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OFFICIAL REPORT
(HANSARD)

Tuesday, October 7, 2014

Speaker: The Honourable Andrew Scheer

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, October 7, 2014

The House met at 10 a.m.

[English]

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1005)

[English]

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

The Speaker: I have the honour, pursuant to section 66 of the Official Languages Act, to lay upon the table the annual report of the Commissioner of Official Languages, covering the period from April 1, 2013 to March 31, 2014.

[Translation]

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(3)(f), this report is deemed to have been permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Official Languages.

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[English]

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Speaker: I also have the honour to lay upon the table, pursuant to subsection 23(5) of the Auditor General Act, the fall 2014 report of the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development to the House of Commons with an addendum on environmental petitions from January 1 to June 30, 2014.

[Translation]

This report is deemed permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development.

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COMMON SENSE FIREARMS LICENSING ACT

Hon. Steven Blaney (Lévis—Bellechasse, CPC) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-42, An Act to amend the Firearms Act and the Criminal Code and to make a related amendment and a consequential amendment to other Acts.

(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed)

INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

Mr. David Tilson (Dufferin—Caledon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34(1), I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian delegation of the Canada-Europe Parliamentary Association respecting its participation in the second part of the 2014 ordinary session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, and its parliamentary mission to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, to the Holy See and Italy, the next country to hold the rotating presidency of the Council of the European Union, held in Strasbourg and Paris, France, and the Vatican and Rome, Italy, from April 7 to April 16.

* * *

PROTECTING BURNABY LAKES AND RIVERS ACT

Mr. Kennedy Stewart (Burnaby—Douglas, NDP) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-631, an act to amend the Navigation Protection Act (Burnaby Lake, Deer Lake and Brunette River).

He said: Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to introduce a private member's bill to restore key environmental protections to local lakes and rivers in my riding of Burnaby—Douglas.

The protecting Burnaby lakes and rivers act aims to re-add Burnaby Lake, Deer Lake, and the Brunette River to the official schedule of waterways protected in Canada. At the demand of oil and gas lobbyists, the Conservatives recently removed the protection of 98% of Canada's water bodies. As a result of these changes, proposed development projects would no longer need environmental assessments or public consultation before proceeding across our lakes and rivers.

We need to reverse this gutting of our environmental laws. That is why I am putting forward this legislation to re-protect Burnaby's waterways for my constituents.

I would like to thank the member for Burnaby—New Westminster, our excellent House leader, for his support on this issue and for stepping forward today to second this legislation.

In my riding, the stewardship of the Brunette River in particular has been a stellar example of our community coming together to preserve our cherished waterways. We need to make sure that our lakes and rivers are protected so that future generations can enjoy them as well.

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(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed)

* * *

[*Translation*]

PETITIONS

DEMENTIA

Mr. Claude Gravelle (Nickel Belt, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to present a petition signed by people in a number of communities in the riding of Nickel Belt, including Alban, Crystal Falls, Field, Verner, and Sturgeon Falls.

These people would like to draw the Minister of Health's attention to the fact that the government needs a national strategy for dementia and health care for people with Alzheimer's disease.

[*English*]

Mr. Glenn Thibeault (Sudbury, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to present a petition signed by hundreds of members of my great riding of Sudbury. They too are calling upon the federal government to create a national dementia strategy. These citizens would very much like this House to pass Bill C-356, an act respecting a National Strategy for Dementia, moved by my colleague from Nickel Belt. Therefore, I am happy to present this petition.

IMPAIRED DRIVING

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present a petition from citizens of Canada who want to see tougher laws and the implementation of new mandatory minimum sentencing for those persons convicted of impaired driving causing death.

The petitioners also want the Criminal Code of Canada to be changed to redefine the offence of impaired driving causing death as vehicular manslaughter.

WORKERS' RIGHTS

Mr. Matthew Kellway (Beaches—East York, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise today on World Day for Decent Work to present a petition arising out of the tragic deaths of 1,100 workers and injuries to 2,500 more in the collapse of Rana Plaza in Bangladesh.

The signatories to the petition remind this House that it is the fundamental right of all people, wherever they live in the world, to be able to go to work without fear for their safety or their lives, and they call upon the Government of Canada to endorse the Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh and to encourage Canadian companies that manufacture in Bangladesh to become signatories to the accord.

● (1010)

ANIMAL WELFARE

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I rise to present two petitions.

The first petition is on the subject of animal cruelty. The petitioners are from Edmonton, and they call on the House of Commons to recognize animals as being capable of feeling pain and needing to have better protection under the Criminal Code.

CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, the second petition is from hundreds of people from Sherbrooke, Quebec, London, Ontario, the Sunshine Coast of British Columbia, and Calgary calling on the Government of Canada to create and maintain stable, predictable, long-term funding for the national public broadcaster, the CBC.

[*Translation*]

CANADA POST

Ms. Françoise Boivin (Gatineau, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition to the House signed by Canadians from across the country. The petition is about the devastating cuts to postal services. These people are against these measures, and so am I.

* * *

[*English*]

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

Mr. Tom Lukiwski (Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

The Speaker: Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

MILITARY CONTRIBUTION AGAINST ISIL

MOTION THAT DEBATE BE NOT FURTHER ADJOURNED

Hon. Peter Van Loan (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, CPC): Mr. Speaker, with respect to the consideration of Government Business No. 13, I move:

That the debate be not further adjourned.

The Speaker: Pursuant to Standing 67.1, there will now be a 30-minute question period, and I will ask members to keep their questions or comments to about a minute and government responses to a similar length of time.

Mr. Peter Julian (Burnaby—New Westminster, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this is a very perplexing move on the part of the government. It is a sad move. It is now the 79th time that time allocation, or closure, has been used in this Parliament, and 79 times is a sad record that has never been equalled before by a government. There has never been a government that has been so inclined to impose closure and time allocation on this House.

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It is perplexing, because we already had agreement for a vote this evening, so for the government to then move to try to shut down debate, when there has already been agreement, is perhaps a way of keeping their own members of Parliament from speaking, as the member for St. John's East suggested. I do not know, but it is a perplexing imposition of closure, the 79th time in Parliament. In this case, it is completely unnecessary, because there was already broad agreement in this House to have a vote tonight.

My question to the Minister of Foreign Affairs is very simple. Since there was already agreement for a vote tonight, why is the government now imposing closure, time allocation, for the 79th time?

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if there is agreement, perhaps we could seek it, and we could have the vote at eight o'clock, and this would not be necessary.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is fairly well noted that the need for debate on the whole issue of what is taking place in Iraq has been highlighted. The Liberal foreign affairs critic was successful in bringing forward an emergency debate. Canadians are very much concerned about what is happening in Iraq and the role Canada needs to play.

The question I have is for the government House leader. Can the government House leader give a clear indication as to why it is the government has chosen to limit debate? I know first hand that there are a number of my colleagues who would love the opportunity to address this very important issue that is on the minds of Canadians from coast to coast to coast. Why is there a need to have time allocation? Why not allow for more debate on this very important issue?

Hon. John Baird: Mr. Speaker, quite simply, it is because the opposition asked for two things. First, it wanted a debate. Second, it wanted a vote. We are proposing to do both.

The government brought the official opposition critics and the critic for the Liberal Party to Iraq so that they could meet with officials, as I did, in Baghdad and Erbil and see the front lines. The government voluntarily called the committee back early and presented its position at the time. It supported the call for an emergency debate when Parliament returned.

We will have the occasion to debate this issue for two full days here in Parliament. However, part of the political process is to not just debate; it is to take a vote on where members stand. That is exactly what we are proposing.

•(1015)

Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, we had an interesting debate yesterday. I do not know why, in the midst of that, the government House leader decided that they had to have a closure motion to bring it to an end.

On the government side mostly we have heard from ministers or parliamentary secretaries. I am sure there are a lot of backbenchers on the government side who would like to participate in this debate, and maybe a lot of other people over here.

Why insist on bringing the debate to a speedy close, when it is an important mission? Some of the speeches have been full of rhetoric,

but this is an important debate. Questions need to be asked and answered.

I do not know why we are going through this process.

Hon. John Baird: Mr. Speaker, I find it quite interesting that my friend from Newfoundland is raising this point, when his own House leader, just a few moments ago, in this very place, said that his party was prepared to have a vote at eight o'clock and that it found the amount of time that had been allocated to be sufficient.

I, for one, agree with his House leader that the amount of time the government proposed is sufficient. It certainly had the agreement of the official opposition.

Ms. Joyce Murray (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I share the view of my colleague from Winnipeg North that there are many of our colleagues would like to speak on this important debate who did not have the chance to go on the trip to Iraq. They have important views to share.

I would ask the Minister of Foreign Affairs to reverse this closure.

I would also like to point out that this really fits into the way he has been positioning this whole issue, which is either that we are for a combat air strike air bombing role or we are free riders. I find it very counterproductive for respected parliamentarians to be making this a divisive issue. In fact, most of our allies have not done that. They have brought their colleagues from all parties in. They have sought to get a consensus on the matter. Very few have gone forward with a combat role. Other countries, like Germany and Italy, which the minister incorrectly claimed were supporting the combat role in the media a few days ago, are not part of a combat role.

In the debate, the minister's very respected colleague from Edmonton Centre said that there are all kinds of important roles for coalition countries to play. Some are combat roles. Some are not. Each of them is an important contribution—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): Order, please. The hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Hon. John Baird: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite had an opportunity to participate in the debate today. If there are other members of her party who wish to join the debate, we will all be here until 8 o'clock this evening debating this matter. It is also debated every day in the House of Commons in question period.

We had an emergency debate when Parliament returned. The committee was seized with this issue. We called it back early. We will continue to debate the issues of the day. Both of the opposition parties have opposition days when this can be further debated and discussed in this place.

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[Translation]

Mr. Alain Giguère (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by apologizing. It seems that I mistakenly misled the House yesterday. In a question I asked, I said that three Iraqi divisions of 50,000 men were defeated in two days by 15,000 jihadists near the city of Mosul. I later consulted *The Guardian* to verify the information and cross-referenced it with information from the Iraqi government, and apparently 30,000 Iraqi soldiers and 30,000 Iraqi police officers and constables who were defending the city of Mosul were routed in two days by 800 jihadists. They were outnumbered 75 to 1, but they won. Imagine. We are going to be supporting the people who lost even though they outnumbered their opponents 75 to 1.

Second, my question about the relevance of this debate is this: does this desire to put an end to the debate arise from information obtained today about the fighting, which is that air strikes have been ineffective and the Turkish government has officially called for our soldiers to intervene on the ground?

• (1020)

[English]

Hon. John Baird: Mr. Speaker, I think when Mosul fell, there was no outside aerial support for those trying to protect religious minorities.

