However, there is a tide in the affairs of men which when taken at the flood leads on to fortune. Shakespeare said this 400 years ago. There is a tide today that is causing government to re-examine its profligate ways and return to the sanity of fiscal

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responsibility, hence ensuring the prosperity of Canadians in future generations.

Canadian taxpayers have seen their taxes rise dramatically over the last 15 to 20 years in the name of reining in the budget deficit. Yet that deficit is no closer to being tamed than in the years before. We have had a continuous stream of finance ministers stand in the House and proclaim that the battle will be won through the increased taxes that they have introduced. These have been empty promises. We have listened to finance ministers tell us that spending is being constrained in the name of deficit reduction. Every year when we add it all up, the spending has gone up.

What is the problem? When more and more taxes only contain the unsustainable deficit, the problem is being perceived as insurmountable. Perhaps the real reason lies in the way we spend taxpayers' money and the needs we as a government have perceived as needs to be addressed.

Over the years governments past and present have created programs to address virtually every perceivable need for Canadians from health to unemployment, grain transportation, disaster relief, alleviating aboriginal problems, educating our young, combating poverty, heritage, industrial development and international marketing. The list is endless.

Some of these programs are highly visible. They serve Canadians every day. Some are out of sight of the Canadian taxpayer and yet we hope are performing some valuable service. Some are out of date and out of touch. Some are just plain obsolete. Some continue because no one has bothered to shut them down. They are forgotten, expensive and ongoing. Are they Beneficial? No.

In this day and age when we are trying to justify every dollar spent, we should take the time to evaluate on a program by program basis what we are actually doing and why.

The President of the Treasury Board has announced that 45,000 civil servants are going to lose their jobs. Is that because we have suddenly found out their work was irrelevant? I doubt it.

Somehow the Treasury Board is telling us that government can do the job required with 45,000 fewer civil servants. We do not have these answers, only questions and concerns. What does it mean for those Canadians who depend on a certain program? Will it still be there for them tomorrow?

What about the career of a civil servant which has suddenly been shattered? What does the future hold for him? Why did we find out now that we can dispense with 45,000 civil servants? It did not appear apparent to us last year or the year before that we could dispense with these civil servants, 30,000 of them, 20,000 of them or 10,000 of them. Why now?

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Over the last 10 to 15 years the private sector has realized technology has changed the world, that profit margins are slimmer. Efficiency must be improved to maintain profitability. Innovation is the only way to success.

By recognizing these signs and acting on them, Canadian industry leads the world today in rising productivity growth. To them we owe a great debt of gratitude. If they had been as laggardly and as slothful as the Government of Canada, the country would have had a financial crisis long ago.

The private sector is constantly reviewing what it does, how well it does it, how it can improve efficiency and how it can innovate. Is the government exempt from these issues? The answer is no. It does not have the political will to address them.

My private members' bill is a serious attempt to redress that problem. I have focused on statutory spending in my private members' bill, spending that accounts for \$112 billion this fiscal year. It is included in the estimates for information only.

Members of Parliament cannot debate it. They cannot vote on it. They cannot reduce it. They cannot eliminate it. Like old man river, it keeps rolling on every day. I want to take stock of that \$112 billion of spending.

Like the private sector, I want it done rationally, completely, objectively and most of all on a cyclical basis of seven to ten years.

(1735)

I am proposing in my private member's bill that all statutory spending, no matter how great or small, how meaningful or meaningless, be evaluated every decade using four fundamental principles. Is the program still relevant? Is the program effective in addressing the needs that have been identified? Is the program being delivered efficiently? Is there a better way to achieve the same results? Those are four fundamental criteria on which to evaluate every statutory program that has been authorized by the Government of Canada over the years.

Let us look at these points again. Is the program relevant? We all know we live in a changing society. Statistics Canada is continually measuring these changes in our society, the size of urban poor, child poverty, wealth, the size of our houses, the products we buy, the appliances we own, our level of education. The index of Statistics Canada is an inch thick. Who says a program designed 20 or 30 years ago is meeting the challenges of today unless we ask what is the challenge we are trying to meet today?

Therefore I want the question asked whether the program is still relevant. That will cause the senior bureaucrats and the political masters to define clearly and specifically what the need

is in today's terms, not last year's terms or last decade's terms. What are they trying to accomplish today? It is simple enough. The private sector does it all the time. It boggles my mind that this is an innovative idea for the Government of Canada.

The second principle of evaluation is whether the program is effective in addressing the identified need. That again seems a fairly simple question to which we would want to know the answer. Surely if we have identified a need through the discussion on relevancy it behoves us to know we are addressing that need effectively, not just 60 per cent of the need being addressed and 40 per cent being ignored or whatever percentage we want to choose.

On the other side of the coin, why would we want to address a need with 20 per cent overlap beyond that? We would be wasting taxpayers' money because we did not examine our programs to determine if they are effective. Worst of all, what would we say if we were to find that a program is addressing issues largely irrelevant to the fundamental focus of the programs, spending money with abandon while the need identified remains unaddressed?

Surely it is our job as parliamentarians to be asking these questions to ensure on behalf of taxpayers that we have the answers.

The third principle of my bill requires that we ask how efficiently we are delivering these programs. Is our service up to par or do we have to wait months for a disability pension from CPP, for example? I found out through my work on the public accounts committee that the Canada pension plan only answers four out of every 11 telephone calls. I found out that the Department of National Defence built a warehouse in Halifax to house inventory. However, after the building was largely complete it looked at the inventory it wanted to put into the building and realized it was largely obsolete and was not being used.

Therefore, when we ask whether the program is being delivered efficiently, I hope in most cases the answer is yes. We want to know every situation when the answer is no.

(1740)

The final principle of the bill asks the simple yet fundamental question is there a better way? Too often we get caught up in repetition instead of innovation. As needs change we have new tools and new technology to identify needs. As we improve our efficiency we should always ask whether there is a better way.

Preventive maintenance goes a long way to reduce renovation. A stitch in time saves nine. Program evaluation, as proposed in my private member's bill, is an ongoing process that will provide value to the Canadian taxpayer. It is not politically driven. It is open and transparent.

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My bill will require each program evaluation be laid before the House and referred to a standing committee for its input, for public discussion, hearings and for recommendations. It would be a public process.

We have program reviews going on today with the Minister of Human Resources Development. These reviews are taking place behind the scenes. They are being presented, according to the Auditor General, without pooled information. In his last report he mentioned we would require more information. It would be a public process and the government would be required to respond the committee's report within 150 days.

Another major point is we must have faith in the quality of the evaluations. For that reason my bill causes evaluations on programs that spend more than \$250 million annually to be reviewed by the Auditor General, and his report on the evaluation to be laid before the House also.

Program evaluation is an idea whose time has come. The Auditor General has been critical of the progress of development of program evaluation in his 1993 report. Program evaluation has been introduced in other western democracies with significant success and savings to the taxpayer. It can, will and must do the same here.

As parliamentarians who are wrestling with a serious budget deficit and an accumulated debt almost out of control, we owe it to the taxpayers to adopt program evaluation. As members of Parliament responsible for the public purse, program evaluation is without doubt the best tool that has come along to assist us in our work in decades.

The Auditor General said: "The story of program evaluation in the Government of Canada is one of high expectations and great potential that have only been partly fulfilled". That quote is from the 1993 Auditor General's report, paragraph 844.

Let us not have heads of gold and feet of clay. Let program evaluation achieve its full potential in playing its very real and substantial role in managing government programs.

**Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Treasury Board, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to address the House on Bill C-289, a private member's bill.

The bill provides for the regular evaluation of continuing government programs funded by statutory appropriations by a program evaluation process set by the President of the Treasury Board. Responsible ministers would be required to table in the House the results of these evaluations.

[*Translation*]

The bill also requires the Auditor General of Canada to review and report to the House of Commons on major evaluations.

[*English*]

During this period of concern for the deficit and the level of the national debt, it is very important all parliamentarians and all Canadians know which government programs are working; which government programs are working well and which ones are not working well. We also want to know how we can improve them so they are affordable and that they meet the objectives established for them.

Program evaluation is a good tool for reviewing programs. It allows for the questioning on a periodic basis of the rationale for each government program. It involves the systematic gathering of verifiable information on a program. This information would include demonstrable evidence of its results and cost effectiveness. This process would provide more and better information for decision making.

(1745)

The government has already demonstrated its commitment to the need for regular program evaluations. Many of our public documents place an important focus on evaluation. For example, "Creating Opportunities", the red book, outlines the importance of evaluation information and the 1994 budget called for major reviews of federal programs.

[*Translation*]

These important reviews of federal programs had two objectives: first, to identify the programs and services that the government will continue to provide if there are enough resources and, second, to ensure that these programs are delivered in the most efficient way possible. We can already see the results of these reviews.

[*English*]

In addition, in May 1994 the Treasury Board approved a new review policy. The intent was to strengthen the ongoing review capabilities of departments and the government in general. More and improved review and evaluation findings are to be made publicly available.

Bill C-289 recommends evaluations be made of statutory programs on a cyclical basis. This a worthy approach. We need to ask how practical it is. There are only so many resources that can be devoted to program evaluation. We must use those resources carefully.

While major statutory programs are important, sometimes it is much more cost effective to evaluate issues which impact on more than one program and possibly on more than one department. Evaluations involving many departments are often more strategic and more likely to be useful.

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The government needs to retain flexibility in this regard. Cyclical evaluations of singular statutory programs may not always provide the wider information base needed for a significant government decision. There is nothing wrong with supporting cyclical evaluation. One needs to think whether this approach is the best one in all cases.

Ultimately we want to ensure review of activities undertaken by government departments and central agencies are better linked to government priorities rather than some predetermined schedule.

[*Translation*]

The needs and aspirations of the population change rapidly. Unforeseen problems may arise. Decision makers and managers must adapt quickly to any change in conditions.

[*English*]

A long term fixed evaluation schedule is not always appropriate. Programs should be evaluated based on an analysis of risk, their importance to Canadians and, as the information is needed, for decision making. To have an evaluation for the sake of an evaluation is not cost effective or wise.

Evaluations are not the only source of information parliamentarians and Canadians can use to evaluate whether government programs and services are affordable and effective. There are many different activities in government which help us to learn how well programs are serving Canadians and also to identify successful practices that can lead to service and quality improvements when needed.

Earlier this week the President of the Treasury Board released details of the renewed expenditure management system of the Government of Canada. The new system is intended to support the objective of making the best use of tax dollars to deliver quality services to Canadians. The renewed expenditure management system introduced the concept of departmental outlooks. These outlooks on program priorities and expenditures will be provided to the various standing committees of the House.

[*Translation*]

These documents will give parliamentary committees better quality information that will enable them to evaluate future priorities and trends in departmental and program spending and to comment on them.

[*English*]

The public service is currently working to establish service standards for its programs. The role of service standards is to provide answers to questions such as how long will it take to provide a service? How often will it be provided? What can people do if they are not satisfied? Providing service standards that pose these types of questions invite public feedback. This

feedback from the clients of government is an important element in the government's attempt to provide quality services that are affordable, efficient, effective and responsive to the needs of Canadians.

(1750)

Internal audit is another important tool available to provide information on the success of programs and activities. Internal audits are designed to help managers achieve their business objectives by identifying weaknesses or opportunities to improve the overall economy, efficiency and effectiveness of program management practices.

[*Translation*]

It is also important to note that the information on program performance must be available on an ongoing basis. Managers, members of Parliament and senators along with the Canadian people would not be very happy to learn long after the fact that the programs have not produced the expected results.

[*English*]

There must be useful performance measures that provide answers on an ongoing basis. The Auditor General has for several years encouraged the government to improve the quality of the information in this area. Program managers must be encouraged to demonstrate on a timely basis the results being achieved by their programs.

Most of the mechanisms for providing information on program performance, what I have discussed already, have a permanent place in the management framework of government and are already used to assess statutory programs.

[*Translation*]

I have tried to demonstrate that, even if evaluation is an important management tool, it is not the only one. No single tool such as evaluation can meet all information needs that determine program effectiveness. Each review tool and each information tool must be used at the appropriate time and for the appropriate purposes.

[*English*]

I have tried to demonstrate the most important aspects of what is happening in government in terms of relating information to parliamentarians. The House recently passed a private member's bill that changed the Auditor General's act to allow him to report more frequently to the House. This change will provide us again with more timely information on government activities and I am sure it will provide the Auditor General with more work.

How much more work can we be asking the Auditor General to do before we start to reduce his effectiveness? That is one of the problems we would encounter.

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[Translation]

The bill before the House is the result of an admirable effort by an hon. member to ensure that we all have access to good quality information on program performance. I suppose that we can never have enough information. We must, however, consider the costs.

[English]

As the bottom line there are many good sources of information available to us on a routine basis. We must ensure we are making full use of these resources. If we need further information there are many options open to us. Should we be enshrining a new review process into legislation without fully considering the options and costs involved? I think not.

I am prepared to look at the positive options of the proposed legislation. If they can be incorporated into some of the mechanisms we have in place it will be done.

[Translation]

**Mr. Richard Bélisle (La Prairie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I take this opportunity to commend my colleague, the hon. member for St. Albert, for taking the initiative of tabling Bill C-289. Incidentally, the hon. member sits on the public accounts committee that I chair and I share and certainly understand his interest in ensuring that an act is passed to provide for the evaluation of statutory programs.

The need for statutory program evaluation has clearly been established both in the public and the private sectors, especially at a time when costs are tightly controlled and we have to make the most of our scarce resources. The only thing standing in the way of this bill being passed and applied to major programs is an obtuse government unable to keep up with the times.

The public accounts committee has already devoted several meetings to program evaluation. The Auditor General of Canada, for his part, devoted chapters 8, 9 and 10 of his 1993 report to program evaluation, and made the following comment again in 1993, and I quote: "Our audit found that the story of program evaluation in the Government of Canada is one of high expectations and great potential that have been only partly fulfilled. Cabinet has been paying sustained attention to program evaluation data over the last ten years".

(1755)

But this interest was given little more than lip service, really. The sixth report of the public accounts committee, tabled on November 21, reiterated the relevance of program evaluation. The auditor general indicated that most of the programs that were evaluated were not high expenditure programs.

In 1991-92, the evaluation of programs with budgets over \$1 billion, that is to say 16 programs totalling \$124.5 billion, showed that only two of these had undergone a comprehensive evaluation; the rest were only partially covered, if at all. In

1991-1992, twenty-four per cent of government's program expenditures were evaluated. That same year, 480 of the completed evaluations covered programs with expenditures of \$250 million or less, as compared to 18 in the over \$250 million category.

There is therefore a need to eliminate this kind of laissez-faire in government with respect to evaluating mostly low expenditure programs. That is why I agree with paragraph 8(2) of Bill C-289, which states that the Auditor General of Canada may review any program evaluation and submit a report on it to the House of Commons in the case of a program evaluation covering a statutory program with expenditures of \$250 million or more each year.

I also support this bill because it is directly based on the main recommendations of the sixth report of the public accounts committee, which I signed last November.

This legislation would establish an objective decision making process regarding the continuation or the elimination of government programs, and it would help reduce the arbitrary and political nature of the decisions made. Having better documented and more objective decisions would give more weight to the role of managers and members of Parliament. An improved program evaluation process would result in a more efficient control of costs, given that the current deficit exceeds \$37 billion for that the accumulated debt is close to \$550 billion.

As the hon. member St. Albert pointed out, program evaluation is a modern day management tool. In this era of electronic highway and state of the art technology, why would the government keep ignoring the value of cost benefit analysis and objective criteria on which to base its decisions, and instead follow trends, rely on a gut feeling, or base these decisions on political or partisan considerations?

Program evaluation is definitely a protection against dramatic cost increases which become unmanageable over time. I should add that this explosion of costs which eventually become uncontrollable accurately reflects the Liberal Party saga of the last 25 years.

Bill C-289 is a rare attempt by this Parliament to get us out of the vicious circle of expenditures, debts and subsidies to friends of the party, in which the Liberals put this country two decades ago.

The purpose of this bill is to provide for the regular evaluation of government programs by a program evaluation process set by Treasury Board on a prescribed cycle. The President of the Treasury Board would determine the cycle for evaluating statutory programs. We could not agree more.

New programs would also be covered by this process within six months after the coming into force of an act authorizing a statutory program, the President of the Treasury Board shall, by order, prescribe the fiscal year as an initial evaluation year for the statutory program and prescribe the evaluation cycle for the statutory program. This whole process would tend to reduce the

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risk of arbitrary decisions, and we therefore support section 3 of the bill.

In concluding, I have two suggestions for the hon. member for St. Albert: first, in subsection 7(4), the hon. member suggests 150 days for completing the evaluation of a statutory program after the end of the evaluation year. I think 90 days would be more reasonable. This means that tabling in the House would come after 120 days, instead of 180 as the hon. member initially suggested.

Second, considering the strategic role played by the auditor general in program evaluation, I would suggest to the hon. member that the program evaluation report and the auditor general's report connected with the former be referred to the Public Accounts Committee instead of a committee designated by the House as provided under section 9.

(1800)

I endorse Bill C-289, and I urge the House to support this bill, so that the government will stop this debt spiral caused by unnecessary spending and programs that have outlived their usefulness.

[English]

**Mr. Ray Speaker (Lethbridge, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak in support of this very thoughtful and very important legislation. As my colleague, the member for St. Albert, stated in his remarks, the objective of Bill C-289 is to hold statutory spending to the same standards of accountability that Parliament currently applies to discretionary expenditures. That is a very noble and worthwhile cause to put forward in this assembly.

While time is limited, there are two points I want to make in these remarks. First, as statutory programs come to represent an ever-increasing amount or share of total government expenditures, the inability of Parliament to evaluate these programs effectively and objectively is making it more and more difficult for members of Parliament to hold governments accountable. For this reason there is a need to have a bill such as Bill C-289.