I suppose if we had adopted the definition of success and the criteria that the New Democratic Party sets out on this, we would not have been able to justify previous missions, whether World War I, World War II, Korea, or elsewhere.

I do think it is important that we have a good debate in this place. The member opposite's party was supportive of the timeframe that the government laid out and, frankly, we agree.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saannich—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. minister for the debate, but I do object to the closure for the following reasons.

Side conversations with the minister just before the House resumed have given me more information than I have had through this debate.

I will not be able to speak on the current speaking order with closure, but I appreciate greatly that all members allowed me to have an opportunity on Friday, through unanimous consent.

However, being aware of the time, I was hoping that I would have an opportunity for a full presentation of at least 10 minutes. There are options that the Green Party would prefer we pursued rather than aerial bombardment, which we still believe could be counter-productive.

A fuller debate would make a big difference. I ask the hon. minister if he would not reconsider or at least provide a speaking slot to the Green Party out of one of the many repetitious Conservative presentations.

Hon. John Baird: Mr. Speaker, I certainly appreciate the non-partisan nature of the member opposite's comments.

Mr. Tyrone Benskin (Jeanne-Le Ber, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this closure motion is particularly disturbing. As my hon. colleague said, there was an agreement in terms of the debate continuing and then

voting tonight. Now we are in a situation where we are basically wasting an hour on this debate and vote on closure, rather than spending it on the important work of trying to figure out how to come to consensus on this military action.

Hon. John Baird: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite said there was agreement. I seek agreement. If we can adopt this motion on division, we can resume the debate right away on this important question before the House.

If the member would like to seek agreement to call the question, and that it be approved on division, we can return back to the debate as the member opposite would like. I hope he will support my suggestion.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): Before I go to questions and comments, the chair is presuming the minister is speaking rhetorically. If in fact he wishes to move a motion, he is familiar with that procedure.

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, let me be clear. We have not been in agreement with the Conservatives' use of closure and time allocation. They have used it not once, or 12 times, or 70 times, but 79 times. This has been the reality of the current government. The Conservatives invoke closure and time allocation at a snap of the finger.

The point we have been making, and the point the members for St. John's East and Jeanne-Le Ber just made, is that the government has changed the focus of the debate that we were to have yesterday and today, and instead we are now having a debate around the 79th use of closure by the government. It is absolutely unacceptable.

No, we do not support the use of closure. We think the government was wrong-headed in bringing this in. It just shows how the Conservative government likes to impose its view rather than have the kind of debate that should be part and parcel of what we do as parliamentarians here in the House.

We will not agree to closure. We will not agree to time allocation. We will not agree with the 79 times the current government has snapped its fingers and tried to impose its will on the opposition. It is simply wrong to do this.

The government should be allowing the discussions to continue. Rather than having a debate on closure, we should be debating the mission and our disagreement with the government's approach right now in the House of Commons. However, we cannot do that because of the government's closure motion.

Hon. John Baird: Mr. Speaker, the member should check the record. The House leader of the official opposition was very clear when he said there was agreement to vote on this at eight o'clock. That is exactly what this government is proposing we do.

I do share the view with my colleague, the House leader for the official opposition. We have in this Parliament the most unreasonable official opposition that we have ever had in this country, and that is indeed regrettable.

•(1025)

Ms. Yvonne Jones (Labrador, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge the fact that the government agreed to bring the motion to the House for debate. It is a motion of immense proportion and it would have a tremendous impact on Canadians. Regrettably, the government is going to stifle debate. This is not unlike the tactics it often performs in controlling and asserting itself in the House of Commons. It is unfortunate that it has chosen to do this.

The irony in all of this is that we are debating this important motion during Mental Health Week. Many Canadians have asked me what the government is doing for our soldiers and our veterans who have already come home from combat and are receiving no services.

As the government revs up the CF-18s, I would like to ask the minister what the government is doing for all of the soldiers and veterans in our country who are suffering immensely today because of combat efforts.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): Before I go to the hon. minister, I would like to remind all hon. members that they ought to keep both their questions and their comments relevant to the matter that is before the House, which is the closure motion and the motion itself.

Hon. John Baird: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of National Defence would welcome the opportunity to discuss the range of mental health supports. Canadian society over the last 25 years under successive governments is coming to grips with mental health issues. These issues were never discussed for far too long, and the government has taken a number of leadership roles with respect to that.

We are having a debate in this place. We did not have a debate when our troops went to Afghanistan the first time. There is no legal or constitutional requirement to have one. We are having a debate because the Prime Minister respects Parliament. The Prime Minister made commitments when we were both a minority and a majority government about having a debate before our men and women are sent into combat missions. He is living up to that commitment of accountability.

[Translation]

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé (Saint-Lambert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is astounding to see that this government is using time allocation yet again. This time, it will cut short a debate that is crucially important to us as parliamentarians and to Canadians.

How can the minister justify his behaviour in the House to Canadians? How can he justify muzzling debate and, by extension, our constituents?

[English]

Hon. John Baird: Mr. Speaker, this government is simply adopting the time for debate that the party opposite supported. The member's own House leader stood in this place at the outset of this debate and said that his party would be happy to have a vote at 8 o'clock and that is exactly what we are proposing.

Mr. David Sweet (Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Westdale, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have heard the opposition talk erroneously many times about limiting debate. I wonder if the minister might be able to share with the House how often Parliament

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was previously consulted when military action was taken prior to the Conservative Party taking leadership.

Hon. John Baird: Parliament was not consulted, Mr. Speaker.

The only sin of the member opposite is that she was once a Liberal member of Parliament; otherwise she is a great parliamentarian and wonderful person.

The Liberal Party, of which she was a member, never had a parliamentary debate when our forces left for Afghanistan. This is something that the Prime Minister campaigned on, and we have honoured that, whether we had a minority or majority government. A key part of the parliamentary process is a vote. All members of the House wanted a debate and a vote, and that is exactly what this government is providing.

Mr. Ted Hsu (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, given that the Conservative government has decided to limit debate on the current motion, does the government have plans to provide briefings to opposition members of Parliament, which may include non-public information that may be required for opposition members to carry out their duties of holding the government to account?

Hon. John Baird: Mr. Speaker, I have taken opposition members to meet with Iraqi and Kurdish officials. I gave them full access to all of the meetings I had. They could participate, ask questions, and make comments. As the hon. member's leader mentioned yesterday, I have had occasion to reach out to him on occasion when Parliament was not in session.

The government is certainly prepared to work with parliamentarians and answer all reasonable questions.

•(1030)

[Translation]

Ms. Françoise Boivin (Gatineau, NDP): Mr. Speaker, thank goodness I have seen the light. That is what I am tempted to say to the hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs.

That said, I know that this issue is extremely important to the people of my riding of Gatineau. I receive emails and telephone calls every day from people who do not necessarily agree with the government's position. This is an extremely important debate. This is probably one of the most important decisions a country has to make.

In light of that, I understand the argument put forward by the hon. member for Burnaby—New Westminster to the effect that we already agreed to a vote at 8 p.m. I want to repeat his question, since I did not hear the response. Why take away an hour of debate on something this important? At the very least, we could have heard from four or five more members of the House and tried to foster the broadest possible consensus or heard as many opinions as possible.

Hon. John Baird: Mr. Speaker, if my dear colleague, the hon. member for Gatineau, and all the members of her party unanimously agree to a vote at 8 p.m., as she said, and if no one else rises to speak to this motion, we can immediately return to the focus of today's debate. We are prepared to do that if the House agrees.

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[*English*]

Ms. Elizabeth May: Mr. Speaker, it is a rare opportunity to follow up with the minister. I do apologize to the minister if he interpreted anything I said as partisan, as that was his response. However, I do want to ask him once again if he does not think it would be fairer, in the interest of a full debate, if there were not closure, so that those of us who actually have original points can put them forward. I asked him before the mace came in this morning, when we were able to consult informally, if there would not be an opportunity to explore other ideas that could actually make a difference on the ground.

We have heard from very knowledgeable foreign affairs experts—such as former ambassador Peggy Mason and foreign affairs expert Robert Fowler, who himself has had tragic and terrifying exposure to a terrorist organization, being held hostage in Mali—that the mission as proposed could do more harm than good. Therefore, without trying to adequately explore what could do more good than harm and what other opportunities are out there, this debate becomes foreshortened into a false choice between doing something that could be stupid and doing something else. I think we need more time.

Hon. John Baird: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite, my friend from Saanich—Gulf Islands, to whom I made complimentary remarks yesterday, while I do not agree with her, while I think she is wrong, I think she is principled in her position on this issue.

She did say that members on one side of the House just make repetitive speeches, but only apparently she is able to give good speeches. I think there are rules that allow parliamentarians to speak. Not every parliamentarian can speak to every issue. That is a reality we all have to come to understand in a Parliament of 308 members.

As do many Canadians, the government sees evil people doing very bad things and we want to help stop it. We can look at additional measures, as we have, whether humanitarian support or something I am very passionate about, tackling rape as a weapon of war and sexual violence in conflict. Whether we do this through diplomatic efforts to ensure there is an inclusive program with the new government in Iraq, whether it is ongoing efforts at deradicalization, stopping foreign fighters, there are many other things we could do beyond this resolution, on which the government will continue to work.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Éline Michaud (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I just heard the minister say that there are rules in this House to ensure that members have the right to speak. He said that not every member can speak to every issue, and I understand completely. However, if the government would stop limiting debate, more members would have a chance to speak, express themselves and share their constituents' concerns with the government. The Conservatives have very few representatives in certain regions, so they have very little opportunity to find out what people in those regions are thinking. They should welcome the opportunity to hear about it in the House.

I would therefore like to know why, for the 79th time, the government is playing fast and loose with the rules of the House,

rules that are there to ensure that all parliamentarians can represent their constituents properly?

• (1035)

Hon. John Baird: Mr. Speaker, we obey the standing orders of the House of Commons. That is not simply a goal; it is mandatory. You are here, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that everyone follows the rules. We agree to have a vote at 8 p.m., the time proposed by the official opposition. The motion currently before us confirms that.

[*English*]

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it seems that as we debate the 79th motion for closure, the government does not take seriously the need to debate critical issues. What more important issue is there than sending our country to war and members of our military personnel into harm's way? All we are asking for is to speak on behalf of our constituents, the Canadians who sent us here.

If the minister and his government are so passionate about this issue, why will they not allow an open debate on an issue as important as sending our country to war?

Hon. John Baird: Mr. Speaker, what this government is doing is having a vote at eight o'clock tonight. That is the exact time the New Democratic Party wanted to have a vote—

Mr. Peter Julian: You said tonight.

Hon. John Baird: —8 p.m. tonight.