The second point is that the intense fiscal pressures brought about by decades of government over-spending not only make enhanced review and evaluation of statutory expenditures desirable, but certainly very essential at this point.

On the first point, I would like to remind the members of the House how our system of government is supposed to work. Under the Constitution as members of Parliament we have been granted three very important powers. First, we must decide how much government will be permitted to spend. Second, we must decide how the government will spend it. Third, we have an

obligation to hold the government accountable for those expenditures.

The objective of the legislation is to bolster and to enhance the third of these three parliamentary powers that are given to us as members of Parliament. Specifically, it asks that statutory programs be subject to the same periodic program evaluations that are presently applied to non-statutory programs.

These program evaluations seek to answer four very fundamental questions. First, is the program relevant? Second, is the program effective in meeting its objectives? Third, is the program being delivered effectively and efficiently? Fourth, can the purpose of the program be fulfilled through a variety of different means?

At present no such reviews are conducted for statutory items. When weighing the merits of extending program evaluations to cover this area, we must consider the following: This year, fiscal year 1995-96, the Government of Canada will spend some \$164 billion dollars. Of this only \$48 billion will be subject to parliamentary review. That means that some 71 per cent, or the remaining \$116 billion of our tax dollars will be spent automatically without any attempt to evaluate those programs success. That is just not accountability. That has to change. That is the main purpose of Bill C-289.

Given the size of these annual expenditures, it seem rather ludicrous that members of the House would not be provided with the information to determine whether such programs are effective in meeting their objectives. It is hard to believe that members would have no way of determining whether there is a better way to do things. Yet that is the current state of affairs. Members do not have the information they need to evaluate the effectiveness of statutory programs.

(1805)

This brings me to my second point. The federal government is presently facing what amounts to a fiscal crisis. It finds itself under immense pressure to reduce government expenditures. Even after making significant cuts to discretionary expenditures in its last budget, it will still have a deficit of \$25 billion in the year 1997.

Simple arithmetic tells us that if the government has any hope of achieving a balanced budget then the lion's share of the cuts will have to be made in the area of statutory expenditures. Discretionary programs have already been cut or pared to the bone. The only sizeable pool of money left is in the area of statutory programs and programs such as old age assistance.

That is why Bill C-289, which would subject the statutory programs to periodic review and evaluation, is so critical. In the coming years, members of Parliament will be called on to make more difficult and tough decisions than previous Parliaments have had to make. We will have no choice but to reduce or even

eliminate benefits which millions of Canadians consider to be virtual birthrights.

If we as parliamentarians are to fulfil that task in a responsible manner then we will need the information to make intelligent decisions. At present this information does not exist. Bill C-289 seeks to fill this information gap.

In conclusion, Bill C-289 is valuable legislation which would address two fundamental concerns. First, by improving the scrutiny of statutory expenditures, it would begin to put control of the government purse back in the hands of Parliament.

Second, the information obtained from these evaluations and reviews would provide members with the information they need to make intelligent spending decisions. At a time when every government program is being evaluated, when the most sacred of government cows is being reconsidered and when every dollar is now subject to careful scrutiny by the budget cutters, legislation like Bill C-289 is not merely desirable but is most essential.

**Mr. Stephen Harper (Calgary West, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I am rising, along with the previous speaker from Lethbridge, to support Bill C-289. In doing so, I want to thank the hon. member for St. Albert for having brought the bill to the House. It is one of a series of bills he has brought forward to improve the financial accountability of Parliament.

[Translation]

I would also like to thank the hon. member for La Prairie for his support. He gives his party the kind of financial perspective we need in this House. As chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, he helps the cause of public finances in Canada.

[English]

In addressing the bill I would really like to ask a question. Do we do anything here other than provide the veneer of democratic decision making to what goes on in the massive leviathan we call the Government of Canada?

Historically our system did not begin in Parliament. It began with the crown. The crown would periodically call together Parliament in order to get Parliament's input into important decisions. The crown would do that because it needed tax dollars and felt that a process of consultation with both the Lords and the Commons would aid in getting their consent to raise tax dollars in the general governance of the country.

(1810)

As British history unfolded, Parliament asserted more and more its rights, not only to give its approval and its input, but to control the entire process: to control the agenda, to select ministers, to ultimately provide responsible government and democratic control over the affairs of the crown.

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The funny thing about this is that as time went on the process almost reversed itself. Gradually Parliament pushed the crown out as the governing force in British democratic countries. As soon as that happened, the government increasingly became a force very much independent of Parliament, until it is as we have it today, where estimates are presented in the hundreds of billions of dollars, approved by Parliament without serious scrutiny, almost on a ritualistic basis. We saw that here last week.

Auditors General have pointed out on many occasions, and in many different ways, that Parliament has lost control of the estimate process. The question will increasingly arise, particularly as we go through this period of governments cutting spending, cutting favours and the goodies which they give to the population, as to why people believe that this process protects their interests, protects their tax dollars and protects their financial interests.

We are talking about the estimates and a bill to expand the scrutiny of Parliament beyond the estimates. Previous to getting involved in politics I spent some time as a student and as a professional studying the history of federal government spending.

One of the things that really strikes us when we look at what has occurred since the second world war is the relative decline in non-statutory spending as a proportion of the total and the increase in statutory programs as the significant element in federal government spending. Thirty years ago about one-third of all spending was of a statutory nature. Today it is well over two-thirds, as previous speakers have pointed out. That is not simply due to the increase in our debt and the statutory interest payments, it is also due to the focus which we increasingly have on a small number of statutory programs, mainly in the area of social spending.

It is unbelievable to realize that this portion of spending is not at all controlled by the estimate process. It is only mentioned in the estimates. Information is provided, but it is not controlled at all. In fact, there is no formal review mechanism for Parliament on this 70 per cent of spending.

The parliamentary secretary commented, as he has before, on the question of the cost effectiveness of these cost control measures. I find it distressing that the question of cost effectiveness only seems to come up on cost control measures and never on the actual spending programs in the first place.

The hon. member for St. Albert gave us the example of the problem with the disability aspects of the Canada pension plan, which is a statutory program. I know in my own riding that we have recently dealt with cases where there are serious problems in program administration and in the attendant conduct and administration of the program. However, because it is a statu-

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tory program there is no regular review conducted through the parliamentary process.

The parliamentary secretary also mentioned the resources that it might tie up to review these programs. One fact that needs to be mentioned is that we are talking about a large number of dollars but a small number of programs. There are 11 major statutory programs. There are payments under the Farm Income Protection Act. There are payments under the International Financial Organizations Act.

(1815)

There is the public debt charge program. There is the fiscal transfer program to the provinces. There are military pensions in the Department of National Defence; payments to the provinces for health and medical care; payments to the provinces for CAP, the Canada assistance plan; the old age security program; grants to municipalities and other authorities under the real property program of the Department of Public Works; post-secondary education payments; and payments to railway companies by the National Transportation Agency under the Western Grain Transportation Act.

These 11 programs account for 97 per cent of all statutory spending. In effect they account for over two-thirds of all federal government spending. They are the 11 programs for which the bill suggests there should be a mechanism to review on an ongoing basis.

It is a new way. It is a suggestion to deal with what are some fairly obvious difficulties. I hope no one in his right mind, even in the government, would hold up the way we have conducted the public finances of the country in the last generation as a proper way to do business.

We know from our background, wherever we came from, that we cannot run the Government of Canada as a committee of 295 people. We know generally what happens when committees try to run anything, but especially a committee of 295 people.

The bill suggests that Parliament use its authority, rather than just have vague political debates and vague political reviews, to set up a formal mechanism that properly evaluates the non-political aspects of major spending and that Parliament be provided with a formal way of reviewing the technical aspects. The inevitable political debates will accompany that.

I cannot see how that will use a lot of resources. I cannot see how it can possibly be ineffective in some kind of cost way. It would seem to me it is just a logical development now that the major programs occupy such a large percentage of our spending.

I know the hon. member for St. Albert is aware that adopting a bill such as this one would plug a very small hole in our boat. We have lots of holes. It is safe to say that we are not only taking in a lot of water. Our boat has been sitting at the bottom of the ocean for some time.

Maybe a bill like this one and thinking a little more constructively and innovatively in this direction would help us eventually construct the giant crane we will need to pull the financial boat up from the bottom of the ocean and get it back to the surface where it needs to be.

**Mrs. Jan Brown (Calgary Southeast, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to participate in the debate from the perspective of a member of the House who is here to represent the constituents of Calgary Southeast.

I know why I came to Parliament. I came here to look for accountability. I came here to look for responsibility. I came here to make a difference. Those elements of my life are extremely important to me.

As I listened to my colleagues tonight I was absolutely astounded and amazed to realize how very little a part I can play in actually touching the heartbeat of government when I will not be able to make a difference in 71 per cent of its program spending.

This was a tremendous surprise to me and I guess I would have to say a major disappointment. In everything I do as I represent constituents of Calgary Southeast I look at the questions that were asked by my colleague from St. Albert. Is what I am doing relevant? That would apply to anything I would be reviewing here. Certainly when I look at applications that come from the human resources department for grants and applications to help employment opportunities, I always ask a question of the submission: Is it relevant?

(1820)

What kind of effect will that relevance have not only on the constituents I represent but on all Canadians? I get all kinds of letters as do all members from constituents who are extremely frustrated with the spending practices not only of the government but governments of the past. If it does not pass the test of relevancy then I have to ask the question: Why not? What can we do to make it better? What can we do to fix it?

When looking at effectiveness and meeting its objectives I have to ask: Are the objectives even established? I cannot say the number of times I have looked at projects or proposals and there has been no long range planning.

The minister of defence has been challenged many times in the last month on looking at meeting objectives and having objectives for spending. They have been missing. I was absolutely amazed and appalled that although short term goals were

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laid out in the budget that were to be met, the long range goal must have been missing. All kinds of changes to the budget came after the fact.

The hon. Minister of Canadian Heritage has been challenged a number of times on changes made to budget statements and to program estimates. If we are not effective in establishing objectives, how can we possibly hope to meet them if they are missing from the documentation?

I came here to vote on absolutely everything. On any piece of legislation that came before the House I wanted to give expression to what I felt was important. It disturbs me when 71 per cent of the decisions we make in the House of Commons are non-votable items. Canadians must be absolutely appalled to be hearing that tonight. I certainly am stunned to hear of that kind of spending without any accountability to anybody.

Where is the openness? Where is the effectiveness of the money I am giving to the government through my tax dollars? Where is the accountability?

Another question I often put when I receive requests for assistance is: Is the delivery efficient? If it is not, how can we continue to go through the process over and over again of giving money to the same kinds of programs without even looking at the efficiencies?

Once again we come back to objectives. Are their objectives in place? Are those objectives being met? In the corporate sector everybody always evaluates what they do. Business would not survive if it did not have that part of the expenditure process at the end of every year where an evaluation based on delivery is actually done.

My husband works in the corporate sector. Believe me, he is accountable to his managers and they in turn are accountable to their superiors to look at efficient and effective delivery of product. If that does not happen, they are out of business.

Then we come to the final question: Is there a better way? My colleagues from St. Albert in all good faith brought forward a non-votable bill. This is the place for rational and reasoned debate. This is where we should be able to talk about the issues of the day, to have a broad discussion with everyone participating.

What do we have? We have a handful of people standing in the House tonight talking about a major concern for Canadians: accountability in terms of how we spend money. It is disappointing to hear that we are doing well enough and that we can defend the status quo because we truly are into new times that demand a different point of view, a different way of doing business. If we undertake to look at it honestly and directly from a different point of view, we will be able to hold government accountable. We as parliamentarians will be able to stand in front of our constituents and say that we made a difference in the 35th Parliament.

(1825)

**The Deputy Speaker:** There being no further members rising to debate the bill and it not being designated as a votable item, the time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired and the bill is dropped from the Order Paper.

[*Translation*]

Pursuant to order made earlier today, the House will now proceed to a special debate.

\* \* \*

[*English*]

**PEACEKEEPING**

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

That this House, in light of the UN Security Council consideration of renewed mandates for UN forces in the former Yugoslavia, take note of the rotation of Canadian forces serving with UNPROFOR in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity this evening to have a debate before the government decides on yet another difficult position for Canada in terms of the deployment of its troops in the former Yugoslavia.

[*Translation*]

I would like to begin by drawing to the attention of the House the efforts of the international community to reach a diplomatic settlement of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia. The world community has made significant efforts to resolve the conflict in the Balkans and has used various means to do so, including crisis diplomacy, the imposition of sanctions, the establishment of prohibited air zones and, of course, the deployment of UNPROFOR.

[*English*]

Currently UNPROFOR is made up of 38 national contingents or specialized units, totalling about 39,000 military personnel. There are about 5,300 civilians also assigned to the particular force, making it the largest peacekeeping mission ever put together by the United Nations. Eleven NATO countries are providing about 44 per cent of the total personnel and Canada is foremost among those countries.

UNPROFOR was created in February 1992 specifically to monitor the ceasefire between the Croatian and Krajina-Serb forces, to supervise this demilitarized UN protected area, and to try to bring some kind of semblance of normal life back to the people in the region.

As the situation deteriorated to the south in Bosnia-Herzegovina in September 1992, UNPROFOR's mandate was expanded to provide security for humanitarian relief efforts in the region. As we know, an UNPROFOR element was deployed to the

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former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to help deter possible aggression.

In the brief time I have this evening I want to talk about the situation in Croatia because it is becoming much more relevant to Canada and the Canadian position in the former Yugoslavia.

The conflict between Croatia and the Krajina-Serbs, as I said, has been at an impasse since 1992. At the root of the impasse is Croatia's determination to regain sovereignty over about 30 per cent of the territory held by the Krajina-Serbs who are reticent to disarm in the process.

Talks have been held under the auspices of the international conference on the former Yugoslavia in November 1993. A three-part strategy was set out to help resolve the problem.

[Translation]

First, a ceasefire had to be established, then discussions held on economic issues and, finally, agreement reached on a form of political reconciliation. This strategy permitted some progress.

In December 1993, the Croatian government and representatives of the Serbs in the area reached an agreement on setting up a series of ceasefires. At the end of March 1994, a general ceasefire agreement had been signed between the Croatian government and the Krajina-Serb authorities. UNPROFOR succeeded in making sure the agreement held, one of its various achievements in Croatia.

(1830)

At the same time, this agreement caused considerable concern among the Croatian population. These people were afraid they would be victims of a situation like that persisting in Cyprus and were concerned that the country would be permanently divided by UNPROFOR.

[English]

Nonetheless, the general ceasefire did raise expectations that an economic agreement and ultimately a political settlement were within reach. Efforts to reach a lasting settlement in Croatia were dealt a shocking blow on January 12, 1995 when the Croatian president, Dr. Franjo Tudjman, informed the UN secretary-general that his government would not renew the mandate of UNPROFOR in Croatia beyond March 31.

President Tudjman said that Croatia's experience over the past two years had led him to conclude: "Although UNPROFOR has played an important role in stopping violence and major conflicts in Croatia, it is an indisputable fact that the present character of the UNPROFOR mission does not provide conditions necessary for establishing lasting peace and order in the republic of Croatia".

[Translation]

Before looking at the events in Croatia and at the United Nations following the dramatic statement by Mr. Tudjman, I would like to consider the diplomatic situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The efforts that went into resolving the conflict there paralleled the war itself.

At the start of 1994, Muslims and Croats in Bosnia reached an agreement resulting in a ceasefire and constituting a major step in establishing a federation encompassing the two groups.

[English]

This ceasefire continues to hold. It is monitored by UNPROFOR. In central Bosnia, CANBAT 2 has tasks related to monitoring this ceasefire. Of course we have our troops also in the Krajina region, CANBAT 1. We also have a group largely in the service area located in Split.

This three-part conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina has been stabilized to some degree. The international community has turned its attention to finding a solution to the conflict between the Bosnian Muslims and the Bosnian Serbs.

As we know, to inject more life into this the contact group was established with Great Britain, France, the European Union, the United States and the Russian federation in April 1994. This group has worked particularly diligently in trying to get a solution.

Its first proposition was to redraw the map in a post-conflict Bosnia whereby the Bosnian Muslims and Croats would receive about 51 per cent of the territory and the Bosnian Serbs about 49 per cent. The parties were also offered a number of incentives and disincentives to encourage their acceptance of the new plan.

Like previous international offers, the plan was rejected in a Bosnian-Serb referendum by more than 90 per cent of the voters. Despite these setbacks, the contact group and the warring parties have continued.

There was another development recently, before the year end. Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter met with officials in both Sarajevo and Pale and succeeded in negotiating an agreement for a countrywide ceasefire in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the opening of negotiations for an end to hostilities by January 1, 1995.

On December 31, 1994 the Government of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Bosnian Serbs signed a cessation of hostilities agreement to take effect along the lines of confrontation for a four month period ending in April 1995.

This agreement is being supervised and monitored by UNPROFOR, including our troops. The agreement calls for a separation of the forces, full freedom of movement, the opening of the Sarajevo airport, restoration of utilities, exchanges of prisoners of war and the withdrawal of all foreign troops.

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Throughout the first two months of 1995 the agreement held with only minor violations. By late February violations had increased and most observers do not expect a ceasefire to last beyond the next few weeks. We hope that common ground may be found between the parties whereby an agreement may be extended. One can only hope that these negotiations begin very quickly.

On the current diplomatic situation on the UN mandate, it is useful to set the tone. This is the backdrop by which we will perhaps redeploy our troops starting next week.

(1835)

President Tudjman, after considerable pressure, very courageously decided to re-evaluate his original thinking. He agreed to a continuation of an albeit smaller UN reformulated presence, a different kind of mandate. It is more along the traditional peacekeeping lines that Canada participated in during our years in Cyprus whereby we work the line between two hostile factions.