We will debate this today. We debated it yesterday. We had an emergency debate on it two weeks ago. We brought the committee back early and debated it every day between 2:15 p.m. and 3 p.m. The opposition, if it would like additional days, has a certain amount of opposition days.

If this is so important, as the member opposite says, there are many opposition days and her party has yet to use one on this issue. If it is the most crucial and important issue, as she suggests, I know it will.

Ms. Yvonne Jones: Mr. Speaker, I have a very quick question for the minister before we conclude all of this debate, unfortunately.

Can he tell me which countries are engaging in a combat role and which ones are in a non-combat role? Also if Canada is to go in a combat role, how will that affect the work that we would be doing in terms of humanitarian aid and other supports in a non-combat role?

Hon. John Baird: Mr. Speaker, I say to the member opposite that I guess it depends on how one defines “combat”.

The German government is not sending fighter planes. It is providing arms and munitions to troops on the ground there. In the United Kingdom, all three party leaders supported this initiative. They are conducting the combat mission that Canada's is contemplating with the motion before the House, as well as France and the United States.

If we look at our friends in the Arab world, Jordan is participating in a measure similar to Canada. The United Arab Emirates is participating. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is participating as we are. Bahrain is participating as we are. Denmark is participating as we are. Belgium is participating as we are. It is a long list and we are in good company.

Mr. Peter Julian: Mr. Speaker, we are seeing from the Minister of Foreign Affairs the same kind of imagination that he used in inventing the idea that the UN resolution in some way justified the government's intervention in his trying to pretend that the NDP had agreed to a certain time tonight for debate and a vote. The point I was making earlier and the point that I stress again is that there had been broad consensus in terms of a vote tonight, though not in terms of the exact time.

However, the issue here is the use of closure, which will take well over an hour out of the debate today that members of Parliament wanted to be engaged in. Certainly the government has shown a profound disrespect yet again, 79 times, to Parliament by invoking closure at the drop of a hat rather than discussing with opposition parties or establishing the kind of consensus that is needed.

My point back to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the question is very simple. Why does the government never seek consensus or discussion and always seek to impose its view?

Hon. John Baird: Mr. Speaker, it might surprise the member opposite, but I share his concern. I wish there could be better collaboration between the government and the opposition, and the opposition and the government. When I say "opposition", I mean all members whether independent, Green, Liberal or New Democratic. It is unfortunate that these things cannot be dealt with. The fact that it has risen to such a level speaks just as much about the official opposition as it does about the government.

When I was in opposition in the province of Ontario, opposition members did something remarkable. We actually worked with the government on a programming motion where, instead of debating day after day the most inconsequential bill, with the most consequential bills getting the same amount of time, we could come up with a motion, get a certain amount of work done in a prescribed amount of time, and all members could structure the debate and allocate how much would be on important issues and how much would be on less important issues.

Unfortunately, we have a situation now where the opposition wants to debate everything without ever having a vote on anything. We also have important responsibilities to move forward the people's business. I wish there could be a greater meeting of the minds and perhaps this debate will inspire everyone to do better.

● (1040)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Paulina Ayala (Honoré-Mercier, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I listened to the minister's comments.

By muzzling the debate, the government is saying that we should work with it because it has a majority and we should reach a consensus. To reach a consensus, however, it is important to listen to the minority, those who are not part of the government, namely, the

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opposition. In a democracy, the government does not have absolute power. That is undemocratic.

Let us be clear: we have a majority government in a parliamentary system that is supposed to be based on dialogue and agreements. How is it a dialogue when a majority government makes all the decisions regarding votes? That is not a dialogue at all. It actually puts our democracy in danger.

Since the minister was talking about working together, why is the government not more open to dialogue and more accepting of the opinions of others?

[*English*]

Hon. John Baird: Mr. Speaker, I think at some point in our history there might have been an opportunity where people came into this place and made impassioned speeches and spoke to the current issues of the day.

I have been here in this Parliament for more than three years. I have yet to see one single member of the official opposition, ever, not once, not one MP on one vote, vote against his or her party.

I, as a minister, a senior minister, have stood and voted against my own government on one or two issues, and I do not have a problem with that.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): The time for questions has expired. It is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of the motion now before the House.

The question is on the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): In my opinion the nays have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): Call in the members.
● (1120)

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(*Division No. 250*)

YEAS

Members

Ablonczy
Adler
Albas

Adams
Aglukkaq
Albrecht

Government Orders

Alexander	Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)	Bellavance	Bennett
Allison	Ambler	Benskin	Bevington
Ambrose	Anders	Blanchette	Boivin
Anderson	Armstrong	Boutin-Sweet	Brahi
Aspin	Baird	Brisson	Brosseau
Barlow	Bateman	Byrne	Caron
Benoit	Bergen	Casey	Cash
Bernier	Bezan	Chan	Chicoine
Blaney	Block	Chisholm	Choquette
Boughen	Braid	Christopherson	Cleary
Breitkreuz	Brown (Leeds—Grenville)	Comartin	Côté
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)	Brown (Barrie)	Crowder	Cullen
Bruinooge	Butt	Cuzner	Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)
Calandra	Calkins	Davies (Vancouver East)	Day
Cannan	Carmichael	Dewar	Dionne Labelle
Carrie	Chisu	Dubé	Dubourg
Chong	Clarke	Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Clement	Crockatt	Dusseauit	Easter
Daniel	Davidson	Eyking	Foote
Dechert	Dreeschen	Freeland	Freeman
Duncan (Vancouver Island North)	Dykstra	Fry	Garneau
Falk	Fantino	Garrison	Genest
Fast	Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)	Giguère	Goodale
Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)	Fletcher	Gravelle	Grogueh
Galipeau	Gallant	Harris (Scarborough Southwest)	Harris (St. John's East)
Gill	Glover	Hsu	Hughes
Goguen	Goldring	Hyer	Jacob
Goodyear	Gosal	Jones	Julian
Gourde	Grewal	Kellway	Lamoureux
Harper	Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)	Lapointe	Larose
Hawn	Hayes	Latendresse	Laverdière
Hillyer	Hoback	LeBlanc (Beauséjour)	Leslie
Holder	James	Liu	Mai
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)	Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)	Marston	Martin
Kennedy (Calgary Southeast)	Kent	Masse	Mathysen
Kerr	Komarnicki	May	McCallum
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lake	McGuinty	McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)
Lauzon	Lebel	Michaud	Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)
Leef	Leitch	Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)	Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)
Lemieux	Leung	Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)	Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)
Lizon	Lobb	Mourani	Mulcair
Lukiwski	Lunney	Murray	Nantel
MacKay (Central Nova)	MacKenzie	Nash	Nunez-Melo
Maguire	Mayes	Pacetti	Papillon
McColeman	McLeod	Péclet	Perreault
Menegakis	Miller	Plamondon	Rankin
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	Norlock	Rathgeber	Ravignat
Moore (Fundy Royal)	Oliver	Raynault	Regan
Nicholson	Opitz	Rousseau	Saganash
Obhrai	Paradis	Sandhu	Scarpaleggia
O'Neill Gordon	Poilievre	Scott	Sellah
O'Toole	Reid	Sgro	Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Wind-
Payne	Richards	sor)	
Rajotte	Ritz	Sims (Newton—North Delta)	Sitsabaiesan
Rempel	Schellenberger	St-Denis	Stewart
Rickford	Shea	Sullivan	Thibeault
Saxton	Shory	Toone	Tremblay
Seeback	Sopuck	Trudeau	Turmel
Shipley	Stanton	Valeriote	Vaughan— 122
Smith	Strahl		
Sorenson	Tilson		
Storseth	Trost		
Sweet	Truppe		
Toet	Valcourt		
Trottier	Van Loan		
Uppal	Wallace		
Van Kesteren	Warkentin		
Vellacott	Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to		
Warawa			
Watson	Wilks		
Sky Country)	Wong		
Weston (Saint John)	Yelich		
Williamson	Young (Vancouver South)		
Woodworth	Zimmer— 154		
Young (Oakville)			
Yurdiga			

NAYS

Members

Andrews	Angus
Ashton	Atamanenko
Aubin	Ayala

PAIRED

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): I declare the motion carried.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS NO. 13

The House resumed from October 6 consideration of the motion, and of the amendment.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): When this matter was last before the House, the hon. Minister of State for Western Diversification had the floor. The hon. Minister of State for Western Diversification has seven minutes remaining.

Government Orders

Hon. Michelle Rempel (Minister of State (Western Economic Diversification), CPC): Mr. Speaker, yesterday I spoke of the clear danger that is presented by ISIL's advance in the region. I would like to speak today about the threat to our country and to other western nations.

If colleagues here do not recognize this direct threat to our country, all they have to do is search any social networking tool to find repeated references to the desire to spread ISIL's vile ideology to Canada.

I am deeply concerned that the expansion of ISIL is attracting individuals from the west, including Canadian citizens, to radicalize to the point of violence. Canadians are known to have travelled to conflict zones to participate in terrorism-related activities, including front-line combat, fundraising, operational planning, and disseminating online propaganda.

ISIL has been able to bolster its strength by recruiting thousands of foreign fighters, including many from central Europe and central Asia. Recent media reporting highlighted the deaths of Calgarian Farah Mohamed Shiridon and of Mohamud Mohamed Mohamud, who both died fighting for ISIL.

As a nation, we have recognized that this expansion of ISIL via the recruitment of foreign workers is a serious issue and have already begun to address it, which is why we co-sponsored UN Security Council resolution 2178. We have also implemented several key legislative tools, such as the Combating Terrorism Act, which created new offences for leaving or attempting to leave Canada to commit certain terrorism offences. The Strengthening Canadian Citizenship Act, now law, allows for the revocation of Canadian citizenship from dual Canadian citizens if they are convicted of terrorist offences.

However, as the democratically elected government of Iraq has recognized by its request for assistance in containing the expansion of ISIL, if ISIL is allowed to operate in the open with its expansion of territory left unchecked, we and our allies have ignored the true source of aggression to our collective borders. This is why, after careful consideration, our government has put forward the motion in front of us today.

I would be remiss if I did not discuss the treatment of women under the ideology of ISIL as part of the case to support this motion.

A report listed by the United Nations outlines the alarming atrocities committed by ISIL. Through their actions, they have embedded the view of women as subhuman into their ideology. Hundreds of women and girls have been sold as sex slaves by ISIL in a bid to tempt buyers to join their ranks. They have been given to ISIL or trafficked for sale at markets.

Women with professional careers have also been targeted and executed. In one example, ISIL publicly killed a female human rights lawyer in Mosul after their self-styled Islamic court ruled that she had abandoned Islam. Samira Salih al-Nuaimi was seized from her home on September 17 after allegedly posting messages on Facebook that were critical of the militants' destruction of religious sites in Mosul. According to the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq, al-Nuaimi was tried in a so-called Sharia court for apostasy,

after which she was tortured for five days before militants sentenced her to public execution.