President Tudjman envisages a new independent force to be established. This new mission should help to implement the ceasefire agreement and it should assist in the implementation of the economic agreement, the one I mentioned earlier. It should also put in place elements of the existing UN peacekeeping plan for Croatia. That continues to be accepted by both parties, including the maintenance of UN presence on international borders as well as confidence building and humanitarian measures such as assistance to refugees and displaced persons, protection of ethnic minorities, mine clearance, convoy assistance and the like.

As the current UNPROFOR mandate expires in two days, the UN must reach some kind of agreement on the renewal of its presence. The United Nations is now working very closely with all the parties involved to reach a workable agreement on this continued UN presence. Canada has been a party to many of these discussions.

The UN secretary-general has proposed three distinct missions in the region to meet the unique circumstances in Croatia, Bosnia and the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia.

Canada's position is that we say to Canadians we know their feelings of pride in Canada in trying to assist in this very difficult situation in the heart of Europe. Canadians have been quite happy to do their part with their continued presence in both Croatia and Bosnia. We also understand that Canadians are becoming a little bit concerned that this deployment not be open ended and that we not continue ad infinitum.

I think we were in Cyprus for about 29 years. We do not plan to be in Bosnia and Croatia for 29 years. We on the government's part are obviously re-evaluating our commitment to the region.

We do not want to walk out on our allies, on the UN. We have all been in this together. We believe there can be a negotiated settlement.

From a Canadian point of view, we hope that we can start to reduce our presence in the region somewhat but at the same time try to continue the good work we have been involved in. In other words, we believe that perhaps with a reformulated mandate in Croatia and a heightened Canadian presence there, we may be able to more effectively contribute in that area. That would be for the UN to decide whether or not it wants us to continue in both theatres, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia, or whether or not it wants us to concentrate our efforts in Croatia.

These are the questions with which we are grappling at this time. Canada certainly is willing to continue to do its part in the region. We feel it is incumbent upon the government to listen to the views of members of Parliament.

As I said, two battalions of the Royal 22nd Regiment are ready to deploy. We have about 2,100 people in Bosnia-Herzegovina and in Croatia. We have another 400 to 500 in the area generally, the UN observers, the people with Operation Sharp Guard on our ships, and the people who have been involved in the airlift operation of supplies to Sarajevo. We have quite a commitment in the region.

Before I conclude, I want to underscore Canada's willingness to be flexible in helping the UN address the concerns. I also want to underscore the fact that Canada's commitment in this particular operation cannot last indefinitely.

(1840)

We believe Canadians want us to review our participation. They welcome the views of parliamentarians to see whether we should continue with this particular rotation for another six months and perhaps talk about scaling down in the fall after we have further discussions. Perhaps the Croatian force itself, the idea of it, will become a bit more mature and well defined.

Perhaps the best posture for us to take is to continue with this rotation. As I said in the House the other day, we do have flexibility. We could decide not to rotate. We could keep some of our troops there for a number of weeks while alternate arrangements are made. Obviously, getting so close to the wire with a number of scenarios unfolding, especially with the new force in Croatia, we feel that may be very difficult to do from the point of view of the UN. We do not want to let the UN down.

However, we do believe we are coming very close to the point when Canada has to make some significant changes in its commitment in the region. We welcome any ideas the UN may have for continued Canadian presence which will demonstrate to Canadians that we are just not there indefinitely performing the same valuable functions, but that we are making progress

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toward a peaceful settlement and that Canadian participation is helping to move in that direction.

I will be very interested to hear the views of members opposite. Unfortunately I will not be able to stay for the entire debate. My parliamentary secretary is here, as well as the Parliamentary Secretary for the Minister of Foreign Affairs, who will be taking notes and taking part in the debate.

I want to assure hon. members that once we have the views of the members this evening, they certainly will be taken into account. The government will address the views expressed in the debate tomorrow morning. We will have something more to say on the matter of the deployment at some point tomorrow.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Leader of the Opposition, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I think that we can all congratulate ourselves for the fine job our Canadian soldiers did in Bosnia and Croatia.

Having said this, I do not think we can be so proud of what the Canadian government did and above all of what it failed to do during these peacekeeping missions, since the situation is far from rosy in Bosnia and Croatia as the UN's mandate expires and as we draw near to the end of a very important ceasefire in Bosnia.

On the diplomatic level, the situation is at a standstill, the stalemate remains to be broken and the efforts of the contact group have been relatively unfruitful. Therefore, compared with last year, it is a dead-end situation which has dragged on. There is not even a hope on the horizon of resolving it peacefully.

On the military level, the situation is hardly any better, it is even worse than it has ever been and, recently, the situation rapidly deteriorated once again. We know that over the past four days or so, there have been no fewer than a dozen confrontations in Bosnia, mostly orchestrated by the Bosnian government. It is attacking strategic positions in the hopes of gaining more leverage in negotiations, and of course the Serbs are retaliating. There have been 12 to 14 battles over the past four days.

The Serbs, quite recently by the way, have opened up artillery fire on four positions in protected areas, in contravention of all of the existing agreements. Last Sunday, Bosnian Serbs called for a general mobilization, which will certainly not relieve any tension in the area. At the same time, the new general of UNPROFOR, Rupert Smith, who is from Britain, threatened air strikes against Serb positions if they shell neutral zones. The Serbs issued a reply, of course: they would consider all peacekeepers stationed there as enemies if NATO were to attack their positions.

(1845)

We know that the Serbs are serious when they make threats of this kind, since they took and held hostages, around fifty Canadian peacekeepers, the last time we used air strikes.

In reality, we are faced with, on the one hand, the Serbs, who have decided to wage a war of attrition, mostly against peacekeeping missions. The Serbs know that we are there temporarily, that it is costing us, that public support for a peacekeeping presence in the former Yugoslavia may wane, that one day we will have to leave, and that, from that moment on, they will have the Bosnians' blood. They, who have been fighting for centuries, know that they have all the time in the world and that it is essentially only a matter of time.

So they say let the hands of time keep on turning, in the end, it is the Serbs who will prevail. After spending so much money, unfortunately also after wasting so many human lives, the Allied Forces of the UN will have to withdraw, probably in humiliation, and leave the area for the Serbs' taking. Their calculation is quite obvious. They do not negotiate or they negotiate only when threatened by an immediate air strike. As soon as the heat is off, before the coalition can regroup, they return to their former positions, they violate ceasefires, they attack protected zones. It is an never-ending cat and mouse game.

As for the Croats, now that the mandate is about to expire, they have all kinds of demands: that the mandate be redefined; that units be split up—apparently, the UN is about to agree to this demand—so that, instead of a single UN force, there would be three contingents, one in Macedonia, one in Bosnia and one in Croatia, under a diversified command which could be a UN general co-ordinating operations. But they also have demands regarding the contingents. Although we are currently unable to carry out the missions entrusted to us, although there are not enough troops to do all the tasks that are assigned, they want to reduce contingents from 12,000 to 5,000 troops. We are negotiating with people who need our presence to keep the peace, who need enough people to achieve the desired results.

All this after nearly two years of presence if not more and for us, Canadians, \$314 million in expenditures, 10 soldiers killed during operations, not to mention those who have recently committed suicide—we do not know too much about this, but we can assume that some suicides are linked to the operations conducted over there or feared by those who do not want to go.

This is the context in which the government is inviting the opposition parties to participate in a debate, but a debate on what? The motion calls for the House to take note of the April rotation of Canadian forces. What does that mean? Does it mean that it has already been decided that there will be a rotation? Will the government claim today that no decision had been made

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yet? Does this mean that tomorrow night, the government could move to replace 1,600 troops, two 800 member contingents, and deal with aircraft, logistics, transportation, options? Are they trying to tell us that no decision has been made yet?

The very wording of the motion shows that I am right. They are laughing at Parliament today. They are laughing at us.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Bouchard:** A debate on what? What kind of debate is this? How can we seriously debate this issue, when the government has not even taken stock of the situation over there, when there is no assessment, no information? All that we know, we have learned from reading the papers. The government never provided us with any significant, specific and clear information on anything that went on over there. It never told us how the operations were evaluated, or what it was prognosticating. We were never told whether our troops were there for the duration or only a certain length of time, and in which case, how long that would be. We know nothing. We are kept in the dark.

We are expected to drink in the words of the Minister of National Defence and take leaps of faith, sign blank cheques and continue to send troops who operate in total frustration over there, not knowing what their mandate is, not being authorized by military authorities to conduct the operations that need to be conducted. They are helpless witnesses to revolting situations: children being tortured and killed, people being blown to pieces, civilians becoming live targets for blind fire from the hills. We are despatching our troops under very poor conditions. Are they there for the duration and under what conditions?

(1850)

I think that the position the government finds itself today is such that it does not have much of a choice. The only argument it has left is to say: "We do not have any choice; we have to maintain our presence over there". The worst of it is that they are right: we do not have a choice.

We do not have a choice because, by its failure to act, its negligence and its superficial commitments, the government has put itself in such a position that we do not have any choice any more. A government or state that bases its policies on arguments like: "We do not have a choice" is in big trouble.

I think that this is the kind of action that has to be decided as a matter of choice, deliberately, for humanitarian reasons, on compassionate grounds, as a show of solidarity. In this case, the decision is based on an absence of policy. This government does not have a policy.

I dare anyone to get a serious response from government to the questions: what is Canada's policy regarding peacekeeping missions, what are the guiding principles, on what basis are decisions made regarding these operations? These questions will remain unanswered because they do not know.

We know for a fact that the government, through its members on the foreign affairs committee which reviewed Canada's foreign policy, agreed with the opposition that some criteria and standards were now required, and that we could no longer make individual commitments on a case-by-case basis in operations such as this one, where people die and where incredible amounts of money are spent in vain, without making a difference. The fact is that we did not make any progress whatsoever since last year. On the contrary, the issue is becoming more and more insoluble and it is increasingly obvious that we have reached a deadlock.

We wanted to get information from the government. We wanted the government to table these documents and set up a House committee, but all we got was an advance notice of a few hours yesterday. Indeed, yesterday afternoon we suddenly received notice of a debate on Bosnia and Croatia. Earlier today, we managed to get a one-hour briefing from defence officials who were very co-operative in answering our questions. However, we did not get the necessary files, the basic information required.

If the government is serious about this issue, it should allow a House committee to review the situation and hear witnesses, and it should also make these documents available. If we have to respect parliamentary secrecy, if the members of such a committee have to work in secrecy, they will do it. We are all responsible people, whether we belong to the Reform Party, the Bloc Québécois or the Liberal Party. We could conduct an in-depth review of the situation in Bosnia and Croatia, because right now we do not know what is going on.

Because the government let the events dictate its policy, we do have to remain there, since nothing was solved and the situation is still the same. From a humanitarian point of view, we are well aware that if, under the current conditions, UN troops were to withdraw, including the Canadian peacekeepers, the whole Sarajevo population could die of hunger.

All the food that enters the city is airlifted by UN forces, along with water, gas, medication and so on. People barely survive in extremely harsh conditions and almost unacceptable sanitary conditions, but they do survive thanks to the humanitarian assistance provided by peacekeeping forces in Bosnia.

We are well aware that the UN mission in Bosnia is essentially humanitarian in nature. It is a military one in Croatia, since there is a buffer zone that keeps the factions apart with, in the

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middle, the UN forces. But in the case of Bosnia, it is far more than that. It is humanitarian. It is a matter of helping people to survive.

So can we just decide to withdraw? Of course not. We know perfectly well we cannot. The government knew this. The government thought that by starting this debate, it would necessarily get the support of the opposition.

However, although we cannot do otherwise, we are aware that the government has failed in several respects, in that it does not put its cards on the table and give us a chance to make informed decisions. In a democracy, people want to make informed decisions. They want to know why, because they want to choose the best option. In this case, we have no option.

From the military point of view, we know what would happen if we left right away. We know that in Croatia, it would be a signal for all-out war. People are just waiting for a chance to attack each other. And of course in Bosnia, the Serbs would try, and they would probably succeed in settling their differences with the Bosnians, in ways we can well imagine.

(1855)

Without the presence of tv cameras and without UN forces, we can imagine the kind of atrocities that would take place. It would be total war, a war that would not be contained, that would spread to the Balkan powder keg towards Greece. We know that the Greeks sympathize with the Serbs and have done so for centuries, and that the Serbs might depend on the support that the Greeks might be tempted to give them. The Turks support the Bosnians.

Finally, there are any number of reasons why we would see an incredible explosion of hostilities with all the consequences this might have for relations between the major powers. What would be the position of the Soviet Union if there was an outbreak of armed conflict of this magnitude? We can assume this would make international tensions even worse tense. In other words, we are trapped.

What we would like to see is for the government to commit itself, with the help of the opposition who would be glad to oblige, to identifying certain criteria before getting into this kind of trap, and second, to setting conditions for the renewal of the mandate. I think the government should set certain conditions. It has already said that it would not agree to have the arms embargo withdrawn. I think the government has already adopted this as its policy, and we support that policy. I think one of the conditions would have to be that the embargo must be maintained, because on the American side, there is a strong movement in favour of lifting the embargo.

Second, it must ensure that ceasefires will last. Ceasefires tend to have a very short life expectancy in that part of the world. There have been dozens and dozens of cease-fire violations. We

must be able to set certain conditions. The UN will have to agree to identify more specific mandates. We must have a better idea of what we are going to do. To what extent can we reciprocate and in what way?

We have to know more about this, especially in connection with air strikes. For instance, does General Smith have the authority to carry out the threat he made recently without any input from Canada? Can they go ahead with air strikes without consulting the Canadian government? The answer would seem to be yes, in certain instances. It appears that, for reasons of defence, for example, General Smith is at liberty to launch air strikes. This is less clear in the case of offensive action, in which Canada apparently has some say, if only for reasons of defence, which we understand, in order to protect the lives of the peacekeeping force.

This means that things can escalate. We know very well how the Serbs will react to air raids on their positions. It is the people in the area who will pay. Who is going to be there? Our soldiers. There is also the whole question of morale in the Canadian armed forces as a backdrop. We will talk about this again in the House.

It seems to me the Canadian forces are going through a crisis. It seems to me that these peace missions have severely taxed their ability to meet these challenges. We might be tempted to think that, for the military, these missions are exotic tours of duty in faraway lands. Some might think that since apparently they do not have to engage the enemy, it is not an unpleasant business. We realize, however, that these missions are very hard and, perhaps, harder psychologically than traditional missions, because there is no clear objective, because these people often do not know why they are there and because they must remain impassive in the face of totally incomprehensible, uncivilized and unacceptable behaviour.

I think the Minister of National Defence should say more in this respect to the House. I am sure he has reports on morale in the Canadian forces, and I believe it is in the interest of all of us in this House to be informed of the constraints and of the actions that need to be taken in this area.

Therefore, the opposition's response, the one the government expected, the one it forces us to give, is yes. A very conditional yes. A yes that comes with lots of questions and doubts. Not a very happy yes.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

(1900)

[English]

**Mr. Jack Frazer (Saanich—Gulf Islands, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, at the outset I would like to advise you we will be splitting our times—

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**The Deputy Speaker:** There seems to be confusion about that. After the first three members, no member can speak for more than 10 minutes and so we will not have the dividing of time. This member has 20 minutes.

**Mr. Frazer:** Mr. Speaker, I hate to start on a complaining note, but I feel I must. The timing of this debate is the one I would like to address. I would much rather have risen to my feet to discuss our commitment to Bosnia and Croatia in December or I suppose we could have accepted January.

To be rising two days before the commitment is to come to an end seems to me to be very late in the game. Moreover, until very late this afternoon there has been no consultation whatsoever or briefings presented by the government. This seems to be a very dramatic oversight on the part of the government.

I think that the opposition parties, while we represent different philosophies, are certainly also trying to represent Canadians and present their views in this House.

It strikes me that we have two committees, the Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs and on foreign affairs, both of which would be appropriate forums to have discussed the possibilities of extension, the difficulties and the ramifications of extending the mandate in Bosnia.

We have heard overtures that this might happen, but as yet it has not. I think it is a dramatic oversight on the part of the government. I request very strongly it reconsider this and in future involve the opposition parties more deeply in this type of negotiation.

To move into the situation, the background on Croatia is that it is a true peacekeeping operation as the definition goes. It is basically a separation zone which keeps antagonists apart. Once again I would like to pay tribute to our troops not only in Croatia but in Bosnia. They have done superb work and unquestionably are, if not the most professional, among the most professional who are performing the duty in the UN mandate.

Bosnia is a totally different mandate because, to use the official term, it is humanitarian assistance. It is to try to separate three different groups of people who are rather antagonistic toward each other. They are again doing very good work under extremely difficult conditions that have really constrained their activities to a tremendous degree.

By virtue of their flexibility, their professionalism, they have managed to create homogeneous or friendly situations—friendly is probably going too far—but acceptable situations in areas by interceding on a personal level with the local leaders. By showing without any question they are totally unbiased, that they have no favouritism, they have performed very well.

It could be fairly safely said that Canada and perhaps one or two other nations are the only ones that can make the claim of being completely and totally unbiased.

The problem is there have been many violations of agreements. We have seen rapes, we have seen murders, we have seen atrocities that are unspeakable. These are conducted by people who are committed to hate each other. It seems such a shame. It is such a beautiful country and there is so much prospect for it to prosper. Unhappily, it is caught up in what is truly a war.

We have seen hostages taken. This comes about as a result normally of NATO exerting influence to try to coerce or force people to abide by agreements that they have made but choose not to abide by.

(1905 )

Canadians I think are in a particularly vulnerable position in this case because we are the only ones, to my knowledge, who are actually occupying positions in Serb held territory. The other UN forces are not so deployed.

As a result, if the UN calls on NATO air support to achieve a change of heart on the part of Serb aggression, the Serbs will in all likelihood do as they have done before and they will take Canadian hostages. This has happened twice now and I think it is pipe smoking opium if we do not think that it will happen again if the situation arises.