There have also been reports that ISIL planned to make four million women and girls undergo female genital mutilation in the Mosul area. This is, of course, on top of the thousands of cases of rape, innumerable instances of forced marriage, and the complete removal of equal rights of women to receive education and to participate in the economy and in politics.

ISIL's treatment of women goes well beyond any concept of misogyny we are accustomed to fighting against in western culture. Given that this group has been able to attract fighters from western nations and clearly has sympathizers residing therein, it poses a threat to the ability of women to have equality in free society around the world.

That said, I am not afraid of these cowards, who see women as subspecies with little value over being a necessary nuisance in procreation or as chattel to be raped and traded to the ignorants that fight for their cause. This is because our nation's anthem has never rung hollow. Our brave men and women have always "stood on guard for thee" against threats to our country and to its people.

This motion presents a clear and defined response from Canada to the threat ISIL presents to the global community. We will continue the deployment of up to 26 CAF personnel to advise Iraq's security forces, with no ground combat mission. We will coordinate with our allies to participate in air strikes against ISIL, with the goal of limiting ISIL's ability to operate in the open and of preventing its continued expansion of territory. In doing so, we will contribute one air-to-air refuelling aircraft, two Aurora surveillance aircraft, and the necessary crews and support personnel. The above will be for a period of six months.

We are ready and capable to take on this challenge. Our investments, as articulated in the Canada First defence strategy, are building a modern, first-class military ready to face the challenges of our generation. The government has steadily been delivering upon this plan, providing our men and women in uniform with the equipment that has made a positive difference in the way that they operate.

• (1125)

We will seek to prevent the flow of funding and financing to ISIL, work to halt the flow of foreign fighters to Iraq and Syria, and provide diplomatic support to help Iraq toward a religiously and ethically inclusive government.

Supporting the government's motion shows Canadians that we as a Parliament accept that unless confronted with strong and direct force, the threat that ISIL poses to international peace and security will continue to grow.

Government Orders

By supporting this motion today, we show Canadians that we understand the depth of the atrocities committed by this terrorist organization. We show Canadians that we support Iraqi leaders in undertaking a concerted effort to confront ISIL's barbaric advance and to mend sectarian divisions that threaten Iraq's long-term security. We show Canadians that as representatives of their voices, we are prepared to stand with our allies who have committed to containing this threat. We show Canadians that we support a clearly defined combat mission, which we are capable of delivering, coupled with humanitarian assistance for the region.

By supporting this motion, we show Canadians that we are willing to act, not obfuscate, while ISIL flourishes.

Mr. Paul Dewar (Ottawa Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, along with my colleagues on this side of the House, I have some real concerns about how well defined things are and what the goals and objectives are. After we heard from the government, one of the concerns that we have is that we are talking about three weeks, maybe, before we actually have planes situated somewhere. We are still not sure. That definition has not been provided by the government.

If the government is putting all of its focus on the air strikes, what happens in three weeks if there are no targets or if things have changed on the ground? Is there any other strategy that the government has come up with to deal with that scenario?

• (1130)

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Mr. Speaker, in the take note debate on Mali on February 5, 2013, my colleague opposite said:

The government's alternation between disengagement and divisiveness has weakened Canada's voice on the world stage...

I would argue that in this motion here today, we are being decisive. I would encourage him to support it. Canadians around the world understand the urgency of this situation.

To his direct question, I read an article in the *Calgary Herald* this morning by a columnist who is on the ground there. One of his comments was:

Those packed into the grounds at St. Joseph's Catholic Church were astonished when they were told that two of Canada's three main political parties have opposed the Harper government's plan to send half a dozen warplanes to the Middle East...

Somebody from his article basically said that if these air strikes do not happen now, there will be further advance upon this territory.

We need to act now. We need to send these planes there and we need to join our allies in this combat.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Barry Devolin): I remind all hon. members that they cannot refer to their colleagues by name in the House, including when they are reading something from a newspaper.

Mr. Arnold Chan (Scarborough—Agincourt, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the minister. In the debate, she raised an issue respecting domestic threats, particularly with respect to the capacity for ISIL to recruit Canadians to fight for its cause. I would like to acknowledge that the minister took a particularly brave stand some weeks ago in standing up against those local threats.

Considering this potential risk, could the minister elaborate on what outreach methods have been taken by the government to bring

in, for example, the Canadian Muslim population to halt or degrade the capacity for the recruitment of these potential terrorists?

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Mr. Speaker, certainly working with different groups in Canada is important in combatting any sort of extremism. I know efforts are under way right now. As I mentioned in my speech, we do have legislative mechanisms that we have put in place to create disincentives for that type of behaviour.

To my colleague, who is new and who is a member of the Liberal Party, I cannot help but wonder how he feels when his leader stands up in front of a group of people and looks for validation with a vapid comment about our air force at a time when we absolutely need to act.

This is not about holding conferences or obfuscating. We need to have forces on the ground. We need these air strikes to ensure that we achieve the objectives of reducing this organization's ability to operate and expand its territory.

Hon. Gary Goodyear (Minister of State (Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario), CPC): Mr. Speaker, I do not think anyone in the House wants to put our own in harm's way. I firmly believe that none of us want to do that, any more than any of us want terminal cancer.

However, these are not just kidnappers or murderers. They are beheading children and forcing parents to bury their children alive. If the folks who are now offering to do this to Canadians are not our enemies, then who is? Whoever was an enemy of Canada? The Taliban? Hitler?

These are difficult decisions. The Liberals sent our troops to fight the Taliban. This is the time to do the same.

The NDP are obfuscating and want more time. Time is of the essence. People are dying right now.

I know the leader of the Liberal opposition has an obsession with phallic symbols. That is immature and inappropriate.

Could the minister tell us what would happen if we were to wait longer, since people are dying today?

• (1135)

Hon. Michelle Rempel: Mr. Speaker, what we have presented today, and make no mistake, is a clear request from a democratically-elected government to assist in combatting a terrorist organization operating within its borders that is treating people as sub-human. It is treating women, religious minorities as non-human beings.

With every day and every hour that this group advances within that territory, with every new base it sets up, with every oil well it takes over, it is getting more financing, attracting more fighters to its cause, and its ideology seeps into our communities. It must be addressed with force, and it must be addressed with force now.

Hon. Wayne Easter (Malpeque, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with the member for Winnipeg North.

Government Orders

I am pleased to speak to this motion today. It lays out the position of the Prime Minister and the government on our part as Canadians in the fight against ISIL and the atrocities it is inflicting on others, especially those in Syria and Iraq, and its desire to inflict such atrocities on many in the western world, including Canada.

I listened to a considerable amount of the debate yesterday. I do not think it is not very often any of us do this, but I read *Hansard* and the speeches I missed last evening.

Just as an initial point, because it does not happen often in this place, I congratulate everyone for what I think has been a very serious debate. There has been the odd shot thrown across the room. I heard the member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca suggest that the Liberals did not understand the quality of our military. We certainly do, and we support it. There are also implications from the government, which the minister reiterated, that we cannot sit on the sidelines, implying that both opposition parties want the government to sit on the sidelines. That is not true either. In general, the debate has been very good and a lot of good points have been raised.

My colleagues, the member for Westmount—Ville-Marie and the member for Vancouver Quadra, made good arguments on the many ways that we could contribute other than CF-18s, such as strategic airlift, medical supplies, work with refugees, military advisers who are already there, and the list goes on. They were making the point that CF-18s were not the only option.

It bothers me somewhat, as I mentioned a moment ago, that the theme the government is trying to express is that those who do not support the motion, and I certainly do not at this time support the CF-18s being sent into the fight, do not want the necessary action.

Absolutely no one on this side argues that ISIL is not a threat to peace and stability in the world. It is indeed a threat. I will even give the Minister of National Defence credit for some of the points he raised yesterday in his remarks of how ISIL was such a threat, outlining that it wanted instability and potential instability elsewhere in the world. I will not reiterate those points, but they have been made and anyone who wants to see them can read *Hansard*.

Let me also be clear that inaction is not an option. Our party is not talking about inaction. We are saying that there has to be action, but not being supportive of sending the CF-18s is not inaction. Doing other things in the Iraqi theatre could, in fact, be more strategic. Let me explain.

In other areas of the world, for example, Britain, the prime minister of the country called the opposition leaders in and gave them a proper briefing. That has not happened in our country. Why? We are part of a coalition. There are already CF-18s. Military force through air strikes are already taking place. Action is already happening. What is the state of our equipment? We do not know. What is the state of our troops? We have done more than our fair share in Afghanistan. We have asked our men and women in uniform to rotate in, and some of them four times in a rotation.

● (1140)

Are we right to ask them to do that at this time or are there other strategies that we should employ, in conjunction with the coalition, that would add more strategic action to the effort and in other roles, such as humanitarian aid, dealing with refugees, medical supplies,

increasing the advisers on the ground and so on? We do not know, because the leaders in the opposition parties do not have the detailed information to give us the confidence that the decision the government is making is the right one. We need to look at the whole picture.

Has the coalition or the President of the United States requested that we send in six CF-18s versus taking other positions? Yes, it is true that the government is also doing some other things, and it made a good announcement yesterday in terms of the \$10 million and support in that area, but was the request made to us specifically for those CF-18s? We do not know. Nobody from the government has expressly said so.

The fact is, in terms of our commitment financially, with equipment and human resources, that if we commit in one area, it is conceivable that there would be less we could commit in other areas. Therefore, strategically, we do not know the whole picture, and the Prime Minister has failed to outline it, as he should have, for the opposition leaders.

Some have tried to make the point that my party does not have confidence in our military. In fact, we do. We have the highest regard for the Canadian military and its capabilities, and its members have shown that time and again in various war theatres around the world.

Also, I would point to what Hillary Clinton said yesterday, and she has had considerable experience around the world on foreign issues. She came down on both sides of this issue as well, and she said:

I think military action is critical, in fact I would say essential, to try to prevent [the Islamic State's] further advance and their holding of more territory.

She is right. We agree that military action is in fact taking place, but do our CF-18s have to be a part of it or are we better doing other things in conjunction with that?

She also said, "Military action alone is not sufficient" and maintained in describing the fight against Islamic jihadists as "a long-term commitment". She is absolutely right in that area.

We are in this fight. We knew when the 30 days was announced, that it would not be over in 30 days or in six months. We have been through some of these issues before by not engaging in Iraq and our fight in Afghanistan. We know this is a long-term commitment. I cannot say all are willing, but we are certainly willing to commit Canada's efforts to take on this scourge on the world.

Yesterday I talked to a person who was 30 years in the military. For security reasons, I will not go through his comments, but his bottom line is this. He said, "In any case, we should be in a support role and not in a combat role in this one". That is basically what we are suggesting.

Government Orders

I want to make one other point, which is that this fight is not only in Syria and Iraq. There are radicalized individuals leaving Canada, the United States and Britain, and coming back to these countries carrying passports. They are a risk domestically and they have to be taken on. The government also has to figure out a strategy on how we deal with that radicalization in Canada, which is a serious threat to our country.

• (1145)

Mr. Leon Benoit (Vegreville—Wainwright, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I was somewhat shocked by the member saying military action is needed but Canada should not be part of that. It is letting someone else do the dirty work. That really does bother me.

I heard throughout these presentations members of the opposition parties saying what we really should be doing is providing humanitarian aid to people in the refugee camps, in Iraq and that type of thing. I agree with that, but that is not the most important thing. The member for South Surrey—White Rock—Cloverdale, the member for Mississauga—Streetsville and I went to Iraq about a month ago. We visited three of the camps near Erbil and Mosul. What we were told was very clear. They want to take their children and go home. The only way they can take their children and go home is if there is military action to stabilize their home territory so that they can do that. Therefore, if we care about the children and care about doing what is best for the people in these camps, what we need to do is to get involved in military action so they can go home.

Hon. Wayne Easter: Mr. Speaker, I have to laugh at that comment because we are part of the military action. Do our CF-18s have to be in that squadron? They absolutely do not. We are part of the military action now. We have advisers in Iraq. There are other things we could do in terms of strategic air support.

For the member opposite to leave this fluffy impression that air strikes are going to do it alone, they are not. We need to get real here. Every expert in the world says that if we are going to deal with this, at the end of the day, it is going to require ground forces. That is where this leads. We should look at the longer picture, and we are not there.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alain Giguère (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my relatively simple question is for my distinguished Liberal colleague, who seems to be implying that there could still be military action.

The problem—and that is what I would like my colleague to address—is that the Americans bombed Iraq for 12 years. Nevertheless, the jihadists are still there, receiving financial support from Saudi Arabia and Qatar, which, I should point out, are part of the coalition. That is rather bizarre.

Furthermore, they are indirectly supported by Turkey, which allows the trafficking of oil and arms and lets jihadists pass through Turkey on their way to Syria and Iraq. Now we are being told outright that we have to go and fight because the Iraqi soldiers refuse to die for a corrupt government.

How will the bombings allow Iraqis to assume responsibility for defending themselves, which they have not done so far?

[*English*]

Hon. Wayne Easter: Mr. Speaker, just because previous engagements with military aircraft, and even in some cases forces on the ground, have not worked in their entirety does not mean we should not do what we have to do.

The government's position is that it believes sending in CF-18s is the best option. I disagree with that and my party disagrees with that. Strategically, we have to look at what is the best role for Canada to play, in discussion with the coalition, and how can we do the most good in terms of taking on the threat of ISIL and giving people their lives, their homes and their futures back.

Canada has to play a role. There is no question about that. We do have a difference of opinion on how we get to the end result.

• (1150)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, let there be no doubt that from the Liberal Party's perspective Canada does have a role to play with respect to what is taking place in Iraq today.

Canadians from all over our vast country are concerned about what is being portrayed, whether it is through the Internet or through different media outlets. We need to recognize that as a whole, Canadians are a caring, compassionate society that believes in democracy, freedom and the rule of law. There is absolutely no doubt about that. They also want the government to make good, sound, solid decisions. This is where the Prime Minister of Canada is lacking. He has not been able to put the cards on the table. He has not been able to justify his actions.

The Liberal Party is open to listening to what the government wants to do, but we have not been able to get answers to numerous questions that we have put forward to the government. I will go through a number of those questions.

Right from day one we in the Liberal Party have been arguing for the need for more debate on this issue inside the House of Commons, where members are offered the opportunity to get engaged on what is an important world issue and one in which our military would be engaged.

I am speaking somewhat from experience. I had the privilege of serving in the Canadian Forces. I would like to think that all members of this chamber support our military personnel. The Liberal Party certainly does. Canada has some of the very best military personnel in the world as a result of the training that we provide and as a result of their abilities. Let there be no doubt about that. All of us are proud of each and every member of the Canadian Forces. The government has to support our military personnel in a real and tangible way.

From the beginning of this session we have been arguing for debate. We need to talk about what is taking place in Iraq. The government seems to have its mind set on one thing and one thing only and that is the air strike. That seems to be the only option that the government has considered, and the government is wrong on that part. It would appear that members of the Conservative Party closed their minds right from the beginning, and at a great cost. Canadians want us to play a role in Iraq but the Prime Minister's decision is wrong. He has not been able to justify his actions.

Government Orders

Members of the Liberal Party supported taking on an advisory role for 30 days. That is what makes us different from the New Democratic Party. The Liberal Party is not shy about dealing with the issue and keeping an open mind. Our party understands the complex issues that are taking place in Iraq and the Middle East. They are having a profound impact on the world.

I have listened to many Conservatives talking about the savage behaviour, the terrible things that are taking place in Iraq today, what ISIL is bringing upon people. It is criminal. It is completely unheard of in many minds. They talk about people being butchered, about women being sold as sex slaves, the things that ISIL is doing to children, to babies. There are all of these compelling arguments as to why Canada needs to play some role. We in the Liberal Party acknowledge that Canada does need to play some role, but we do not believe that the government has made the case to justify Canada's role being that of air strikes.

● (1155)

We can still be as upset as the government in terms of the horrendous behaviour of ISIL and individuals involved in that organization. We can still condemn their actions, but there are different ways of fighting it. There are different ways of being engaged that we could be looking at for our military forces, but the mentality of the government seems to be that if people do not favour air strikes, then they do not favour fighting ISIL, which is just not the case, at least not within the Liberal Party.

I believe the overwhelming majority of Canadians believe, as the Liberal Party believes, that we have to do something. We need the government to provide answers to questions. There is a litany of questions. I will pose but a few. What is the Canadian objective in this particular mission in terms of air strikes? What is the plan to meet the objective? What is the total cost of the proposed CF-18 deployment, which is important to have at least a sense of? Who will be commanding the mission?

With the time limit on the deployment, will the government seek additional parliamentary support if the mission is to be extended, as Liberals anticipate it will be? What other options for the Canadian military contribution did the Prime Minister consider? Did he even consider any of them? Why were they ruled out?

When we talk about humanitarian aid, what options for a humanitarian contribution rather than a military contribution did the Prime Minister consider, or did he even consider them? Why were they ruled out? Will the incremental costs of the combat mission reduce the amount of humanitarian aid that the government would provide? I believe that is an incredibly important question that needs to be answered.

How much humanitarian aid and technical assistance is Canada planning to give to each of Iraq, Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan over the next six months? How much humanitarian aid and technical assistance is Canada planning to give to the international agencies and NGOs operating in the area in the next six months? These are good, sound questions.

Last Thursday night we heard that the Prime Minister was going to making a statement on Friday morning last week. Friday came, the Prime Minister gives an indication of what the Government of

Canada's intent was, and the leader of the Liberal Party had the opportunity at that time to address this issue and raise many of the questions that I put forward.

The leader of the Liberal Party made clear where Liberals stand, how important it is that Canada plays a role in what is happening in Iraq, and articulated why it is that the Prime Minister has failed Canadians by not being more transparent and honest about what is taking place and what the government's actions are going to be.

There has been a general unwillingness to even work with the opposition and the Liberals. Yes, the critic on foreign affairs was able to go to Iraq. There has been some goodwill, but it has been very limited. Is it because government members are scared to answer many of the questions? Maybe there is something more that Canada could be doing that would include the Canadian Forces. These types of things are important.

ISIL is a threat both to the region and global security. ISIL murders ethnic and religious minorities across Iraq and Syria. They murder innocent civilians, humanitarian workers, and journalists. These are awful acts that have been fully documented. Canada does have a role to play to confront the humanitarian crisis and the security threats to the world.

● (1200)

When the government considers deploying our men and women in uniform, it must make it a clear mission overall and a clear role for Canada within that mission.

I will finish my comments through questions and answers.

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I agree with my hon. colleague opposite that there are concerns about a military mission. However, on balance, this mission should be supported. There are three reasons for that.

There is a clear, moral reason to support this mission. As people like Lloyd Axworthy and Romeo Dallaire have pointed out, there is a responsibility to protect innocent civilians so that we do not see a repeat of the genocides we have so often witnessed in the 20th century. There is a moral reason in terms of the safety and security of Canadians.

There is a legal reason. The Government of Iraq has formally requested our military intervention in its state in order to protect its sovereignty in that state.

Then there is the real political issue here, the realpolitik of it all, which is that our allies have joined in assisting the Government of Iraq in this area. I noticed that the British resolution, adopted in the British House of Commons, is worded almost identically to the resolution in front of us right now. It was adopted by a vote of 524 to 43. Most Labour and Liberal Democrat MPs voted for that motion. Countries like the Netherlands, Denmark, Belgium, and social democracies run by socialist governments are supporting this mission. I am wondering why the opposition parties here are not on board with it.

Government Orders

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, when the member makes reference to moral reasons to get engaged in air strikes, surely he should also recognize that there are countries that are not getting involved in the air strikes. They understand and appreciate, as does the Liberal Party, that we all have a moral responsibility and understanding that Canada needs to play a role. Where we differ is like Germany, which is not participating in the air strikes.

We are not convinced that the Prime Minister has made his case that air strikes are the best way in which Canada can participate in dealing with the horror that is taking place because of ISIL. There are alternatives. To what degree are we using the C-130s or other opportunities with our Canadian Forces or non-profit agencies? There are other alternatives that it appears the Prime Minister has ruled out. We do not know if he even considered those, because he did not allow for the type of discussion that was necessary for a good, sound decision to be made.

The member made reference to the EU. The EU worked with the opposition parties and was far more transparent and accountable in terms of the decision ultimately being made.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Order, please. I see we are under questions and comments. I thought the hon. member for Winnipeg North was continuing his comments there and part of his speech. We need to make time for some other questions and comments.

Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to the member for Winnipeg North and his predecessor, the member for Malpeque. Forgive me if I am confused about the position of the Liberal Party. I had understood that it gave unquestioned support for the initial mission of 30 days, even though questions were not answered. We did not support it because we did not really know what we were being asked to support. However, that is a different question altogether.

The Liberals, in both previous speeches, said that they are opposed to the air strikes but they want to find a military mission that they can get behind. I am wondering what that might be, because people are saying that the air strikes alone are not enough. The answer from the military perspective seems to be ground forces. Is that what the Liberal Party is now suggesting? Is it trying to show that it does want a military response but it has not figured out what that is, or is it just that it is not sure what it wants to propose?