UN patrols have been fired on in both Bosnia and Croatia. In Croatia at New Year's two of our Canadian UN peacekeepers were wounded and it was only by some extraordinary effort on the part of one of them and good hospital facilities that resulted in no Canadian fatalities in this instance.

There were a total of nine soldiers killed in the UN commitment in the former Yugoslavia. I think it is likely that if the situation continues, and it does appear to be heating up, we could very well be in danger of having even more casualties.

We have seen the lifeline of Bosnia put in extreme danger or even cut off completely. The Sarajevo airport was closed for an extensive time. As recently as a couple of days ago UN aeroplanes were being shot up as they went in and out of the airport. This impacts of course on the ability of the UN and UNPROFOR to perform the duties they are there for which is to provide humanitarian assistance by delivering supplies to the people concerned.

The problem is that there does not seem to be any particular desire on the part of the antagonists there to abide by agreements that they have made. We have seen aggression in the form of UN declared safe zones which are totally ignored and in fact attacked in dramatic fashion by the opposing forces, particularly the Serbs in this case.

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It appears that the UN really is a toothless monster. It makes agreements, gets concurrence in those and then the antagonists decide which one they are going to adhere to. As I mentioned before, we have seen atrocities committed and even now we are seeing more battles between the ethnic groups in the area.

As far as any cease fire agreement, and we are now in an realm where a cease fire was declared some time ago, there is no cease fire because as the hon. leader of the official opposition has said, in the past four days I believe there have been 14 different violations recorded. As I understand from the briefing we were given an hour ago, these are relatively major incidents that are recorded because the sniper who shoots at an individual in Sarajevo is not considered to be a reportable incident. I am told that on average there are between 80 and 200 incidents reported daily. That adds up to a pretty hot war situation.

All this came about because of mandate deficiencies. First, we did not have agreement from all parties concerned to involve ourselves or the UN in the area. We decided to impose ourselves there and they said: "You are here but we did not agree to you being here". There is no indication that they have changed their mind on that at all. They will go along with things they agree with, but the instant that it does not suit their purpose they go back to doing what they want to do. There is without question a lack of desire to achieve a peaceful resolution.

I must say that if there were any sort of a light at the end of the tunnel, a view on the horizon, that there could be an accommodation which would last it would be a very different solution than we are facing.

We have seen that UN agreements are unenforceable. The UN makes an agreement, people come forward and sign off on them and then sometimes within hours or a few days the thing is violated and it is gone.

(1910)

It is patently obvious that despite the embargo arms are getting through. Word has it that the Bosnians are now armed to the extent that they feel relatively capable of operating on an even footing against the Serb forces. There is a lot of question as to the capability of the various forces, but it seems without any question that there is every likelihood that there will be what is referred to as a spring offensive. I sincerely hope this is not the case, but certainly every indication is that the war or the fighting in the area is becoming worse rather than tailing off.

I think there are some unique Canadian problems which should be discussed. I will start with equipment. The government and the chief of defence staff have said—the chief of course is required to say that—that the equipment in fact is functional and is adequate. I would call it obsolescent, if not obsolete. Certainly when we were on the ground in Bosnia and in Croatia, particularly in Croatia with the M-113 armoured per-

sonnel carriers, there was no question in the minds of the people who were using them that this was not a piece of kit that they really enjoyed. They are unreliable. The tracks broke regularly and they were not sufficiently armoured to do the job they were intended to do.

The solution to this of course was to add additional armour to them. The problem with adding additional armour is that it adds to the weight. Adding to the weight means that the drive train will be in trouble, the suspension will give up and the fuel consumption will rise tremendously. That is not an adequate solution.

The radios are vitally important in that situation, with observation posts and troops deployed in various areas; to be able to talk to the guy you want to talk to when you want to talk to him. We heard time and again from people that their radios were broken down. Everyone has become a fixer of communications equipment. That is unacceptable.

The flack jackets that our personnel wear there are cumbersome and uncomfortable. We saw in Croatia a new design which was being tried out, but the ones which were issued to our troops, in their opinion, are unacceptable.

We have a very poor night vision device available. That is absolutely unacceptable again because a lot of our observation posts are involved in night observations and if they cannot see or use them properly this is not good.

I think the business of helmets has been discussed a couple of times and I understand if it were not so tragic it would be humorous. When we got the Kevlar helmets they were not blue. We decided to paint them, so we went out and bought some paint. The only problem was that the paint reacted with the Kevlar and they became soft and basically useless. The other UN forces I think who use those helmets have put canvas covers on them. Again, I do not think we did our homework.

We also have a problem, in my estimation, with our people. First of all, I want to pay tribute to the co-operation, the professionalism, the dedication and the sincere interest that our people have shown and the way they have conducted themselves. However, I think we are rotating them through the operational zone too often. We have people who have been there three times. Soon if we keep up the rate we are doing, if we renew the commitment, we will have people on their fourth tours of operation.

Many of these people are volunteers, and I understand that. However, I still think that from a man management point of view, this is not the way we should go. It is fine for the troops who are in the zone, but their families are tremendously impacted by the fact that they are away. Dad is out of the picture or, in some cases, mom. The children suffer, the family suffers and therefore it has to impact to an extent on morale.

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There is an increase in the incidence of alcoholism in the units that have been deployed. There have been increased disciplinary problems. This is natural because people are under an awful lot of tension and it will unquestionably affect them.

(1915)

The whole thing boils down to a morale problem which I think would be difficult to deal with at the best of times. Added on to other problems that the Canadian force are now experiencing I think it is somewhat devastating. Basically we are asking our troops to be burned out. I do not think we can afford to do that.

With regard to the mandate in Bosnia and Croatia, Reform in December last year laid down what we thought were four reasonable conditions which Canada should demand or we should withdraw. First, peacekeepers should be left alone. They should not be taken hostage. They should not be interfered with. Second, we asked that the Sarajevo airport be opened and left open in order that humanitarian assistance could be brought in. Third, we asked that all aid convoys be able to proceed unimpeded. Finally, we asked that a ceasefire be in place and be holding and be seen to be holding.

The only one of these four proposals that has been met, and that is only recently, is the one to leave the peacekeepers alone. The Sarajevo airport has been closed many times. Aircraft have been shot at. Aid convoys have been held up or refused passage. Of course it is obvious there is no ceasefire and it is not holding.

The Reform Party believes the solution to this is that Canada should accept the situation is not now resolved, nor is it likely to be in the near future. This is a situation where there are no white hats. Every one of the ethnic people in that area are to some extent responsible for atrocities: the Croats, Muslims and the Serbs. Some may be more prone to it than others but everyone is guilty to an extent.

As I said just a few moments ago, Canadian resources are stretched to the limit. We should be aware of this and we have to accept it. It can be safely said that Canada has done her share. We have now committed our troops there for three years. We have done exemplary work. I do not think that anyone can point at Canada and say that we are not pulling our weight.

There are other UN forces committed there that are much less efficient. Some of them are not doing their job at all. One particular unit, which I will not mention by name, has brand new armoured personnel carriers bought by the UN, purchased in Korea, and it refuses to use them. It wants to keep the mileage low because the UN depreciates them and it is then going to take them home in almost brand new condition.

Other contingents will not go to the front lines. They will support only one side or the other in the conflict. It is only Canada and a few other nations that are truly perceived by the antagonists to be unbiased and impartial.

The Reform Party proposes that Canada should say: "We have done our share. It is time to withdraw our forces from Bosnia and Croatia". We should say to the United Nations that we understand that it will take them some time to find replacements. I suggest that an initial timeframe of three months' grace be given, after which time Canada would withdraw from the region.

I believe this is possible in Croatia. It might be more difficult in Bosnia. I do not think that Canada would be unreasonable if the time has to be extended. It could be but I think it should be extended by very short increments.

Finally, we should have learned a very dramatic lesson from our involvement in Bosnia and Croatia. All of us have at some time understood that we got in there with the thought that we were going there to do good. We have done well. The problem is that there was no agreement.

Canada should insist for instance that there be a time limit on our involvement. There should be an insistence that the people who are there want us there and that they want to come to a peaceful solution, that they want to solve the thing.

The matter of rules of engagement must be very clearly specified and they must be acceptable to Canada before we say yes we will go in. The financial aspect should be discussed and approved.

(1920)

Unless we do this, Canada may once again wind up in a commitment such as we have here where our withdrawal, without question, will result in an accelerated conflict. I see no way of avoiding this. By Canadians staying there we are just extending it.

As the Leader of the Opposition said, we were 29 years in Cyprus and we certainly cannot stand 29 years in Bosnia and Croatia.

Therefore, the Reform Party advocates that Canada tell the UN that we would like our commitment to come to an end. We will give it a three-month period of grace after which time we will effectively withdraw.

**Mr. Jesse Flis (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are witnessing today the democratization of Canada's foreign policy. It began with the review by the joint committee of the Senate and the House of Commons with certain recommendations to the government. The government responded and in that response it said that it wanted to involve Parliament in future important defence and foreign policy decisions. Therefore, I am very pleased that we are having this debate tonight. I recommend that we have more such debates.

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Two weeks ago the Minister of Foreign Affairs appeared before the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade. At that point, the minister wanted to know the positions of the official opposition and of the Reform Party. I will come back to that.

Although I am pleased we are having the debate, I was truly shocked and disappointed by the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition when he opened his remarks by stating that he cannot be proud of what Canada has done or has not done. We on this side are very proud of what Canada has done in this conflict and we continue to be proud and supportive of these people.

He went on to blame Canada further. He said that Canada had not done anything. Does the Leader of the Opposition not realize that we are one of a team and we cannot act unilaterally? I guess the team approach to things is not in the leader's vocabulary.

Does he not realize that presently there are about 35 countries with 43,000 troops involved here? If it was not for all the negotiations that have been going on over all these years and all the troops and countries participating, who knows if we would not be in the middle of world war three today?

Yes, lives have been lost. Yes, it is expensive. However, thank God that countries like Canada are participating because we may have warded off another world war.

The Leader of the Opposition went on to complain that all we were debating the rotation and that the rotation has been decided. I ask the Leader of the Opposition to read what it is we are debating. It states:

That this House, in light of the UN Security Council consideration of renewed mandates for UN forces in the former Yugoslavia—

That is what we are debating. We are debating whether Canada should continue to keep its forces there or not. The rotation comes automatically. After the troops have been there six months they are replaced. However, if after a month Canada decides to pull out its troops, it pulls out fresh and strong troops, not tired troops.

It is the mandate we are debating. The rotation is automatic after six months. I was disappointed that the hon. member could not distinguish between that.

(1925)

He went on to say that we have no choice. I thought he was going to say that we have no choice whether to stay or pull out. We do have a choice. That is why we are having this debate.

The Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the Minister of National Defence said that before making an important decision like this one, whether or not to renew the mandate, Parliament would be consulted. That is what we are doing. To

stand and say that we have no choice does not help the government. We are looking for some leadership from the opposition to help Canadians make an important decision.

The Leader of the Opposition went on to say: "What is Canada's policy in peacekeeping missions?" I suggest he read a bit of history. By going back to when the Prime Minister of Canada, Lester B. Pearson, recommended the peacekeeping forces. That role continues. We are changing that role. We are looking more at preventive measures, but the peacekeeping role continues. That is why Canada holds such an enviable position around the world.

The Leader of the Opposition does not seem to realize that conflicts since the end of the cold war are much different. In those days, one state attacked another state. Peace was made and we sent peacekeepers to keep the peace. Now it is internal conflicts. It is ethnocultural conflicts. It is tribal conflicts, wars, killings and genocide within a country. That is a totally different kind of challenge.

I was pleased that the Leader of the Opposition ended by saying: "Yes, we should renew the mandate". However he puts certain conditions on it. I guess it was a conditional yes. To be honest his remarks did not help the government very much to decide whether we should continue our mandate and keep our peacekeepers there or not.

The official spokesperson for the Reform Party complained that we had no consultations. We have had consultations through the whole foreign policy review. The government responds. The foreign affairs standing committee had the Minister of Foreign Affairs before it just two weeks ago. We discussed the Bosnia-Herzegovina conflict. The minister asked point blank the members of the official opposition what was their position. The answer was similar to what we got tonight.

When the minister asked the Reform Party, what the position was, the response was that they are split 50:50 on the issue. I was pleased that today the Reform Party made it clear that its position is to withdraw our forces. At least we know what the stand is, the position of the Reform Party.

To answer the Leader of the Opposition, I want to remind him that Canada remains one of the strongest advocates of reinforcing UN's conflict prevention and conflict resolution capability. We have been working with like-minded countries at the UN to bring about reforms that will provide the organization with the political, financial and military tools it needs to fulfil its growing responsibilities.

Canada is conducting a study on a UN rapid reaction capability and will host an international conference on the subject next week. We are organizing with our partners peacekeeping

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seminars in the context of PAC, Regional Forum and the Organization for American States.

We are also working with the Organization of African Union to improve the capability of African countries to better contribute to peacekeeping operations and preventive diplomacy.

I do not want to finish my speech on Bosnia–Hercegovina without mentioning to all members that we have gone beyond peacekeeping. We are looking at conflict prevention. We are looking at reforming the United Nations so that our peacekeepers can be sent with a much clearer mandate.

(1930)

I appeal to all members who will be taking part in the debate tonight, to the independent members, to the members on our government side, to the members of the Bloc Québécois, the members of the Reform Party, to help the government make this important decision. Let us put our partisan politics aside. Let us hear what our constituents are telling us. Then we can make a very knowledgeable, intelligent and the right decision for Canada and hopefully for bringing peace to that area.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, it is an honour and a privilege for me to participate in this debate today on the participation of Canada in peacekeeping operations, and the one under way in the former Yugoslavia in particular.

However, before I go any further, allow me to share a few thoughts, as the Leader of the Opposition did, on how this emergency debate was called by the government.

First of all, what does the motion before us say? It says: “That this House, in the light of the UN Security Council consideration”—which, by the way, has not been done yet—“of renewed mandates for UN forces in the former Yugoslavia, take note of the rotation of Canadian Forces serving with UNPROFOR in Bosnia–Hercegovina and Croatia”.

Mr. Speaker, the deadline is March 31, two days from now. With a deadline days away, the government decides to call an emergency debate, with 24 hours notice, on this issue.

We do not have the slightest idea of what the terms and conditions of this mandate will be that the UN Security Council will review. As I said, while the current mandate regarding Croatia is due to expire on March 31, the Security Council has yet to make a decision on a new mandate. We do not have the slightest idea what is involved here, if, for instance, there will be a reduction in forces, as the Croatian government has given to understand. We do not know whether troop rotation will take place. We do not know. What we do know, however, is that the

necessary logistic arrangements have already been made for Canadian troops to be rotated on Monday. That much we know.

In order to be able to prepare for this debate for which the government gave us very little time, with only a few hours notice, we managed to meet briefly, less than an hour actually, just two hours ago, with officials from the departments of National Defence and Foreign Affairs. And that was only possible because we had requested to meet with them; otherwise, I wonder if any information would have been made available to us. We were fortunate to receive, minutes ago, a number of backgrounders from DND.

How do you expect us to be able to make any significant contribution to a fundamental debate like this one under the circumstances?

This debate aimed at renewing—even if the motion talks of “taking note” of—Canada’s peacekeeping mandate in the former Yugoslavia is somewhat inconsistent with the conclusions of the Special Standing Committee Reviewing Canada’s Defence Policy and especially the dissenting report drafted at that time by the Bloc, which defines a number of criteria to be met for our participation in peacekeeping operations instead of making decisions on a piecemeal basis, as the Leader of the Opposition said. Again, we are acting on a case–by–case basis and that is disgraceful, given the recommendations in the report.

This shows the arrogance of this government, which took for granted that the opposition would give the motion its benevolent support. Why did it take this support for granted? Because, as the Leader of the Opposition said, we have no choice. How can we, at this stage, withdraw from the former Yugoslavia?

(1935)

The government, riding the wave, decided to call a debate at the last minute, just before the end of the mandate, and force parliamentarians to settle this matter, thinking that it would obtain the benevolent and unanimous consent of this House.

This debate is all the more surprising in that, on March 14, as the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs rightly pointed out, the Minister of Foreign Affairs appeared before the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade. As the parliamentary secretary rightly pointed out, the minister asked Reform and Bloc representatives to state their positions on the renewal of the mandate of Canadian peacekeepers in the former Yugoslavia.

The minister said the purpose of his initiative was to avoid having to hold a debate in the House. We very spontaneously stated our position to the minister, without having had time to prepare. In spite of that co–operation, we find ourselves in a debate on this issue. I fail to understand the logic of this government.

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We of course supported the renewal of the mandate of Canadian peacekeepers in the former Yugoslavia, but with some reservations. We have to make sure that our presence is still required, and we must also ensure that our peacekeepers are safe in the theatres of operations.

We also want to raise the issue of suicides. There is some extremely disturbing information to the effect that a number of soldiers committed suicide either after participating in peacekeeping operations in the former Yugoslavia, or because they did not want to take part in these operations. This is most disturbing. Some facts will have to be thoroughly reviewed.

Given these considerations, I am somewhat surprised to find myself debating the presence of our troops in the former Yugoslavia, less than two days before the expiry of the UN forces mandate in that region, and particularly in Croatia.

In any case, the previous debates on this issue provided us with an opportunity to express our views and to hear the views of others.

I do not think that we should go back, today, and repeat everything that was already said on the issue. Instead, we should try to see why Canadian troops should withdraw from that region, or remain there.

A primary concern, to which I briefly referred earlier, is the danger faced by our troops stationed in the former Yugoslavia. This issue, which was also raised in previous debates, must once again be considered now.

Indeed, given the numerous violations of the cease-fire, our troops, on any day, could be dealing with a bloody war, as opposed to a conventional peacekeeping mission. Let us not forget that ten peacekeepers lost their lives and many others have been injured since the first Canadian peacekeepers arrived in the former Yugoslavia.

Similarly, a truce signed by the Bosnian government with the various warring factions in Bosnia was violated repeatedly during the past few weeks. Furthermore, the Bosnian Serbs recently threatened the international community with retaliatory action against the peacekeepers if the Bosnian Serb forces were hit by NATO air strikes.

In a way, and we see this in the media, since the beginning of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia, the situation has hardly improved, on the contrary. Today, battles are raging throughout the territories coveted by the various belligerents. Today, people are suffering from a lack of food and fuel, lack of medical drugs and health care, lack of adequate housing, peace and safety.

On the other hand, we should also consider the excellent job being done by our troops within the UN theatres of operations. Our troops continue to provide the peoples of the former Yugoslavia with shelter, food, clothing, protection and moral support. Since the fall of 1991, nearly \$60 million has been

spent on the purchase and delivery of food, medicine and clothing, on shelter for the homeless and on assistance to refugees, displaced persons and victims of violence.

(1940)

I feel that as long as the presence of Canadian troops is required and useful, there is no doubt that its presence must be maintained. By sending troops to the former Yugoslavia, Canada has made an important choice. It cannot afford to ignore a situation where human beings are experiencing an unspeakable tragedy. Granted, the help provided by our soldiers is not a panacea but at least it can alleviate the suffering.

To bring back our peacekeepers in these circumstances would not only mean abdicating our responsibilities and moral obligations as human beings, it would also extinguish that flicker of hope these people still have, people who for the most part are innocent victims of man's inhumanity to man. It would also mean leaving them to face a tragic escalation in the current conflict. No, we cannot go backward today, we have no choice, in the words of the Leader of the Opposition.

However, we need some answers about the safety of our troops should the embargo be lifted and in the event of air strikes. We need to know about the willingness of local authorities to have our troops remain there. We need answers about the cases of suicide in current peacekeeping operations. We need to look deeper into this troubling situation. Of course, we are in favour of keeping Canadian troops in the former Yugoslavia, but, unlike last year, I do not think the government can assume each year that it has the opposition's support.

The government must provide an assessment of the situation and explain to us how it has changed. We have had no assessment and no explanation of changes in the situation. We have no idea, apart from the bits of information we gleaned this afternoon. We have not had an opportunity to find out details of what is happening in the field, and I think that, if we are to have a serious debate in this House, the government must give us this information.

[English]

**Mr. Fred Mifflin (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to enter the debate this evening. I want to put into perspective what Canadian troops are doing.

Right now we have in the former Yugoslavia, and I refer mostly to Croatia and Bosnia, roughly 40,000 United Nations troops from 35 countries participating in a variety of operations. We in Canada have the fifth largest operation and we have deployed roughly 2,100 troops. They are engaged in four main operations. There is the operation in Bosnia in which we have approximately 820 troops. They are mostly engaged in relief convoys and the protection of human beings, humanitarian protection.

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In Croatia we have 770 peacekeepers; combat troops engaged in traditional peacekeeping, looking at the ceasefire areas and preventing skirmishes.

We have another operation in the southwest part of Croatia, on the coast, in Primosten, just north of the larger city of Split, where we have roughly 265 troops. They are logistics troops and represent the logistics battalion.

We also have a separate operation, which is actually a fifth operation. It is an air operation that has Hercules flights from Italy to Sarajevo to keep the airport open. There have been 1,600 flights. Roughly 11,500 people have been transported to and from the airport and 26,000 metric tonnes. That is an achievement in my mind.

Last but not least we have in the Adriatic coast a Canadian destroyer with 265 Canadians as part of the 15 nation, 21 ship force enforcing the arms embargo. This operation is one of which, despite what the opposition parties say, we are very proud and will continue to be.

(1945)

We have been involved in this operation, if we include its beginning, from September 21, 1991 as we have in most UN operations that have ever happened in the world. That we have a reputation that is enviable is an understatement. We have heard all of it before in the House.

The question for debate tonight is whether we continue the mandate. Before I address the question I want to comment on something the hon. Leader of the Opposition said and something the hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands said.

The Leader of the Opposition said that he deplored the fact that we were speaking so late, that it essentially gave no choice to Parliament. The hon. member for Verchères said that he would like some comment from this side of the House on why we are having the debate so late.

I remind the House that the Leader of the Opposition was a member of a government that deployed troops and committed Canada to the gulf war without as much as a word of discussion in the House of Commons. That was absolutely despicable. All Canadians thought it was outrageous.

To have the Leader of the Opposition criticize the government for having the fourth debate on peacekeeping in 18 months plus other debates, one of which took place last week on defence, is absolutely disgraceful, outrageous, misleading and intolerable.

The hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands complains that we are not having a debate on this matter. When it was put forward at the meeting last night I understand there was some question in the Reform Party whether it wanted to debate it. Whether or not the Reformers are being childish because it was at this point in time I do not know. It was not until late in the

evening that they decided they would have the debate. I do not accept these complaints.

I want to make another point with respect to the opposition. The hon. member for Saanich—Gulf Islands spoke about renewing the mandate. He did nothing but moan about the Canadian forces and talk about morale.

If members of the opposition parties, particularly the third party, would refrain from taking brown envelopes from disgruntled people and using them on the government to reduce the credibility of the very credible actions that are taking place from day to day, I would suggest the morale of the Canadian forces, whatever state it is in now, would be a hell of a lot better.

I do not mean for the hon. member from Saanich—Gulf Islands to be a target; in fact we are quite good friends. He debated and complained about the state of equipment in the Canadian forces. We just finished a 10-month discussion on defence where all these matters were brought out. They were part of the white paper. They were addressed in a report to Parliament and are being addressed in the white paper.

I know he wants to be on record as to his knowledge of defence. He has made his point. I will make my point that we are aware of these deficiencies and the government is addressing them, including 3,000 more peacekeepers to make sure that the rotation is better than it was.

The mandate is a hard judgment to make. The support for peacekeeping in my constituency and in those parts of Canada to which I travel, including 10 months on the standing committee's defence policy review, was very strong. I sense that today it is not as strong as it was six months ago. I suggest the reason for that is the perception that we are not making any headway.

How can we expect significant progress to be made in a country where conflict has been ongoing for almost a thousand years? I do not pretend to understand all the politics. I doubt if all of us in the House, if we were put together, could understand what is happening there.

Where does that leave us? Should we not renew our mandate as 1 of 35 countries because we feel progress has not been made in peace?

(1950)

There is more to it than that. We are supplying humanitarian aid. We are supplying hope to a country where hope is hard to come by.

I remind everybody in the House, particularly the members who were with me 10 months ago as we spent some time in Bosnia and Croatia, of a mental institution in a town called Bakovici where many inmates were murdered, raped, tortured and mutilated. The remaining inmates, the poor souls, we saw them. They were being protected by members of the Canadian

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forces. It would rend one's heart to see this place in operation. There are many other examples.

The humanitarian aspect would be sorely missed. I fear, because of the Canadian reputation in peacekeeping, that our decision to exit would give a signal that perhaps would not be conducive to world stability, particularly world stability in the Balkans.

I agree with my hon. friend from Saanich—Gulf Islands who says that ideally we should have a clear mandate. We should have a clear set of operating instructions. Ideally we should have acceptance from the countries we are participating in and a clear set of rules of engagement. These points and principles were included in the white paper. I fear they are not being totally regarded in our participation in the ex-Yugoslavia.

We do not live in an ideal world. Is the contact group, the five countries that were formed last year to negotiate a settlement, making progress? I think it is but it is very slow. If we accept this mandate for another six months how much longer are we prepared to go? I cannot answer that. I would say, as the minister of defence said, that I do not believe it is the intention of anyone in Parliament to have a commitment in ex-Yugoslavia that would last for 29 years.

We are a long way from 29 years. Yes, there are risks. Yes, there are many land mines. Yes, there are snipers. Yes, there are flareups. However the situation in ex-Yugoslavia now, despite the 14 ceasefire violations in the recent past, I am told by the operators is not much different from what it was three years ago.

Let us stay the course for this round. Let us help in the humanitarian aspect. Let us contribute as much as we can to the peace negotiation. Let us go forward with hope that we will see an amelioration of the situation if not an end to the conflict.

**Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, it is truly a pleasure to speak this evening on peacekeeping in the former Yugoslavia.

I emphasize a few of our concerns regarding the lateness of the debate and how it is just two days away from the mandate ending. I discussed this point with the minister a month ago. It was felt that we could be part of briefings much earlier and that then we would look at whether we needed to have this debate. We felt that before a decision was made there could be all-party involvement. We would agree. We would work toward that. We would co-operate in every way possible.

This last minute type of thing certainly makes us wonder how serious the government is and what is the real purpose of our being here. Let us take that it is for honest reasons and that the government really wants to hear what we have to say.

To move to the issue itself, as the foreign affairs critic for the Reform Party I state very strongly and clearly, as did the last speaker, that Canada should not renew its peacekeeping commitment to Bosnia or Croatia.

Canadians have served honourably for almost three years now but enough is enough. Canada has performed above and beyond the call of duty in all its commitments to the UN. No country can say that we did not try our utmost to re-establish peace and facilitate a long term negotiated settlement to the disputes.

(1955)

The facts are sad but obvious. The warring parties have shown no serious commitment to peace negotiations. Over the winter many have rearmed and resupplied their soldiers so they can start fresh fighting in the spring. The mid to long term prospects for peace are bleak and no amount of Canadian peacekeepers can change that fact. If we could just see light at the end of the tunnel, possibly this speech could be quite different.

The Reform Party believes the time to leave is now. If predictions about an increase in the level of fighting over the late spring and summer are true, we must act quickly to pull out our troops now. It may not be easy but now is our best chance to get them home without incident. If we wait and things get tougher, our troops will face an even greater unnecessary risk.

Last fall we saw how increased levels of fighting led to a corresponding increase in hostage taking of UN soldiers. This could happen again if we fail to act decisively now. The conditions in Bosnia during high levels of fighting remind me of the Eagles song "Hotel California". I will not sing it because it would certainly clear the House. Basically the words are: "You can check out any time you like but you can never leave".

If Parliament dithers we may find some time down the road that we want to check out but will not be allowed to leave without fighting our way out through militias and possibly even through civilians. If we are to act responsibly we must leave now.

As far as Croatia is concerned its president does not want UN peacekeepers any more. Although he is no longer forcing the UN out, he has demanded that it scale down its operations dramatically. As the process is going on Canadian troops would have a perfect opportunity to end their tour there without disrupting the ability of the UN to fulfil its new and more modest mandate.

Speaking in more general terms about Canada's role in peacekeeping around the world, it is high time that Parliament rethink how we can be most effective in our UN commitments and set clear criteria for our participation in future missions. We are not saying to get out of peacekeeping; we are saying to set the criteria.

Canadians are not prepared to give up on their proud traditions of caring and intervention for the sake of peace. However these times cannot be seen from a purely international per-

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spective. Our foreign commitments must be in harmony with our domestic needs. Therefore we must be sure when we support peacekeeping that we are operating in Canada's best interests and within the very real financial constraint that must be the primary concern of any good government.

We must pick our spots and we must choose wisely. Today's debate should be a step in that direction. One thing is clear. Canada can no longer be the 911 phone number for the world or for the UN. As much as we want to help others, this desire is tempered by the fact that we cannot be all things to all people. Therefore it is better that we help effectively in a few cases rather than spread ourselves too thin. In this way Canada can protect its own vital interests and provide the most effective help for the international community.

As we examine the issue of peacekeeping it is worthy of note that since the end of the cold war the demand for peacekeepers around the world has sky-rocketed. If the past few years have taught us any lesson it is that instability will continue. New hot spots will continue to crop up and Canada must be ready.

If more requests come from Africa, Southeast Asia or the former Soviet republics, how will Canada respond? Clearly Canada must establish criteria to test the importance of each request for our help. While this is a sensitive issue and I do not claim to have all the answers, I would argue the following could be considered by Parliament when deciding whether to approve of peacekeeping missions.

First, the conflict's impact on the state of international stability is an obvious test of whether Canada should get involved. If the conflict has a serious potential to escalate or destabilize a whole region, we should consider it seriously when making our decision.

(2000)

Second, geographical ties are very important. For reasons of regional stability, the world would be a better place if countries co-operated to make sure that their own part of the world remained stable. Where peace does break down, regional organizations should co-operate to make things right. After all, it will be the member nations of such regional groups that have the greatest interest in restoring stability. For logistical reasons as well, proximity is an important factor in determining whether a country can respond to a crisis in a timely and effective manner.

Third, humanitarian considerations must also be taken into account. While Canadians want bang for the buck they also want Canada to maintain its tradition for compassion.

Fourth, our prior commitments must be given more weight than is the current practice when determining what else we are going to do. We only have so many troops and a limited amount of high quality equipment. We owe it to our troops to be fair in

our decisions where to send them and to make sure that we do not overcommit our forces. They are the Canadian forces, not the Canadian foreign legion.

Fifth, Canada's economic ties are an important factor in determining how willing Canadians should be to commit their resources.

In conclusion, the time has come for us to take a step back to reorganize ourselves. The first thing we have to do is withdraw from the former Yugoslavia. Canadians have been looking for a negotiated peace there for three years but none is on the horizon.

If the UN sees value in continuing the peacekeeping mission, then it is time for some other UN country to hold the fort that Canada has so admirably defended for so many years. Our troops should be congratulated and brought home to their families.

Once we withdraw from Bosnia and Croatia and before we send our troops on yet another indefinite mission with uncertain dangers and at an unknown cost, let us establish a credible set of criteria upon which we can depend to make sure that we pick our spots wisely. Canada can still be an innovator and a leader in the area of peacekeeping, but we have to make some difficult choices and we have to make them now.

**Mr. Bill Graham (Rosedale, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is with a great sense of privilege and responsibility that I rise in the House to debate this extraordinarily important subject this evening.

I feel particularly responsible, given the incredible role our troops are playing in the former Yugoslavia. I sense like every other member of Parliament the responsibility we have toward those marvellous men and women for what they are achieving in that difficult part of the world.

In trying to understand this matter, I have asked myself four questions. I think we should consider them when we discuss whether it would be appropriate to withdraw our troops at this time or to continue the mandate until a more orderly type of withdrawal can be achieved with either the whole of the United Nations forces or of our own troops.

The four questions are these: Are our troops performing an important role where they are? Is their contribution special? What would be the consequences of their withdrawal? How are our overall interests served by their presence there? Let me take the time to examine those issues.

Is the role of our troops in the former Yugoslavia an important one? To that I think every member of this House would have to reply an unqualified yes. Looking at the area of peacekeeping, our troops have performed an exemplary service I would say at the core of the United Nations operation in the former Yugoslavia. They have had a great deal of success. Of course there have

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been problems, but overall we should look at the achievements on the peacekeeping side.

Our troops are very close to Sarajevo. Our troops are in one part of the former Yugoslavia which covers all three belligerent areas. Our troops are the only ones covering that delicate and sensitive area. Our troops are playing a primordial and important role in terms of peacekeeping. They are performing a role of humanitarian aid which was so effectively described by the member for Bonavista—Trinity—Conception that I need not repeat it. However, we must bear that in mind.

[*Translation*]

The second question I asked myself was is our contribution significant? We are but one of 35 countries in the former Yugoslavia and have contributed 2,000 soldiers to the 43,000 troops stationed there.

(2005)

The Leader of the Opposition said that he was not proud of the contribution our troops have made. Like the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, I personally am proud of our troops' accomplishments in the former Yugoslavia. I am proud of their humanity and proud of their professionalism.

The other night I saw on television a young sergeant who had an enormous responsibility. Day in, day out, with unparalleled devotion, intelligence and professionalism, this peerless soldier resolved issues and extremely difficult problems.

I am convinced that the regiments who will replace the troops there now, such as the 22nd Royal Regiment from Quebec, will serve in the tradition that it has maintained for the duration of its long and glorious history.

Therefore, I reject the Leader of the Opposition's statements. I reject the statements of the hon. member for Verchères. I believe that this is not a partisan issue and that this debate should rise above any inappropriate partisanship. We should be examining these serious issues from the viewpoint of the well-being of our troops and our country.

[*English*]

Let me ask the question: What would the consequences be of a withdrawal at this time? We know this is a tense situation. We have read what Lord Owen has said about the difficult situation that prevails there at the moment. What would the effect be of our withdrawing our troops at this time? What would the effect be on the other UN troops there? Think of the demoralizing effect that would have on them. Think of the effect on the belligerents.

We, along with our allies, took extreme umbrage at the suggestion by the leader of Croatia that UN troops should be removed from Croatia. We told him that UN troops must be kept

there because it is a tinderbox which is likely to explode into uncontrolled war if UN troops are withdrawn.

Having exercised that influence on the leader of Croatia, are we to withdraw those troops? Are we to create the very situation of ethnic cleansing and problems that we have seen in the past? I ask myself what the effect of withdrawal would be. I suggest that it would be a precipitating event in creating a crisis.

The member for Red Deer does not seem to be taking that into account. He is suggesting that we can steal away in the night like a Turk with bag and baggage, that no one will miss us and there will be no consequence of that. There will be a consequence. If we try to steal away we may create the very situation of war which will make it impossible for us to withdraw in an orderly way. On top of that, we will leave exposed in the former Yugoslavia the magnificent Mounties who are serving there in a civilian way which is truly an extraordinary example of Canadian devotion.

Last, is it in our global and general interests to be in the former Yugoslavia until a more orderly withdrawal may be organized? It is true, as the member for Red Deer may say, we have done our share. There is no one in the House who would say that we have not done our share. I dare to say there is nobody among our allies who would say we have not done our share. I am sure there is no one in the civilian population of the ex-Yugoslavia who would not say that the Canadian troops have done their share.

The question is not that. The question is whether or not our general interests are served by our staying there and continuing to do our share, continuing to help the people of ex-Yugoslavia and continuing to help the cause of peace as it is to be developed. I would suggest that the effect on our allies would be extremely devastating if we were to leave at this time. Our European allies are counting on our being there.