• (1205)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, in fairness, we need to recognize that the New Democrats have done a bit of flip-flopping on this particular issue.

All we have to do is read the amendment that was brought forward. That amendment says:

....call on the Government to contribute to the fight against ISIL, including military support for the transportation of weapons for a period of up to three months.

It sounds as if the New Democratic Party is starting to come on side with what the Liberal Party has actually been saying.

If the member would just reach over and talk to his colleague from Toronto—Danforth, and read the comments in *Hansard*, he will find

that there are some ideas that his own colleague has actually suggested.

There are opportunities. I would like to think that the New Democrats will continue to follow the lead of the Liberal Party, as they have done in the amendment, and will recognize it is important that Canada does play a role.

The New Democrats have always approached that in a very cautious fashion, and I cannot blame them for being cautious, but there is a point in time when Canadian Forces personnel can be used, even in non-combat roles.

Hon. Peter MacKay (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate at the outset that I will be splitting my time with the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, the member for Selkirk—Interlake.

I rise with others to take part in what is obviously a very sombre and serious debate. Most would agree that there is never a good time to go to war, but there comes a time in every country's history when the necessity outweighs the risk, and the urgency to defend our way of life, threatened as it is, must be defended. ISIL constitutes a clear and present danger to Canada and our allies. Before us is a debate that has been put before this House with clarity and with intent, which is proposing meaningful and measured responses to a very serious situation.

ISIL is pure evil. There is insufficient hyperbole to do justice to the depth of its depravity, no rhyme or reason to the inhumanity that it brings to this world. Some seem willing to accept this new reality. We live in a global society where terrorism does certainly not respect borders, and to offer platitudes or to attempt to placate fear with the promise of acceptance or tolerance toward this type of action reflects a fundamental disconnect.

Unfortunately, or perhaps fortunately as the case may be, we as a government do not have the luxury of indecision or inaction or denial. Beyond the rhetoric and the partisan lines, when it comes to terrorism we have a responsibility to take up arms against the sea of tyranny and to proactively help to end it. Canadians otherwise predominantly enjoy a life free from fear and far from terror because we have men and women in uniform who are prepared to stand at the ready to defend our way of life at home and abroad. We cannot and we should not stand idly by, hoping that other nations will rise to the challenge on our behalf. What we are doing, we are doing because we have always risen to the occasion, when threatened, and addressed the threat head on.

Also in the news is the scourge of Ebola. Make no mistake about it: ISIL is a human plague; an agent of indiscriminate death and clear threats to humanity.

This way of life is not to be taken for granted in Canada. Where we find ourselves today as a nation has come at great cost. It has been defended on the field of battle with the blood of our illustrious ancestors. Our country was literally born on a battlefield, Vimy, according to many historians. Our greatest citizens then, as now, passed through a crucible defending our way of life. All that we hold dear rests on those sacrifices.

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We need to recognize that there is a danger in complacency, and explicit in that is the notion that, when called upon, we answer, we do our part. From the privileged platform of minister of defence, I saw first hand the sacrifices made in Canada's name. There is no argument against war as compelling as witnessing first hand a ramp ceremony or a repatriation service, seeing the suffering of loved ones when their loved ones return home. That epitomizes "true patriot love", as do the sacrifices of those who suffered bodily harm in Canada's name.

Much is at stake. Every breath we take is precious, and the bonds formed in the relationships overseas in conflict have withstood the test of time. We have all heard those stories. We have heard those who have served recount the incredible sacrifices made. However, we do not enjoy the luxury of this bond because they have sacrificed. If there is any comfort that can be passed on to families of the fallen, it lies in the true belief that their loved ones did not die in vain.

What more worthy cause? We saw in Afghanistan, as a result of efforts, little girls now able to go to school, women able to participate in the democratic process and the economy; and our efforts as a free and democratic nation have contributed to an unprecedented change of culture, albeit still fragile. It is the result of much effort on the part of many. Those are the goals to achieve for a new place in the Middle East.

Some members have invoked other images from places like Darfur, places where there have been catalogued the numbers of the dead, and yet it is these factions, those who are at the cause of this destruction and the very threat to humanity, who have come out in the past and in present to pose a direct or indirect threat to Canada, which we cannot leave unchecked.

• (1210)

Some have called for further debate or examination, while our traditional allies are already in the fray.

As tragic as all conflicts are, the faction involved here as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, ISIL, has called for the very destruction of our way of life in the western world.

Make no mistake. These are current threats. These are real threats. This is not a war against Muslims. This is not a fight between Christianity and Islam. This is an intervention to aid in the restoration of some semblance of security against a perversion of a twisted version of a faith distorted and violence perpetrated against true innocents in that region. Yet it is perpetrated outward. It has been carried via the Internet into the homes of Canadians. The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant has proven its distortion of faith through extreme acts of terror so callous in nature that even al Qaeda has worked to distance itself from them.

Let us be crystal clear. The evidence to act in defence of Canada is there. ISIL has targeted humanitarian workers, journalists, and citizens. Millions are displaced, and the suffering is enormous. Acts of genocide, rape as a weapon of war, kidnapping, and slavery as a stated intent are threats against our country and theirs.

We have been asked by a democratic state to assist. This brings further justification to our actions.

ISIL, on the other hand, has shown no tolerance and no conscience and has no regard for beliefs or democratic principles other than its own twisted and distorted view of the world. Now it has descended in that region into a type of maniacal barbarism and brutality rarely seen in human history. Comparisons to other conflicts are limited to the worst in world history.

ISIL has waged a brutal, inhumane war, showing equal disregard for women and children, Muslims and Christians alike. Its claim to religious authority over all Muslims worldwide and its goal to bring Muslim-inhabited regions under its own diabolic control and to spread throughout the civilized world cannot go unchecked.

[*Translation*]

Religious freedom is a fundamental Canadian value that we protect and promote throughout the world.

• (1215)

[*English*]

In addition to military collaboration, we have also sent humanitarian aid in the tens of millions to those affected. It has not been one or the other, but both. We are one of the top donors, in fact, as a country, which again is a source of pride.

We have also helped through immigration. Thousands have been liberated, because they were displaced and left vulnerable as a result of this conflict.

If we must once again put our faith in those who wear the Canadian Forces uniform, we want Canadians to know that it was a decision not taken lightly but is one we have confidence in. We cannot thank those brave men and women in uniform enough. Putting soldiers in harm's way is, as others have said, an undertaking that we must do with extreme caution and deliberation. Asking these brave souls of the Canadian Forces to defend our nation, our way of life, our beliefs, and the rights and freedoms of Canadians at home and abroad weighs heavily on all minds.

However, as a government, we take this responsibility seriously. We believe that parliamentarians should and do have an opportunity in this debate to help to carefully calibrate force and action, which is why we have added another day to this debate and why we have made this a confidence motion.

For a period of up to six months, our forces will launch air strikes against ISIL, along with our allies and partners, including Arab states, utilizing up to nine aircraft and support elements. Humanitarian relief will continue. This is a meaningful, impactful contribution. As always, we will do our part with pride and purpose.

Incremental costs will of course be reported to the Parliament of Canada, as they always are.

The current deployment of 69 members who will be participating in a non-combat advisory role will continue. As the Prime Minister has said, we are not participating in any ground combat mission. We do so in coordination with our closest allies and with the greatest intent in mind to bring about a sense of security in the region.

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The dedication and determination of the men and women in uniform that we have witnessed first-hand thus far is inspirational as always. We have a long and storied history when it comes to protecting our system of beliefs and those we count among our closest friends and allies.

There are easier paths we could go down, but we will not shy away from our duty. We will do what is right, honouring our glorious history and preserving our precious future.

Mr. Ryan Cleary (St. John's South—Mount Pearl, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to some of the minister's adjectives pertaining to ISIL: pure evil, human plague, maniacal barbarism.

I attended an awards banquet on Friday night in my riding, and I was approached by a young man whose name is Sean Vinnicombe. He is 15 years old and is a grade 11 student at Holy Heart of Mary High School in St. John's. I will pose the question he asked me: Why are we going to war in Iraq?

I have my own question that follows up on that. The United States was in Iraq for 10 years. The Americans fought there for 10 years and not much changed after those 10 years were up.

There are many hot spots around the world, including the Congo, where 5.4 million people have died since 1998. The Congo has asked three times since 2010 for Canada to support peacekeeping, but we said no. I have two questions. One, for the young man in my riding, is this: Why Iraq? The second is why Iraq and not the Congo—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The hon. Minister of Justice.

Hon. Peter MacKay: Mr. Speaker, I thank the young man in St. John's for perhaps bringing us to a very poignant question. Why Iraq? Simply put, it is to help defend this young boy's future in Canada; to help preserve his right to get an education in St. John's; to expect his younger sister, if he has one, to be treated equally in Canada; to defend his very way of life; and to hope to defray the real threat he might face when he goes back to his computer and has material presented to him that would somehow distort his young mind and his understanding of what is important in his life and in his obligations to his fellow citizens.

There are many and diverse responses I could give to that young man, and I would relish the opportunity to do so. I hope the member opposite will take the time to pass that on.

As to why Iraq versus Congo, we can do our part. We continue to do so in many places around the world. It is something Canadians can certainly be extremely proud of.

• (1220)

Ms. Joyce Murray (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I was sad, but not surprised, to hear the Minister of Justice continue to promote the false dichotomy that Canada either assumes a combat role of aerial bombing or it is characterized as accepting and tolerating ISIL, standing idly by, complacency, and all of these words that are being used to divide Canadians on this issue.

In fact, Liberals are very clear that we believe Canada can best contribute to other kinds of military roles, non-combat military roles, as well as humanitarian roles. I proposed a training role.

My question is this: Does the minister believe that in the four years when 1,000 Canadian trainers had a non-combat role in Afghanistan, the government was standing idly by and was in a place of complacency and acceptance and tolerance of the Taliban?

Hon. Peter MacKay: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has a very selective memory, because number one, it was a Liberal government that sent our forces, ill-equipped as they were, without a vote, to Afghanistan. Twelve years of a severe combat mission followed, which allowed us to at least prepare the ground for some semblance of a training mission, so I think we have to have some context.

The member suggests somehow that it is Conservatives who are creating this false dichotomy by characterizing this threat in the extreme. Let us look at what some members of her party, members of this House, had to say fairly recently.

Mr. Bob Rae: “We can do more. Assist people under...siege fight back”. That does not sound like a humanitarian response.

Mr. Lloyd Axworthy, who I do not quote very often, stated that ISIL has “to be whacked and whacked good”. That is pretty explicit.