When we consider issues of global security and foreign policy we must never divorce one issue from another. Does anyone in this House not doubt the fact that one of the reasons we have been so successful in dealing with the Europeans over the issues on the Grand Banks is precisely because we are in Yugoslavia and because we are a force in Europe? Our European friends cannot turn to us and say: "We can treat you the way we want to".

(2010)

We are making a contribution in Europe. We are helping the Europeans solve their problems. We are helping solve world peace in our own interests but in their interests as well. That makes us a force in world affairs. It gives us a force in dealing with them in every other sector. We must never forget that. That

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is what strategy is about. That is what foreign policy is about. We cannot ignore these larger issues.

Furthermore, what about the Americans? If we withdraw on the ground, the United States at this moment is taking the attitude that it can stand above these frays. It can fly over at 30,000 feet and not put troops on the ground. We have a moral superiority in dealing with our American colleagues at this time because of the tremendous contribution our forces are making. It establishes a credibility in dealing with the United States that we must never forget.

We owe it to our forces on the ground. We owe it to those magnificent troops.

Finally, we owe it to ourselves in terms of the United Nations. The House has often spoken about the need for the United Nations to be revitalized. This House has often spoken about the need for a more effective United Nations if Canada's interests and values are to be protected in the world. Those interests and those values will be protected by our continuing to be a reliable member of the United Nations forces and enabling the United Nations to improve its situation.

I leave by suggesting that our interests require us to stay at this time. Furthermore, our troops there are enforcing Canadian values by performing a humanitarian and difficult task in terrible circumstances with a devotion and superb professionalism of which all of us may be very proud.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Christiane Gagnon (Québec, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, before starting my speech, I would like to respond to my colleague from Rosedale. According to him, the Leader of the Opposition said that he was not proud of Canadian troops. I am sorry but the hon. member for Rosedale is distorting the comments made by the Leader of the Opposition.

My colleagues and I heard the speech delivered by the hon. member for Lac-Saint-Jean. He is a responsible man. He is more concerned about the living conditions of Canadian troops on peacekeeping missions. He is also concerned about the measures taken after they return home. He is concerned about the problem of suicide among Canadian troops. I wish to set the record straight: he is an honest and responsible man whom we all hold in high esteem.

It is with great sadness and emotion that I will, in this debate, try to paint a rather grim picture of the situation in the former Yugoslavia. Zvornik, Srebrenica, Bratunac and Grobnica were the sites of massacres in which up to 3,000 civilians were killed. The Omarska camp was the site of mass executions and torture. At the Celebici camp, at least 15 Serbs were beaten to death last August. An individual called Borislav Herak killed 230 any-

mous civilians. Last August, 50 Serbian women and children were killed by two Croatian members of paramilitary forces.

In Varjanta, more than 200 Muslims were massacred by the Serbian police. In May and June, between 2,000 and 3,000 Muslims were murdered by Serbian irregulars in a pig farm and factory near Brcko. Countless Muslim women were raped by Croatsians.

That is the other side of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia. That is the reality sometimes obscured by the rhetoric. That is, however, why our troops are serving with the UN.

How did it come to that? How did the situation deteriorate to this extent, as is often the case in armed conflicts, with innocent civilians being massacred, women raped, ethnic cleansing? I have no desire to set myself as a strategy expert nor do I claim to be. My main concern this evening and the most serious aspect of this conflict, in my view, is the impact on civilians and on our troops.

Coming back to the loss of human rights issue, here is some background information. It should be pointed out that all protagonists in the conflict have violated the rights of their minorities from the beginning. I would like to read from a document produced by the Canadian government. It reads:

(2015)

“When the federal republic crumbled, the Serbs wanted to make sure that their people would remain together within the same territory. That is why they tried to spread their domination to regions where large ethnic minorities live as well as to new States run by non-Serbs. Other groups, such as the Croatsians and the Muslims, wanted to consolidate their position in the new States by depriving other ethnic minorities, including the Serbs, of their rights”.

The ethnic cleansing sought by both sides led to murders, rapes, torture and other forms of intimidation aimed at making the members of particular ethnic groups flee their homes and villages and take refuge in the zones claimed by other ethnic groups. Such attempts to achieve ethnic cleansing have had tragic consequences: over 100,000 people killed and hundreds of thousands injured; thousands of Muslim women raped; and three million people displaced or forced to take refuge in neighbouring countries, without mentioning the acts of torture, the illegal arrests and the arbitrary detentions.

Let me discuss for a moment the impact of those rapes, particularly in the context of Muslim society. It has been reported in the media that women who are raped by men from other ethnic origins must often face reprisals from their own families. Almost a whole generation of women was sacrificed. Indeed, in addition to the physical and psychological trauma with which these women have to deal, their whole families and

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social lives were shattered. The scope of this tragedy leaves us at a loss for words.

It is to help the civilian population that the UN forces were deployed in that region. Peace is the most precious thing for any nation. The right to life and to one's physical integrity is the most treasured one. The international community, through the UN, felt an obligation to maintain peace, in spite of the enormous financial and military costs involved. Canada made a contribution from the very beginning and decided to pursue its commitment, although with some reservations and doubts. We agree and we have no choice. Indeed, the consequences of a withdrawal of the UN forces would be tragic for the population. The attacks would start all over again. We know that as recently as last week, there were 14 outbreaks of armed conflict in Bosnia.

Genocide would resume, and help would no longer reach the various communities, with consequences one can well imagine. However, we must also consider the impact of these operations on each individual member of our peacekeeping forces. It seems that in some cases, the impact is considerable. Some problems have already been identified. There is of course the conditions in the field which may have an impact on physical health. And there are also conditions we could qualify as environmental, like bombings, hostage takings, the hostility of part of the population and armed attacks intended to threaten and humiliate the soldiers.

What is most traumatic is being powerless to intervene pro-actively in the face of so much horror. There is also the daily confrontation with human misery, with the very visible impact of war on the civilian population. There is fear and boredom. That was also the point my leader, the leader of the opposition was trying to make.

All these factors contribute, to a greater or lesser degree, to the deterioration of the physical, psychological and mental health of our peacekeepers. A number of questions come to mind. First of all, were they given adequate preparation and training before they left? Second, was there a proper evaluation of the tasks they would be given so they would have a better idea of what they could expect? When they return, do they have access to the support and services they need to resume a "normal" life as members of their community? Apparently not, since it was found that among peacekeepers and their friends, the suicide rate was higher than average.

These are all issues that must be addressed if we want our involvement in peacekeeping missions to be humanitarian for those who are on the receiving end and for those who go on these missions. I deplore the fact that this government failed to table a statement describing the conditions under which our soldiers have exercised their peacekeeping mandate so far. We are faced with a fait accompli. Our answer to the government's request to renew the peacekeeping mandate of the Canadian forces is yes, but.

(2020)

*[English]*

**Mr. Ted McWhinney (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this has been not merely a valuable debate but an innovatory debate in Constitutional law of Parliament terms.

It was intended by the United States Constitution, to which some of the members of opposition parties referred, that questions of peace and war and commitment of armed forces be always submitted to Congress for decision.

We know that historically American presidents evaded that in invoking presidential power. What is fascinating here today is that we have come to Parliament. We are consulting Parliament on the renewal of the mandate and we have established a parliamentary practice that will not likely be changed in the future.

It will now be part of our constitutional law that where there is a commitment to be made of Canadian forces, it will be more than a telephone call at 5 a.m. from a foreign head of government and a Canadian Prime Minister replying yes sir, without any thought of the roles and missions of the forces to which he is committing Canada.

There are mistakes here and we can identify them readily if we survey the history of peacekeeping in its classical form as developed by our then foreign minister, Lester Pearson, for which he won the Nobel prize for the interposition of unarmed UN forces between armed combatants who had decided to cease operations and were looking for a face saving way out of it.

The classic situation was in Suez in 1956. It was muddied in the Congo in 1960-61 when the secretary-general of the United Nations in moves that ultimately brought his own destruction and death interjected political motives that had not been cleared in advance. Many of us would believe they were the correct political decisions but the political motive intervenes.

If we look at the two operations in recent years in which we have been most involved, Croatia and Somalia, we find operations in which the political commitment was made to engage Canadian peacekeeping forces but without a prior adequate definition of goals and missions.

This is the tragedy in Somalia. A classic peacekeeping operation was converted into a mission with political objectives, arguable and even questionable because they ignored the existing power structure there which was necessary to the effective operation of the UN forces.

In Croatia conflicting political agendas had been set by European powers that were in some respects reviving their old quarrels of pre-1914. I would not wish to censor the government that made these decisions without prior discussion in Parliament, without prior examination of the roles and missions in which we are engaged, but it is clear there was a fault there.

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Our real issue today is that Canada entered into operations, engaged our forces, engaged our word as a nation and we are bound by that commitment in terms of consequences. We cannot lightly walk away. In other words, a new political situation is created by our act however much the present government and opposition parties might wish to question the original political premises on which the predecessor government engaged Canada.

I have some suggestions to make in terms of the continued operation of the Canadian peace forces in Croatia. It is clear if we ought to be there it is to be in a classic peacekeeping sense. We are not there as a chapter seven of the charter, a peacemaking operation in which we have a defined political goal that involves the application of military force for its achievement.

This was never our role. It is not our role today. It may well be the objective of some of the people presently engaged in the same operation. One of the problems here is the problem of state succession to the former communist republic of Yugoslavia. It was about to break up, as Turkey was in the 19th century. It created the predecessor of Yugoslavia, Serbia and Montenegro. It was a situation of state succession in which European powers met together and realized that one cannot have recognition of new states without a precise and equitable definition of frontiers.

(2025)

That was not done here and in a very real sense it is a mistake to attempt it under the guise of a peacekeeping operation. Therefore our message to the government should be that the predecessor government engaged Canada in the operation. We cannot in good faith walk away. We are responsible in measure for what has happened since. We should limit our responsibility to the UN mandate, the maintenance of a political military situation created by the parties, agreed on by the parties as a cease fire and no more.

If there is to be an issue of political goals to be established, we should call for another congress of Berlin. The treaty of Versailles to which we are signatory, our first international act, establishes just such a machinery.

If it is to be a matter of defining frontiers, let us have a larger European conference of which we are part. Let us get those frontiers defined. Do not try to do this under cover of a military peacekeeping operation. Do not charge our soldiers with the responsibility of making political decisions. It is beyond their special competence. It is beyond their mandate. It is manifestly unfair to them.

I say congratulations to the government for establishing what I hope will become a precedent that before Canadian forces are committed we will bring the matter to Parliament. Second, we will insist on maintaining respect for the UN charter and respect for UN peacekeeping operations as defined in chapter six.

**Mr. Bob Ringma (Nanaimo—Cowichan, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to start by reiterating the motion:

That this House, in light of the UN Security Council consideration of renewed mandates for UN forces in the former Yugoslavia, take note of the rotation of Canadian forces serving with UNPROFOR in Bosnia—Herzegovina and Croatia.

We are taking note and Canadians are taking note. Canadians are generally proud of the role of the Canadian forces in peacekeeping. They very much respect the humanitarian role that can be played. I do not think they are totally aware of both sides of the equation from a military point of view.

On a very basic level if the troops are told, as they have been recently in Valcartier, they are next in the slot, the morale of the troops increases and they say: "Good. We have a job to do, let us do it". If they have been trained for it, as most of them have, they can do a very creditable job.

The problem is that this has gone on for too long. While there is a momentary surge in morale, the piper must be paid after that. If the troops get rotated with too great a frequency, we have a problem. If the troops do not have the wherewithal in equipment to carry things out, there is a problem. If defects are perceived in leadership in the Department of National Defence or within the Canadian forces, there is a problem. If the terms of reference in the first place are inadequate, there is another problem.

While it is good for the Canadian public to support its peacekeepers, as I do, I nevertheless have to sound a note of caution that all is not that well. There are many impediments, many problems to overcome. The longer we are in this business the more those problems are evident. I would like to agree to some extent with my colleague from Vancouver Quadra who was extolling the virtues of the government by saying that it was doing the right thing by consulting Parliament. I agree, it is a good thing to do.

(2030)

The government made a start on this a year or more ago when this Parliament began. However, I have to question its sincerity when looking at the events of today. Although the mandate for our troops expires in two days' time, the government only yesterday announced the special debate of today. That is totally inadequate. However the intent may be correct. To put it in general terms, as the hon. member for Vancouver Quadra did, it is a good thing to consult Parliament. I wholeheartedly agree with that. It is a good thing to consult Parliament, but let us do it effectively, not in a cursory way.

A good part of the reason for the Reform members' position is that we established in discussion among ourselves what we consider should be the conditions for sending troops on peacekeeping operations. One was that peacekeepers should be left alone to do their job in the Bosnia area. The second was that the Sarajevo airport should remain open. The third was that convoys

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should be able to operate unimpeded. The fourth was that there should be a ceasefire in place and holding.

All of those conditions have been violated. Atrocities are occurring, Canadian hostages have been taken, UN patrols have been fired on, so-called safe areas have been fired on, landings at Sarajevo have been stopped. We have ethnic quarrels going on all the while. In fact, the ethnic quarrels are at the very root of our objection to this whole situation. There will be no basis for peace in the former Yugoslavia until the residents decide they want peace. If it is going to be ethnic group against ethnic group, religion against religion. It is going to go on and on.

Canadians found themselves as peacekeepers in Cyprus for 29 years with no way out of it. We finally pulled out and the situation is no worse now than it was before. I am not trying to simplify this situation. It is fraught with danger.

Let me speak to the other side of the coin. How much danger is there? I ran into Major-General Lewis MacKenzie of Yugoslav fame a week or so ago. He sent me an article which he had had published in the *New York Times*. I would like to read part of what he wrote. He was talking, by the way, in favour of the UN leaving, certainly in Croatia. He wrote:

If President Tudjman gets his way and the UN withdraws from Croatia, war will follow and it won't be a short, local war between Croatia and the Krajina Serbs. The Krajina Serbs have been "assisting" the Bosnian Serbs in the battle for the Bihac pocket and they have recently signed a co-operation agreement for common defence which includes provisions for a joint defence council.

General MacKenzie's knowledge, having been on the ground there is far superior to me.

(2035)

He concludes in favour of keeping troops there.

Surely this is the real litmus test for the UN in the new world order. It is up to the permanent five of the Security Council, led by the U.S.A., to make sure the UN is not found wanting on this issue. Failure to do so will sentence the Balkans to an even bloodier future.

This is a knowledgeable statement from a knowledgeable person. It says to me, why should Canada interpose itself to the degree we seem to be doing and saying we are responsible for the whole safekeeping of that area? It is a UN responsibility. I quite agree with General MacKenzie that pressure should be put on the UN, led by the U.S.A., to do something about the situation.

I would go beyond that and ask what is NATO's role in this. NATO surely has a role to play. It must exercise its influence in the area. Going beyond that, I would ask about the contiguous countries, about Greece, Turkey, Albania and all those that are

affected. Where are they? They must take some responsibility in this whole thing.

We wind up with this problem. Unless the situation can be orchestrated by the UN, by NATO, by the countries in the area and by the ethnic groups in that troubled area saying "we want peace", Canadians cannot impose it on them.

Our military situation is well known. Our troop rotation is too frequent; the equipment is inadequate; the troops are carrying too big a load for the resources they are being given. We have the Jeffries report out of Petawawa. We have the Oehring report out of FMC saying there are problems within the Canadian forces. These problems are of morale and leadership. We had better straighten up that situation on our own home ground.

To conclude, if there is no chance for peace, if there is no desire for peace by the people who are there, we cannot impose it. It will do our country, NATO, the UN and the countries in that area a lot of good if we are seen to be stopping now. Blow the whistle and say: "Whoa, let's start over. Let's see what it is we are doing. Let's give notice now and take it from there".

**Mr. Janko Perić (Cambridge, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise this evening to discuss once again the issue of Canada's role in peacekeeping operations in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

In preparing to speak today I reviewed my notes from two previous speeches on the same matter. I came to the realization that not much has changed. The United Nations is no closer today to implementing its mandate than it was on January 25, 1994 when I first spoke in the House on the issue.

One-quarter of a million displaced persons in Croatia alone are no closer to returning to their homes. Croatia's international borders remain unsecured. One-third of the nation's territory is currently occupied. I have been advised that since January 1995 the army of Yugoslavia has moved in over 900 troops, 25 tanks and ground to ground missiles, all under the watchful eye of the United Nations.

While all-out war did subside with the original arrival of the United Nations protection force in 1992, little else had changed. We must ask ourselves, is it any wonder that the Government of Croatia wanted to terminate the United Nations mandate? We must ask ourselves, are we accomplishing enough in Croatia to warrant our continued presence there and our continued expenditure of Canadian taxpayers' money?

(2040)

I am certain that most members can understand Croatia's frustration. I am not so sure that we can answer the second of my questions quite so easily.

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Last month the members of the Canada–Croatia and Bosnia–Hercegovina parliamentary group hosted a visit by parliamentarians from the Republic of Croatia. During that visit it was made very clear to me and my colleagues that the Croatian government was adamant about not renewing the UN mandate. In fact, Mr. Ivica Racan, the leader of the opposition Social Democratic Party of Croatia indicated to me that the one thing all parliamentarians and citizens of Croatia were in agreement on was that it was time for UNPROFOR to leave.

After the meetings with Mr. Racan and Drs. Domljan and Greguric I truly believe that the Canadian peacekeepers would be coming home. I can honestly say that I have very mixed feelings about that. While I could understand the frustration of the Croatian government and the Croatian people, I was worried that an escalation in fighting might occur, thus once again placing the safety of many innocent civilians in jeopardy.

Then on March 12 came what appeared to be good news. The president of Croatia, Dr. Franjo Tudjman, held a joint press conference with U.S. Vice-President Al Gore where it was announced that Croatia would accept the further international presence on its territory if a new UN Security Council mandate could be agreed on and that certain conditions were met.

Those conditions included: one, control of international borders between the Republic of Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, between the Republic of Croatia and the Republic of Bosnia–Hercegovina and at principal crossing points not now controlled by Croatian authorities; two, control access and communications for UNPROFOR and other international humanitarian operations to Bosnia–Hercegovina through territory not currently under the control of the Croatian authorities; three, facilitate and continue implementation of a ceasefire agreement on March 29, 1994 and an economic agreement on December 7, 1994; four, facilitate implementation of future agreements aimed at reintegration of Croatia and facilitate implementation of relevant UN Security Council and general assembly resolutions.

The Copenhagen agreement engineered by U.S. Vice-President Al Gore which showed so much promise is today in jeopardy. Last week UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros Ghali forwarded the proposed new UN mandate to the Government of Croatia. The problem is that this so-called new mandate is little more than a rehashing of the old Vance–Owen peace plan. This is not what the Republic of Croatia agreed to in Copenhagen.

In a letter to UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros Ghali dated March 27, 1995, a couple of days ago, Dr. Mate Granic, Croatia's foreign minister stated:

I have the duty to inform you and the Members of the Security Council that the Republic of Croatia shall not accept the new mandate of the new peacekeeping force on its territory after the present mandate of UNPROFOR in Croatia terminates unless the following conditions are met:

One: The name of the new operations contains the word Croatia; explicitly confirming the fact that the new operation is to be carried in its entirety on the sovereign territory of the Republic of Croatia; and,

Two: The mechanism of the active control of international borders of the Republic of Croatia in the parts that are not at this moment accessible to the Croatian authorities by the new force are negotiated in detail on the basis of relevant Security Council resolutions and have gained prior formal approval of the Government of Croatia; thus the mechanisms for active control of Croatia's international borders under the new mandate must be clearly established consistent with paragraph 12 of Resolution 820 (1993).

(2045)

The words of the Croatian foreign minister make it very clear to me that Croatia means business. Either change the mandate to reflect the Copenhagen agreement or get out. If somehow, and I am hopeful, a new agreement can be reached, Canada must decide whether it is in our best interest to keep our peacekeepers in Croatia.

If we decide to remain in Croatia it is imperative we play a role in negotiating a new mandate. This is one thing I have found extremely disturbing throughout this entire mission in Croatia and Bosnia–Hercegovina. Canada appears to have had very little influence in the overall decision making process. We have the fifth largest contingent of troops in Croatia and Bosnia–Hercegovina, 2,100, yet we have been completely shut out of the so-called contact group which has been making decisions on strategy in the region.

Our neighbours to the south with only 890 troops and Russia with 1,400 peacekeepers have been playing chess with our men and women in this lengthy international conflict and we cannot allow this to continue. The safety and integrity of our troops rest solely on our shoulders. If we stay we must demand a more active role in negotiations that will ultimately affect the well-being of our peacekeepers.

In addition to playing a more active role in the negotiating process, we should also be encouraging our southern neighbours to put their money where their mouth is by increasing their presence in the region.

Canada is a proud peacekeeping nation. Our troops have done a good job in Croatia given what they have to work with. I believe the Croatian government can confirm that.

However, if there is not a new mandate, if we will simply be helping to maintain the status quo and if the lives of our peacekeepers will be placed in greater jeopardy let us stop wasting the hard earned money of Canadian taxpayers and bring our troops home.

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[Translation]

**Mr. Philippe Paré (Louis-Hébert, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I am taking part in this debate on maintaining peacekeepers in Bosnia and Croatia more out of a sense of duty than of pleasure.

(2050)

More out of a sense of duty, because it is impossible to remain indifferent to the drama taking place in the former Yugoslavia. It is not for pleasure, because the government is putting us in a very awkward situation. It is claiming to consult us, but we know that the UN mandate ends in 24 hours.

Moreover, the government never really took steps to inform the House of the results of earlier peacekeeping missions. Finally, it probably made its decision to renew the mandate several weeks ago.

They better not try to say that the Minister of Foreign Affairs consulted us seriously on March 14, asking us our opinion on the fly. They also better not say that our criticism of the government is criticism of Canadian peacekeepers.

The Leader of the Opposition was very clear on this point. He paid homage to Canadian peacekeepers for their courage, their devotion and their professionalism. I therefore ask the hon. Liberal member to distinguish between criticism of the government and criticism of the peacekeepers. In fact, there is no criticism of the peacekeepers.

We have just reviewed Canadian foreign policy. Throughout our meetings, the former Chair of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, now a senator, made light of Canada's situation describing Canada as the UN's emergency service. We have just issued a statement of policy. In the fall, the government issued its defence policy. Is there anything really different in the process we are starting today? Not a thing. It is the same as before.

At the San Francisco conference, which led to the establishment of the UN on June 26, 1945, following the second world War, people wanted to ensure that history would not repeat itself. Unfortunately, we have to admit that history has repeated itself. The UN charter introduced a new idea of universal security, and it was a Canadian politician, Lester B. Pearson, who, in the end, created peace missions as we know them today.

The new face of war and the increasing number of areas of conflict around the world require action by the international community. Finding ways to regulate and ensure international peace and security is one of Canada's responsibilities as well. Canada, a country renowned the world over as a leader in peacekeeping missions, can hardly run for cover now.

This debate also allows us to reflect on a certain number of subjects more or less on the periphery of the issue at hand. I would like to begin by reflecting on the role that television plays

on the international community's responsibility. As much as we denounce the gratuitous violence typical of today's television shows, we must recognize that the journalists covering international issues heighten awareness in the international community, and in Canada, of the situation reigning in countries in conflict.

On this issue, I think that MPs cannot simply follow public opinion. It would be too easy to conduct surveys and then to apply the decision corresponding exactly to what Canadians and Quebecers want to see. MPs have a role to play in shaping public opinion and they cannot hedge on this issue indefinitely.

The Bloc Québécois is in favour of renewing the peacekeeping mandate in Bosnia and Croatia, but I am in full agreement with the reservations which my colleagues have already expressed. I think that we should react to this situation in the way that we would if we were to see a person in distress.

(2055)

If I were at home in my apartment and heard gunshots in the next apartment, I could not just shrug it off. Why should we then close our eyes and refuse to act when it comes to the international scene?

The role of peacekeepers is extremely important. It is essential in Bosnia-Herzegovina. They bring food and medical supplies, among other things, to people who are undeniably the victims in the situation.

They also ensure that some lines of communication remain open, without which life would become unbearable. They also logistically support NGOs like the Red Cross and the High Commissioner's Office for Refugees, which play a crucial role which could not possibly be undertaken without the peacekeepers.

Finally, regarding the need for the mission, everybody recognizes that if we pulled out of Bosnia, we would leave behind a void which would be filled with massive fireworks, it would literally be hell on earth.

I said earlier that we had begun to review Canadian foreign policy. We must realize that borders are a thing of the past. There is no denying the interdependencies between peoples. When someone pollutes the environment elsewhere, we in Canada are affected. Poverty in developing countries is also our problem because we all are responsible for what happens in the world. We cannot remain passive when we see human rights being violated. Population migrations always end up affecting us.

Some 50 Bosnian refugees recently immigrated to my riding. We cannot close our eyes and say: "It is none of our business. If they want to fight, let them fight among themselves". No. We have a moral and ethical responsibility in these matters.

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Humanitarian action is one of the responsibilities of the international community. I recently attended a forum in Sainte-Adèle, north of Montreal, in which experts tried to link state sovereignty with the responsibility to take action against gross violations of human rights. We are moving toward the right to interfere, and the international community will have to come to terms with this in the future.

Of course, we have a number of reservations about the presence of peacekeepers over there. My colleagues talked about the psychological trauma experienced by our soldiers after or before they return home. I suppose that the Canadian Forces could do a number of things, perhaps better choose the soldiers or prepare them better. However, I do not think we can base our refusal to get involved on this factor, as tragic as it may be.

We often hear Canadians say that we cannot afford to intervene. May I remind this House that Canada spends \$10 billion on national defence. I think it is a false argument to say that we cannot afford it.

The Canadian Forces should look for a new orientation. In the report on the policy statement, we suggested that the government review the make-up of the Canadian Armed Forces. Since peacekeeping is really what we are best at and are involved in on a regular basis, the whole National Defence structure should focus on this new make-up.

Mr. Speaker, I am out of time. But I would just like to remind the House that, if people are able to fight and kill one another, it is because there are others out there who are manufacturing weapons. In that regard, I want to denounce the fact that four permanent members of the Security Council manufacture 80 per cent of all weapons produced in the world. We will never denounce enough this kind of hypocrisy.

I will conclude with a quote from the Leader of the Opposition who stated on January 25, 1994: "what matters for the moment is to bear in mind that we must continue, insofar as our capabilities allow it, to fulfil our fair part of the obligations that result from our allegiance to the values of democracy, peace and justice, values which, given their universality, deserve our efforts to further them abroad".

(2100)

[*English*]

**Ms. Jean Augustine (Parliamentary Secretary to Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to join in the debate tonight on a subject of utmost concern and importance, especially to the people of Etobicoke—Lakeshore and indeed to all Canada.

In light of the UN Security Council consideration of renewed mandates for UN forces in the former Yugoslavia and of the

coming rotation of Canadian forces serving with UNPROFOR in the region, it is important that we have the debate tonight.

We live in a global village and very often the events that occur in the international community have a direct or indirect effect on Canada. We have seen evidence of this in the economy, in our social policy and in issues of security. We have a responsibility to the global village, especially when human rights are being violated.

The importance of peacekeeping to Canadians is obvious from the three times since January 1994 that the government has called a special debate on Canada's role as a peacekeeper throughout the world. In the past year we have dealt specifically with our commitments to UN missions in Rwanda, in Haiti and in the former Yugoslavia.

In the debates that took place members consistently referred with pride to previous Canadian participation in UN peacekeeping missions in Korea, Egypt, Vietnam, the Middle East and Latin America, to name a few.

Numerous members of the Etobicoke—Lakeshore community have been involved in peacekeeping activities around the world since the inception of the UN peacekeeping force. Their contribution to the security of our country and to peace in the world is something that my constituents and I will always be grateful for.

Described as an imaginative worker for peace, Lester B. Pearson received the Nobel Peace Prize for his leadership in bringing about the creation of the UN peacekeeping force. Canada has a proud history of participation in peacekeeping operations both under UN and non-UN auspices. Few if any countries have a more impressive record of dedicated and professional contribution to this essential activity.

Nowhere have dedication and professionalism been more evident than with our Canadian peacekeepers currently providing relief to the victims of the war in the former Yugoslavia. Some 2,080 Canadian troops now monitor UN protected areas in Croatia, provide protection for relief convoys and refugees in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and monitor ceasefire agreements in both countries.

Canada has supported the participation of its forces in this UN mission to promote peaceful settlement and to provide relief to its many victims. As one of the largest contingents to the UN protection force Canadians have selflessly put themselves in danger by undertaking difficult assignments. Service women and men have participated in the European community monitor mission and non-UN mission overseeing the ceasefire throughout the former Yugoslavia and were instrumental in opening Sarajevo airport for the delivery of humanitarian relief supplies.

Canada has also provided a ship to sanction enforcement operations in the Adriatic Sea and has deployed a naval support ship and the Aurora maritime patrol aircraft to this effort. In

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addition, the NATO AWACS aircraft enforcing the no fly zone over Bosnia includes Canadians.

One must always recognize the daily acts of courage of individual peacekeepers. The threat of danger the Canadian personnel might encounter during the course of a day is what many of us here at home can only imagine. Their presence in this war torn region presents a risk to their lives and is a constant worry to their families at home.

(2105)

One must always ask whether we can continue to make a difference. We know our presence in the Balkans has made a difference to the children, the elderly, the women and all other innocent victims of this cruel war.

Is the UN presence continuing to make a difference to the peace process? If the answer is yes, it is our responsibility to remain in the area. If little progress is being made toward peace, the government must seriously consider our current commitment.

The service of Canadian peacekeepers in Bosnia and Croatia has not been without its ordeals. In the last six months the danger to our Canadian peacekeepers has increased daily. Many Canadians have been shot at by snipers and non-UN soldiers. Several of them have been seriously injured.

In November, 55 Canadian soldiers were taken hostage and held against their will for over two weeks behind the confrontation lines of this war torn country. The time has now come to reconsider our commitment to the mission in Bosnia and Croatia. That is the purpose of the debate tonight.

In light of the increase in risk to the lives of Canadians we must come to a decision on whether to send neutrals to the UN peacekeeping mission in the former Yugoslavia and we must consider our role.

We have not stopped the fighting but we have prevented the war from spreading to other regions. We have made accomplishments in the region and have made a difference to the lives of many families living in the midst of a horrifying war.

Canada's involvement is said to create the breathing space within which diplomats and political leaders can negotiate a peaceful solution to a bloody war. New developments have taken place since we last debated the subject in the House.

As the defence minister recently mentioned, Croatian President Tudjman stated that he wanted all UNPROFOR to leave Croatia. An agreement was worked out, however, and the details of these terms and conditions are presently being negotiated.

The dynamics are now changing and the UN forces are undergoing a restructuring process that will affect all participants in the UN mission. Under the new agreement Canada's role should be to continue to help implement a ceasefire

agreement worked out with the maintenance of borders and the maintenance of the all important humanitarian measures.

At the moment we have about 2,100 soldiers preparing to replace the personnel who have been in Bosnia and Croatia since their tour of duty began six months ago. We know they will continue the excellent work being accomplished in the region but it is dangerous work.

We have also had excellent leadership on the issue from the Minister of National Defence and the Minister of Foreign Affairs. I commend their efforts. A good number of my constituents' comments on Canada's peacekeeping strength and their determination to ensure the promotion of international human rights and our humanitarian contribution in the Balkan region are on the record of the ministers.

In closing, Canadians continue to see peacekeepers as an important contribution to the maintenance of international order and stability. The people of Etobicoke—Lakeshore will after careful consideration continue to support the involvement of the Canadian forces in this peacekeeping effort. After all, we are helping to ease the suffering of millions of innocent people.

I am confident we will continue to fulfil our international obligations through negotiations and peacekeeping to bring about peace in the Balkan region.

**Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise on behalf of my constituents in Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt to participate in the debate this evening.

We on this side of the House realize that the final decision is the responsibility of the government. We appreciate that the government gave us the opportunity to be heard tonight on this very important issue.

The government said it would like to hear what we had to say in order to help it make the decision whether or not we should continue to maintain our present commitment in the former Yugoslavia.

(2110)

Interestingly this is a take note debate regarding the rotation of Canadian forces. The hon. member for Red Deer earlier used the words of an Eagles song, one of my favourite musical groups. I am not sure which group sang this song: "Leaving on a Jet Plane". In actual fact the troops' bags are packed. They are set to go. On Monday they leave for Bosnia and Croatia in this troop rotation.

According to my calendar today's date is March 29. The commitment to the former Yugoslavia ends on April 1. Yet the government wants to consult Canadians by holding an emergency debate tonight at the 11th hour. We all know nothing can be done to stop that rotation from taking place.

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Members of the Reform Party have made very clear their position on the issue. We should announce and make very clear that Canada intends to withdraw from the former Yugoslavia. We should give the UN a three-month notice of that decision. The reason we are taking this position is that we know it would be very difficult for us to pull out immediately and leave a vacuum until another nation is able to step in and take over where we left off.

I feel, therefore, that we should be debating whether Canada should commit continued peacekeepers to the former Yugoslavia in the long run. If we do not debate the issue now, when will the issue be debated?

Recognizing the fact that the debate should have occurred weeks ago, I state unequivocally that we should pull out and give the UN three months notice. Many people on the other side of the House may be asking why we should pull out of the former Yugoslavia. There are numbers of reasons why we should leave.

Despite our past history as peacekeepers to all the world's troubled regions, I feel strongly that in this new world order of regional, ethnic and tribal conflict running rampant and with Canada's own defence resources shrinking at an alarming rate the government must develop a commitment criterion to give us a guide for future deployments of our peacekeeping troops.

On December 1, 1994 the Reform caucus issued a statement which outlined the four conditions that should be met to keep Canadian peacekeepers in the former Yugoslavia. We developed these criteria because of the numerous violations and because Canadian troops were being held hostage.

At that time we said, first, that all UN detainees should be released immediately; second, that the warring factions should agree to cease all aggressive actions toward the UNPROFOR troops; third, that the Sarajevo airport should be immediately reopened and all humanitarian aid should be allowed to proceed without interference by any of the warring factions; and, fourth, that a ceasefire should be put in place and honoured by all sides.

Let us look at each one of the points individually. Even though all UN detainees have been released there is still no guarantee that the warring factions would not undertake such activity again. As a matter of fact with the situation in Bosnia we are in close contact with Serbian troops on a daily basis. It is a very volatile situation. It is something that could possibly happen.

There have been less aggressive acts toward UNPROFOR over the past couple of months but incidents do occur. There is no guarantee in place by the warring factions to prevent any future aggressive acts. All humanitarian aid is not getting through. Anyone who says it is, is simply not stating the truth.

Two weeks ago the Montreal *Gazette* reported that there was a desperate food shortage in the Bihac pocket because of the heavy fighting between government troops and the alliance of Bosnia Serbs, Croatian Serbs and the renegade Bosnian Muslims. I would like to quote from the Associated Press report:

The Serbs generally refuse to give the United Nations permission to move convoys into the region through Serb-held territory. The United Nations does not have a mandate to use force to get its humanitarian aid through.

The UN World Food Program, based in Rome, said only 5,000 people in the enclave get regular meals from public kitchens. Patients in hospitals eat only one meal a day.

Only an estimated 20 per cent of the people trapped in the region have received any donated food during the past six months, the agency said.