Ujjal Dosanjh, a former minister of this House said, “ISIL must be stopped and destroyed”. These are words that I think are in keeping with this effort, this motion, to respond in a way that would bring about real results, not stand on the sidelines and hope that others will do it in our name.

Mr. James Bezan (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak in the House regarding Canada's engagement in the combat mission against ISIL. I have to say that I am extremely disappointed in the opposition parties. They took positions before this debate even started. They were opposed to this mission and are not interested in listening to logical debate before making a decision on the motion.

As has already been made clear, the so-called Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, ISIL, constitutes a threat to local, regional, and international security. The serious security and humanitarian crisis in Iraq and in its neighbouring countries has been created by the vicious advance of the ISIL terrorists. Their capture of territory has resulted in mass displacement and has forced over one million Iraqis from their homes and communities, and we know well of their despicable and unspeakable crimes.

ISIL stands accused by the United Nations of the persecution of ethnic and religious minorities and of the murder of thousands of innocent men, women, and children. Of course, they have also bragged about their decapitations of journalists and aid workers. If allowed to continue, the threat posed by ISIL will develop into an even greater threat, further destabilizing the Middle East and creating and encouraging greater enmity among its people.

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We know that these terrorists seek to hurt Canada and our allies. The leadership of ISIL has called for Canada and Canadians to be attacked. How much longer should Canada wait to act? If it were up to the leaders of the Liberals and the NDP, Canadians would never act.

Our government will not sit on the sidelines. We are taking action.

Since the end of August, the Canadian Armed Forces have airlifted critical military supplies for the Iraqi forces battling ISIL on the ground. Twenty-five flights have delivered more than 1.6 million pounds of military supplies donated by Albania and the Czech Republic. We have also deployed special operations forces to advise and assist the Iraqi forces and in particular the Kurdish Peshmerga. We announced yesterday that their initial 30-day deployment is being extended for up to six months.

On Friday, the Prime Minister announced that this government will take the following additional steps. A strike force of up to six CF-18 Hornet fighter aircraft, with associated aircrew and logistical support elements, will deploy to conduct air strikes against ISIL targets in Iraq in co-operation with our coalition partners. In addition, a CC-150 Polaris refueling aircraft and up to two CP-140 Aurora aerial surveillance aircraft will deploy for their reconnaissance and support capabilities.

This force will also include an airlift capability and several hundred support personnel who will be contributing to command and control and logistics and will be providing assistance to the coalition's air combat operations.

These deployments mean that Canada is shouldering its share of the international burden to combat the threat of ISIL. We know that it is possible that there may be risks to our deployed members, but I can attest to the fact that they are ready, willing, and up to this task. They are exceptionally well trained and equipped to the highest standards. Members of the Canadian Armed Forces are the very best of our citizenry, and I know that they will make us proud of their heroism and bravery yet again.

As I explained yesterday in the House, this operation is still at a preliminary stage. We will continue to work closely with our allies to evaluate the operations and events as they continue to unfold.

Let me say something about our allies in this operation. Over the last few months, a wide coalition of more than 40 countries has come together. They all understand the vital need to confront ISIL. Our closest ally and defence partner, the United States, is leading the coalition. The U.S. has been conducting air strikes against ISIL for two months now, and it has expanded its air campaign in the last two weeks. However, the U.S. is no longer alone, as other countries are joining the fight every day.

France and the United Kingdom have already conducted air strikes, destroying ISIL facilities and weaponry. Ten Arab countries have also pledged their support, with Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Jordan, and Bahrain already participating in air strikes. Australia has committed direct military support, including 600 personnel and eight F-18 Super Hornet fighters.

• (1225)

Many of our allies within NATO are also getting involved in combat operations. The Netherlands is sending 6 F-16 fighter jets plus 2 reserve jets, 250 support staff and pilots. Belgium is sending 6 F-16s, with 8 pilots and 120 support staff. Denmark is providing 7 F-16 fighter jets, along with 250 pilots and support staff. Germany is sending paratroopers to provide weapons and training to Kurdish fighters. Weapons and ammunition are being sent by countries such as Italy, Estonia and Hungary.

The international community is stepping up, and so must Canada.

Let me end on this note. The violence we see from ISIL simply has no place in the modern world. Who would have even dreamt two years ago that this would happen? ISIL's utter contempt for human life is beneath humanity and it rightly shocks Canadians.

We do not make decisions through a red mist or through a desire for revenge. We know that down that path lays disaster. Our measured response, very carefully considered by our government, is in line with Canada's intent to contribute to international peace and security.

We are citizens of the world and this government is acting as such. ISIL knows no boundaries and no borders. It threatens to gain more ground and it directly threatens the safety of our country. It is time for something to be done, and for the international community to act. If we do not, as the opposition has suggested, we will eventually face the serious consequences. We simply cannot afford to let the Middle East wallow in the repression, bloodshed and atrocities that would result. We simply cannot ignore the direct threat posed by ISIL to Canada and our western allies, or to our values.

This government is prepared to address this threat at its source. Canadians agree that this military action is in our national interest. We must take action and we will take action. We seek the support of all Canadians for the government motion.

• (1230)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mathieu Ravignat (Pontiac, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have a number of questions I would like to ask my hon. colleague opposite. Basically, what I heard on the news yesterday is rather important. In fact, ISIS captured a large city near Turkey's border. The bombing started two weeks ago, if not more, and yet the fighters captured the city quite easily.

What effect are the bombings having? Second, I also learned that ISIS has changed tactics. Its members are now hiding. Where will they hide? They will hide among the civilian population. Are my colleagues opposite really going to agree to bomb civilians, children and pregnant women because ISIS is hiding among them? I find that deplorable.

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[English]

Mr. James Bezan: Mr. Speaker, I have listened to the NDP members for the last day and a half on this and I have been engaged with them in multiple panel debates. I am so disappointed in their position. They are prepared to sacrifice innocent civilians who are under the threat of ISIL. We are talking about a genocide taking place, and the NDP would do nothing to protect those people.

All the NDP ever talks about is humanitarian aid. We are providing humanitarian aid. There is a huge coalition of over 60 countries providing humanitarian assistance and dealing now with the war crimes that are being committed. We made that clear yesterday.

The NDP does not care and will not act to protect the children who are being beheaded or the women who are being sexually assaulted and sold into slavery. The NDP will not stop ISIL at its source. Our government will.

Mr. Arnold Chan (Scarborough—Agincourt, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my objection to the suggestion that somehow on this side of the House, the members of the opposition are less patriotic than the members of the government. The member suggested that there is disappointment that the opposition does not support the government motion.

Is it not ultimately the responsibility of the government to reach out to the opposition, step forward, provide the compelling reasons and give the necessary information for the opposition to make an appropriate decision? Would the parliamentary secretary do the right thing and offer the Leader of the Opposition and the leader of the Liberal Party the opportunity to be sworn into the Privy Council and give them a private, confidential briefing on the operational capacity of our ability to execute the mission?

Mr. James Bezan: Mr. Speaker, I know the member is relatively new to the House. We lived through a Liberal government that sent our men and women into battle, for the right reasons, in Afghanistan to take on the Taliban. This is the same situation we face today in Iraq with ISIL.

An hon. member: This is worse.

Mr. James Bezan: This is definitely worse, Mr. Speaker. This is a situation where we have an all-out genocide going on.

The Liberals made that decision without consulting opposition parties, without having a debate in the House or a vote. They just went and did it. It is the practice in our party that when we deploy troops in combat roles to bring it to the House for that discussion. It is just unbelievable.

The Minister of Justice just quoted some members who served when I first got here. They were ministers of the Liberal government and support this mission. I know the Liberals love Hillary Clinton, and even she is saying, "I think military action is critical. In fact, I would say essential". If leading Liberals in Canada and around the world support this mission, what is wrong with the Liberal Party of Canada today?

•(1235)

Hon. Gary Goodyear (Minister of State (Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario), CPC): Mr. Speaker,

I want to thank my colleagues for staying high level on this debate. There are some unspeakable things that ISIL is doing, such as beheading children and forcing parents to bury their children alive. While my colleagues will not mention that because it is unspeakable, I want the opposition members to understand what they are voting against.

No god, including Allah, condones this behaviour. No religion, including Islam, supports this behaviour. This is an affront to humanity.

Could the member comment on what the government proposes in terms of the limited military action against this evil?

Mr. James Bezan: Mr. Speaker, we all realize that ISIL is still recruiting. We know there is at least 130 Canadians who have deployed and moved to Iraq and Syria to fight for ISIL.

We want to take away those passports, which is not supported by the opposition. We want to take away their citizenship when they are dual nationals, which is not supported by the opposition.

We have to target ISIL at its source. We have to target its ability to generate revenue and finance its campaign of terror. We are going to continue to target ISIL, whether it is them capturing refineries, oil wells, financial institutions. We are going to go after them to ensure that ISIL does not have money, the resources and ability to continue to behead children, to bury them alive or sexually assault women and children, and sell them into slavery.

Mr. Wayne Marston (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak to this motion. As members of Parliament, the single most important duty we have is to give consideration to actions by the government, as those actions would lead our military men and women into harm's way.

One thing I want to be clear on is that at this point in time there is already an action under way to go after ISIL, the people committing the atrocities about which the members on the other side just spoke. Nobody on this side of the House is any less offended or troubled by those actions.

Right now militarily, about 60 countries are involved in a coalition and not all of them have made the decision to put their military into action. The United States, France and Australia are leading the way with a massive force. In point of fact, if we consider the six aircraft being proposed by the government and the 600 people who will accompany them, that is a very small portion of what will be utilized in the bombings.

Based on some testimony that the Subcommittee on International Human Rights heard this week from Reverend Majed El Shafie of One Free World International, which is a group that took Conservatives and other members of Parliament to Iraq, right to the edge of where the combat is taking place, the president of Iraq and Kurdish leaders begged for humanitarian aid for the hundreds of thousands of displaced persons in that country, not bombs.

I want to take members back for a moment and ask if they remember the use of the words “collateral damage”. In and around Parliament and places of government, there are often what are called buzzwords. An example of buzzwords that I am very familiar with were “free trade”. In the 1980s, there was a great debate on free trade and it sounded good. In both Gulf Wars, when the American missiles and bombs were dropping, collateral damage was referred to. The collateral damage consisted of men, women and children. Nobody can direct a surgical strike that does not put at risk having collateral damage.

One of the offshoots of the Gulf War was the instability when the Americans left. Prior to that time, Saddam Hussein, who was a Sunni, whose tribe was about one-quarter the size of the Shia in that area of the world, installed his Sunni supporters into the army. When the Americans and their allies removed Saddam Hussein and destabilized that area, he was ultimately replaced by a prime minister who was Shia, who sought revenge for the many atrocities committed by the troops of Saddam Hussein. It is said that he did not pay the army on time and humiliated it.