(2115)

The reason for the failure of the first three criteria is due to the failure of the fourth criterion which the Reform Party laid down. There is no ceasefire in place in Bosnia that is being honoured by all sides. Do the warring factions even actually want peace? Are they willing to make a lasting truce upon which a negotiated peaceful settlement will be found?

In the case of Bosnia it appears the answer is a resounding no. The combatants do not want peace. Short-lived truces are only holding long enough for the combatants to reform and refit. As we can see, the latest truce between the Bosnian government and the rebel Serbs is crumbling. It is crumbling as we debate this issue tonight. As UN spokesman Alexander Ivanko said yesterday: "It is our understanding both parties continue to opt for a military option".

We must consider the facts. Without a meaningful negotiation between the combatants, peace is only wishful thinking. The role of a peacekeeper is to keep the combatants apart while they negotiate peace. There is no peace and there is no negotiation. Canadian troops are more like pawns in a game of chess between the differing parties. The threat of interference by both Serbs and Bosnians has not been reduced.

It is dangerous to train and equip our troops for traditional peacekeeping missions when we are putting them into a situation which cannot succeed, where there is no peace or a will for peace between the parties.

Many in the House will defend our humanitarian role on grounds that the civilians would be worse off without the peacekeepers. I can sympathize with that because I travelled there. We should be very proud of our troops. They have done a good job.

In the short term it may be true that the presence of UN peacekeepers in Bosnia may have prevented widespread starvation. However, at the same time the UN presence may have actually perpetuated division, squalor and low-level fighting for longer than would otherwise have been the case. We must

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ask: Is the present morass a success or has the United Nations become part of the problem despite its best intentions?

The fact remains that the UN's involvement in Bosnia is in limbo, with the very strong possibility that Canadians will be forced into a situation of peacemaking. If the international community is serious about making peace, then maybe the military role ought to be handed over to NATO with a mandate to end the fighting through military means. Yes, I know that solution is also problematic. It is again possible that nothing will be solved. The warring parties will not have settled their differences and fighting would resume once NATO withdrew.

This House must recognize that we should only be sending troops on peacekeeping missions where the warring parties have fought their battles and are ready to negotiate and to sit down at the negotiating table to come to terms with a lasting peace.

What we are doing is committing our soldiers and our nation to a moral dilemma. We must stay forever or else by leaving, become responsible for the resumption of hostilities. Canada cannot afford and has no moral authority to become not only the world's policeman but a permanent benevolent occupier in troubled areas.

(2120)

Is this commitment going to turn into one of 29 years or more in the former Yugoslavia as we ended up committing ourselves to in Cyprus? Remember this is just another chapter in a centuries old conflict that appears to be without an end.

As we debate this issue in the House tonight we can clearly see that none of the four criteria outlined by the Reform caucus has been met. Support for our continued presence in Bosnia is waning at home as well.

I heard one of the members on the other side of the House ask: What are your constituents saying? In my riding we conducted a telephone poll and 68 per cent of the constituents told me they would like us to leave as quickly as possible.

For just 30 seconds, Mr. Speaker, I would quickly like to turn to Croatia where President Tudjman would like to see UN peacekeepers, at least he did say he would like them out of—

**The Deputy Speaker:** I am sorry, the member's time is up unless there is unanimous consent. There are at least six other members who were hoping to speak in this debate, as I understand it. Is there unanimous consent to give the member additional time beyond his 10 minutes?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Very well, the member has unanimous consent.

**Mr. Hart:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the members of the House.

President Tudjman in Croatia has had a change of heart and said he would like to keep some peacekeepers in Croatia. The problem is that the only peacekeepers he would like to remain would be unarmed monitors. That is not satisfactory in this volatile situation. We should get our troops out before any further fighting begins. We should give the United Nations three months warning that we are planning to do that so it can fill the vacuum when we leave.

Finally, all Canadians can be proud of the Canadian troops who have served their country valiantly and well in the former Yugoslavia.

**Mr. Leonard Hopkins (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this has been a very good debate tonight. I congratulate all those who have spoken for their candour and openness and for putting their points forward.

We have to remind ourselves that Canada was one of the key founders of the United Nations, one of the key partners in that formation.

Today's problems are many and great, as has been pointed out. However they pale significantly when one recalls the world wars and catastrophes that have occurred over the history of mankind. The United Nations was founded to try to prevent that from happening again. It requires every responsible nation that belongs to the UN to pull its weight and to work toward the aim of peace, regardless of how frustrating and how crooked that road may seem.

Many Canadian peacekeepers have served in the former Yugoslavia, particularly in Bosnia—Hercegovina and Croatia. Today some 2,080 are over there performing their role on behalf of Canada and the international community.

It behoves each and every one of us in the House tonight to thank the people who have served there in the past and in other peacekeeping duties around the world. They have served Canada well and will continue to do so. It also behoves us tonight to thank the Canadian people at large for the support they have given our Canadian soldiers as they go about doing their great mission on behalf of international peace.

Recently we heard that the Bosnian Serbs have called for a general mobilization. That is bad news. It almost seems as if when summertime comes the weather is better for fighting. It is a sad commentary on mankind.

(2125)

Hatred is older than the hills, but it is there and it must be dealt with. It must be dealt with by responsible nations, those that maintain their calmness in duty and have very specific responsible aims in place as they look to the future.

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This has not only been a great challenge for the United Nations. It has created frustration for many as well. This is the largest UN operation to date. Therefore, it undoubtedly demands the greatest cohesion and togetherness we are going to see in a UN operation probably since the Korean war.

We have had many fires to put out along the road of international history over the last half century since the founding of the United Nations, but this is not a time to let go of the traces. It is not a time to stop pulling for peace in the world for which we all strive.

There is a Chinese proverb which says that fury is nothing but the energy of weakness. Nothing exemplifies this statement any better than the ongoing circumstances in the former Yugoslavia. There is another saying that ignorance never settles a question. It simply keeps the argument all stirred up.

I love reading history. J. M. S. Careless wrote the book *Canada—A Story of Challenge*. The 19th chapter deals with a maturing nation. We must remember tonight that many people came from countries across Europe in the early days to settle in Canada. They came here to find peace, a place where they could make a life for their families. As we stand here tonight in the House we certainly can understand very well how many people in disturbed parts of the world must be looking forward to the days when they can see some peace.

Canada has worked on behalf of refugees, the children's fund, humanitarian supplies. We have put troops into very difficult situations. We have had an international airlift from Italy in Sarajevo since July 1992. The Canadian forces Hercules 130 transport planes have been busy with 1,600 flights, 11,300 passengers and 26,600 tonnes of food and medical supplies into Sarajevo. That is a small part of what our Canadian forces have done.

Tonight it behoves all of us to take into consideration the work that has been done to date. We must stand firm and work with our partners in the United Nations toward the goal of the UN for which it was founded half a century ago: to try to bring peace to mankind and some sanity to the world.

**The Deputy Speaker:** The time has expired for the three hours set aside for the debate.

**Mr. de Jong:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I seek unanimous consent of the House to extend the debate for myself and the member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca.

(2130)

**Mr. Flis:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. We also have two members who sat here all evening, participating and listening very carefully. I am wondering whether you could seek agreement to extend the debate to allow the remaining speakers

time but limit the debate to maybe five minutes each, which would not go beyond 9.50 p.m. or 10 p.m.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Certain members have indicated they wish to speak. Is there unanimous consent?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Simon de Jong (Regina—Qu'Appelle, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, it is not with pleasure that I join the debate. I am certain all members present do not find much joy in debating this subject. We have debated the topic several times. Parliament has sat late to debate our role in the former Yugoslavia.

This time as I listened to members from all political parties I sensed a sense of weariness with what our role has been. There is more weariness now than I heard in previous debates.

The Reform Party is calling for our troops to be brought home. The minister of defence made it abundantly clear in his remarks that even if he recommits our troops it would only be for a limited period of time.

The Leader of the Opposition talked in terms of renewing our mandate because there is not much choice. The views expressed by the members of the House really reflect the mood in the country from coast to coast.

The lack of progress in ending hostilities, the ongoing flagrant denial of basic human rights while our troops under the UN command stand helplessly by, the incidents in which our troops were detained and humiliated as well as our budgetary problems have all added to the sense of weariness.

What are we doing there is the basic fundamental question that gets asked. It is important for us and for Canadians to realize the tremendous job Canadian troops have done. There would have been a lot more death, destruction, carnage, rape and denial of basic civilized human rights had there not been the United Nations and the Canadian troops present.

It is hard to quantify that but let there be no doubt Canadian troops have saved innocent lives. It is important that all Canadians tip their hats to the men and women both in the RCMP and in our military who have done a very professional job. Canada can be proud of them.

The frustration we feel is also the frustration the Croatian people feel. I and two other members of the House visited Croatia in June 1994. We talked to its foreign minister as well as members of its Parliament. Overwhelmingly they talked in terms of ending the Vance peace agreement of 1994, the mandate by which UNPROFOR forces are in Croatia.

The Croatians have the same fear the minister of defence expressed, that this becomes a permanent situation. Under the original agreement the local Serb groups were to be disarmed. There was to be UN monitoring and taking over heavy armaments. Non-Serbs were to be allowed back home. None of this has happened. The concern is this present occupation of almost

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one-third of Croatia by Serb forces will become a permanent situation.

When one looks at a map for the areas controlled by the Serbs, one sees how it prevents north-south and east-west communications and transportation in Croatia. Croatia cannot economically develop as long as this situation continues. There is a tremendous sense of frustration.

When President Tudjman called for an end to the mandate, he was not speaking for himself. It was a unanimous decision passed by the Parliament of Croatia. Because of international pressure the Croatian government has agreed to back down.

(2135)

An agreement was reached with Mr. Tudjman and the Vice-President of the United States, Al Gore, in Copenhagen. That agreement has not been implemented in a mandate. There is no agreement as things stand now for a new mandate. That is why the government a bit amiss when it asks the House for advice to renew that mandate. Right now no mandate exists.

The agreement reached in Copenhagen has not been finalized in an agreement that would allow a new mandate to be implemented in Croatia. In part what we are discussing here could very well be beside the point. The Croatian government has given until the end of May to reach this agreement. I understand the condition will continue as it is now until the end of May.

No agreement exists right now that would allow Canadian troops to stay in Croatia. Hopefully something can be achieved by the end of May. If it can be achieved, I urge the Canadian government to allow our Canadian troops to remain there for humanitarian purposes in the hope and prayer we all share, that peace can be achieved in that part of the world. Our prayers are with them.

**The Deputy Speaker:** I trust colleagues will agree to let the pages leave.

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Mr. George Proud (Hillsborough, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I can safely say every member of the House respects and honours our peacekeepers serving around the world. We all know the story of Lester B. Pearson inventing the concept we now call peacekeeping. Not all of us know Canada has participated in every United Nations military effort since Korea.

All this brings us to the debate at hand about the future of Canadian peacekeepers in the former Yugoslavia. Since the beginning of the conflict Canada has been an active participant helping end conflicts there. Through our partnerships in NATO, the organization for security and co-operation in Europe, and the international contact group in Yugoslavia we have sought ways to bring safety to that troubled land.

Canada has contributed almost \$60 million in humanitarian aid through various international and non-governmental organizations. Our presence in Bosnia and Croatia has helped save the lives of countless thousands of people. Our aid programs have helped to alleviate the sufferings of those trapped in these conflicts.

Many Canadians are questioning our role in the former Yugoslavia, whether we are even needed there. I believe we are needed there. We must stay there.

As has been said, 2,100 Canadians are serving as peacekeepers and monitors today in the former Yugoslavia. As part of our commitment to NATO, Canada is obligated to help protect the western European security. In keeping that commitment we are at the forefront of NATO expansion and we are helping prevent the Yugoslavian crisis from spilling over into other parts of Europe.

There is always a potential for peace. There is still a potential for peace in the former Yugoslavia. However, for that peace to exist there must be an end to the continual fighting among the various factions. Our humanitarian efforts are helping people realize they can get along in the spirit of co-operation and mutual understanding.

Our peacekeepers are there to prevent acts that might be destructive to any sense of understanding. After all, it was an assassin's bullets on the streets of Sarajevo that sparked the first world war.

(2140)

If our peacekeepers can prevent such a pivotal action from taking place, they must remain there to make sure this peace comes eventually. Our presence is necessary.

**Mr. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the House for allowing us to continue the debate this evening.

I would like to express my profound gratitude to the Canadian men and women who serve in our armed forces. They have received a lot of criticism of late, much of it unjustified. They have for many decades conducted themselves professionally, effectively and with bravery. Lest we forget, they have done us all proud. Some from the PPCLI come from my riding of Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, and I am deeply gratified to those people specifically.

The views I am going to express are those of my own. They are not held by my caucus. Although there is much on which we agree, on the bottom line of whether we should pull out of Bosnia and Hercegovina and Croatia we disagree. I do not think we should and I will give the following explanation.

Let us first understand what our troops are doing there. For over three years under UNPROFOR they have enabled the

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UNHCR to provide aid for those people who have nothing. Currently over six million people receive aid that would not have got to them had it not been for the troops of UNPROFOR and for those people who work with the UNHCR.

They diffuse situations on a daily basis which could blow up and cause death. They liaise between belligerents. They involve themselves in prisoner exchanges and their mere presence has prevented hundreds of thousands of people from being killed. Anybody who would like to disagree, who would allow this to occur, I would ask them to put themselves in the shoes of someone living in Srebrenica, Gorazde or Bihac and ask what they would like the international community to do if they were there.

If we were to move out, our other allies would leave and we can be certain there would be carnage, torture and mass killings on a scale which we have not yet seen. It would be an orgy of blood letting. We would see this courtesy of CNN.

Furthermore, we would see an expanded conflict. Not for a minute should we delude ourselves that the Croats will not start to fight with the Krajina-Serbs. Let us not delude ourselves that the Bosnian Muslims and the Bosnian Serbs will not attack each other. Let us not delude ourselves that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia would not get involved with the Krajina-Serbs or that Bosnia would not start to attack other people.

Then what will happen, because of our responsibilities under NATO, is we would be dragged into that. We would be dragged into an enlarged conflict which would cost us in terms of men and women and also in terms of dollars. That is exactly what will happen if we pull out and allow this to occur. There is no contingency plan for a pull out right now.

Therefore I propose, with my colleagues, that we put pressure on the belligerents to start keeping the Sarajevo airport open. Let us ensure our peacekeepers will be there to conduct and provide aid through the UNHCR. Let us also work with the United States to put pressure on the EU and the OSCE to find a regional solution to this problem because that is where it lies.

The former Yugoslavia has been called the shame of the west. We have not done what was required through preventive diplomacy to prevent this tragedy. It should be a lesson for those countries that will blow up in the future.

I do not think there will be a diplomatic solution to this problem. That is a tragedy. What will happen is the belligerents, the Serbs, the Croats and the Muslims, will fight it out and then diplomacy will occur. There is no way they want to solve this other than at the end of an assault rifle.

My primary concern is for the civilians who bear the brunt of these civil conflicts time and time again. We must provide a safe zone for those individuals and allow an area that will be protected with force by international troops so that civilians who choose to go there will be protected and have their basic needs met. Tragically what is going to happen is that the belligerents are going to fight. Rather than us actually being

those troops, we should work now to remove our troops and have EU troops take our place.

**Mr. John Murphy (Annapolis Valley—Hants, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise tonight to participate in this important debate.

I support, as does the government, a continued role for Canada's peacekeepers in the former Yugoslavia. Canada has an important role to play in finding solutions and in helping bring peace to the region.

Canada has a proud and distinctive record in preserving world peace and fostering global security. Since the creation of the first UN emergency force in 1956 there have been 26 other UN peacekeeping missions. In every case Canada participated in some way. This record of excellence has been further enhanced by our presence in the former Yugoslavia. From the beginning Canada has participated fully in efforts to promote a peaceful settlement to the conflict and provide relief to its victims.

In September 1991 we led the call for the UN security council to deal with the issue. However there are those who would argue that Canada should pull out. We do not think the problem is yet to be resolved. Despite our presence the conflict rages on with no end in sight.

It is true that we have not been able to secure peace in the region. For the peacekeepers involved, for all members of Parliament and for all Canadians, this is a grave issue of concern. While it is frustrating to see the conflict continue, we must remember the many positive contributions that Canada and other countries have made to the region. These contributions, as has been said here numerous times, are the delivery of food, medical supplies, clothing, shelter and so on.

Make no mistake about it. For those living in some of the war torn areas of the region, Canada's continued presence makes a difference. We have protected the lives of innocent victims of the conflict. We have a responsibility and a moral obligation to continue that help.

Our efforts also continue on the diplomatic front. We continue to consult regularly with all countries contributing troops to the UN protection force. By extending our commitment to the UN protection force we are by no means committing ourselves to the status quo. The valuable work our troops continue to do in the region cannot be seen in isolation from our efforts to find innovative solutions for peace.

Our experience over the past few years indicates that we need to explore more innovative options. Recent peacekeeping missions have shown that the traditional approach no longer applies. Clearly our long term commitment to international peace and security must be closely tied with efforts to make peace-keeping and, more important, peace building effective security mechanisms.

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Given our longstanding commitment in international peace-keeping, Canada has a wealth of experience to contribute to future discussions. By renewing our commitment we are sending a strong signal that Canada's first priority is to help find a peaceful settlement to the dispute.

In closing, I would like to read an excerpt from a letter I received from one of my constituents who was serving with the UN protection force. He writes: "Hello from southern Croatia. I hope people back home realize how dedicated their soldiers are. From what I have seen so far, everybody down here realizes how professional we Canadians are".

I would like to acknowledge the excellent work of Canada's peacekeepers stationed in the former Yugoslavia.

[*Translation*]

**The Deputy Speaker:** I thank all House of Commons employees who worked until close to 10 p.m.

The House now stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow, pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 9.49 p.m.)

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