When a couple of thousand ISIL fighters came across the border, five divisions of Iraqi soldiers laid down their arms. Many of them joined ISIL because of the instability. Not understanding the horrific consequences, they believed that by joining ISIL, they would get a fairer deal from the government. Since that time, that prime minister has been removed.

I would like to inform the House, Mr. Speaker, that I am splitting my time with the member for Louis-Hébert.

The instability that was created by that vacuum and the years and years of Shia and Sunni tribal warfare is being taken advantage of by the ISIL group.

● (1240)

We have heard testimony from people here today and on other days that ISIL is far more sophisticated than any terrorist group that we have come across. It is an offshoot of al Qaeda. Our leader was indicating in the House the other day that North Americans have been fighting ISIL in one form or another for well over 10 years. It took advantage of that vacuum and has also taken advantage of some people who, had they really considered their actions, would not have joined it.

It is horrific. We have heard very little like it. The only place I can think of that might be comparable is the Democratic Republic of Congo where there have been atrocities.

Reverend El Shafie spoke to us in committee and raised the fact that they are four to five weeks away from winter and there is not even shelter for people. The few hundreds of millions of dollars, if not billions of dollars, that are going to be spent by Canada on these bombing missions would be better used serving the people on the ground in that country who are suffering. If we were to go there and build shelters and bring medicines, winter clothes and the things they need, they would be better served.

They were forced out of their homes. They were given a choice but they were not believers in this particular brand, this abhorrent brand of Islam. I am pleased to hear the government say that it is not Islam as the world knows it. This is a group of people, much like

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Osama bin Laden, who use the word “jihad” to justify horrific things. Those who know a little about Islam know that “jihad” simply means to defend one's religion when it comes under attack. It is not to go out and do the things that are happening here.

It is very important to remind Canadians who may be watching that in Canada there are 1.2 million Muslims. Every once in a while I will find someone who is ill informed, who says Muslims are trying to take over, or this and that. I remind him that there are 32 million of the rest of us. When do we see a newspaper story of a Muslim attacking someone in Canada, or stealing, robbing a bank, or committing murder? It is extremely rare because these are good people who believe very fundamentally and are committed to Islam.

Again, this is not Islam. This is a terrible group. I cannot think of ISIL members in any other terms than monsters because the things they have been doing are monstrous. I can understand that members on the other side who have the lever of power and the ability to say we should put our aircraft in the air, or put troops on the ground—in fairness, they have not said that as yet, but we are worried it might happen—would want to do something when we are facing those kinds of horrific crimes.

However, we have a coalition of 60 nations. We have among them the top three or four militaries on the face of the earth prepared to undertake this mission. They do not need Canada to go there bombing, but they do need Canada's help in this effort. I agree with Canada taking part in this effort. I agree that Canada must do something on a huge humanitarian scale because this is going to be proven to be one of the most horrific times in our history with what is going to happen to the displaced people. They have already been terrorized to the point of having to leave their homes. Many have had brothers, fathers, uncles and cousins murdered and there are other atrocities we have heard about.

No one is arguing those have not happened. What we are arguing is that perhaps Canada can take that step back from going into military action and say Canada is prepared to stand up with our allies, supply the humanitarian aid, offer support and the delivery of arms. We are already delivering arms to those fighters trying to protect their homeland, which we are in agreement with. However, it is most important to take that pause before we choose to send our men and women into a war zone that is going to become a quagmire. We saw it happen in the last war in Iraq. We saw it happen in Afghanistan where 40,000 Canadians went through that war zone. We are still paying the price for that today with PTSD and the loss of over 150 Canadian soldiers and a person from our diplomatic service.

● (1245)

I will close by appealing to the government side. Take a moment, step back and give some thought to the fact that this is a broader concern than just war and bombing. It is a place where we can do some real humanitarian work.

Hon. Gary Goodyear (Minister of State (Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario), CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would just say to my hon. colleague that we do not have a moment. We do not have all the time in the world. I wish we did and I wish we did not have to go.

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I wonder why it is that among the NDP members, who made their decision to vote against the motion long before the motion was even put up, we have not seen a change in that position despite everything that we have said. We do not see democracy here or rational debate. We see obstinance and obstruction. The member knows full well that we have humanitarian aid over there and we can do more, and we will. The opposition is concerned about refugees. We are doing a lot in that regard and we will do more.

However, what do we do, as a nation that can, about those people who cannot escape the evil? Do we just focus on those who can escape the evil and become refugees and leave those who cannot escape this evil only to die, to be tortured, to be buried alive? I say that we do not do that, and with a heavy heart, I will vote for the motion.

I am asking that reasonable member to break rank, break the domination of his leader and vote for the motion.

Mr. Wayne Marston: Mr. Speaker, I was proud to stand in the House and vote against the Afghanistan mission because I thought it was ill conceived and ill prepared for.

Looking upon the circumstances we have today, the member says that if we do not go to war those people will die. However, there happens to be a huge military force from France, the United States and Australia with the weapons that can do exactly the job that the Conservatives are asking the Canadian military to do.

We are saying that it is not necessary for us to take part in that level of that conflict, but for Canada to have a role supplying humanitarian aid, supplying the workers that will build shelters. That is where Canada and a huge number of Canadians believe we should be in this particular event.

Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, frankly, I share the hesitancy of the hon. member, and I congratulate him on his speech.

I wish we could ramp down the politics of this matter, because not one of us on either side wishes to send the men and women of our military into harm's way, particularly in a situation such as this.

I wonder if the hon. member has given thought to the people who are going to be joining us in the coalition, and not so much the obvious ones, but rather Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Syria. Up until now, Iran has been the greatest exporter of state-sponsored terrorism, according to our own Minister of Foreign Affairs. Iran is a sponsor of Hezbollah, yet in this particular fight, it is our ally. That puts everyone in a very awkward position. I would be interested in the member's thoughts on that.

• (1250)

Mr. Wayne Marston: Mr. Speaker, the member will probably be surprised to know that, prior to speaking, I came here in a rush because I had just left a press conference where we were talking about dissidents in Iranian prisons who were about to be executed, so I share his concern.

We have heard the comments about Syria, that if Assad asks, we will bomb. This is a man who just a year and a half or so ago the United States drew a red line and said that if he crossed it they would stop him, but they failed to do that. However, all of a sudden, this

man is a potential ally. We certainly all should feel conflicted in this place, and I do not care from what party. The good souls who sit here who are going to make the best judgment they can with the information they have at hand.

We have lost an opportunity in the House. I do not often agree with some of my friends, but the fact is that we could have had our leader and the leader of the third party sworn into the Privy Council and taken into the discussions. Maybe, it is possible that it might have looked different. However, we can only make our decisions based on the information placed before us and placed before our leaders. The Conservatives have failed on that count.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Denis Blanchette (Louis-Hébert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would like to provide some context for my comments by saying that neither the UN nor NATO approved this military contribution.

Iraq has the fifth-largest proven oil reserve in the world, which may explain a lot things about this conflict. Moreover, oil production has almost doubled since Saddam Hussein left power. Lastly, as for the barbaric group we are talking about today, I will not use the word "state". I will do as the French and use the Arabic acronym Daesh.

The Prime Minister has a very limited point of view and sees the problems only from an economic standpoint. The government is only seeking revenge for actions that are, obviously, extremely reprehensible. Let us be clear: we do not like the murders and the way this organization treats dead bodies any more than the members opposite. It is unacceptable.

However, I was truly surprised by one thing in the Prime Minister's speech. He admitted that the motion he moved will not solve anything. In other words, we are doing something for the sake of doing something because we feel obliged. However, in the same breath, he admitted that this will not solve anything. We therefore need to ask ourselves whether we should be doing something that will not solve anything.

This kind of magical thinking is unacceptable. We cannot hope to solve things this time by repeating past mistakes. I doubt that this will work because the situation has not been deteriorating for two years, but rather for decades. We are going to take the same approach and hope that things will go a little better this time, but that does not reflect the reality on the ground.

Some members went so far as to say that providing support for humanitarian aid was the same as doing nothing and that it was not very honourable. How many people depend on that humanitarian aid? Do those members think that it is easy to provide humanitarian aid in a conflict situation? The most important thing is to have a long-term vision for this assistance. We are not just talking about meeting the needs of today, tomorrow or next week. The humanitarian aid provided must be seen as the first step toward a sustainable solution in this geopolitical space.

This problem has existed for years. All sorts of solutions, particularly military ones, have been tried, and now they are being tried again. If this was the first time this had happened, we could plead ignorance. However, that is not the case, and the situation gets worse every time. The only thing that has changed is the opponent's acronym.

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On this side of the House, we are not advocating sitting back and watching the train go by. However, we need to take the right train, not one that will lead us into another similar debate five or 10 years from now, when other people will do the same things we did and will certainly fail to resolve the problem. At no other time in the history of humanity have we had so much knowledge. Unfortunately, we are not using it. We need to understand what is happening, not just react to it.

•(1255)

We know that military action alone cannot resolve the problem. Nevertheless that is the approach the House is adopting. We know that long-term social, economic and political change is needed. If we simply repeat the past, we are bound to fail.

For example, this very day, the Americans are bombing ISIS fighters in the town of Kobani, which is located on the border of Syria and Turkey. This has been only partially successful. They are bombing during the day, but that is not working because the troops are light and mobile. This intervention has already practically failed. That is what is happening at the Turkish border. Approximately 140,000 people have already left Kobani for Turkey.

Who is helping them? Are we giving them enough assistance? Are we allowing the Kurds to properly defend themselves? No. We are ignoring the geopolitical problems of the region because it is located near the border of Turkey and Syria. The Turks do not want to intervene because the situation involves the Kurds and the al-Assad government would consider any intervention an act of war.

Perhaps diplomacy is needed to resolve the situation. That would help everyone on the planet. However, the government does not seem to want to take that approach. It is truly unbelievable.

We have to look at the problem as a whole. We cannot look at humanitarian aid as a one-off. We have to look at the bigger picture and draw on all of our knowledge.

That is why I am saying to the Prime Minister that it is time for him to consider sociology, social sciences and political sciences, indeed all our world knowledge, both in Canada and elsewhere in the West, and think about effective ways of intervening so that we never have to go through this experience again and deal with groups of madmen going around beheading people.

What is more, it is important to support the local people. They are the ones who will manage to solve the problem and if we do not support them in finding a solution, I can assure the House that we will never resolve this crisis.

The thing is, we are falling into a trap. All the horrors are being broadcast to the world when usually they are hidden. They are being made public precisely because ISIS wants us to do what we are in the process of doing right now, which is to conduct the bombings. This will help them recruit people. It is obvious. It is not rocket science.

The Daesh, or Islamic state terror group, is not very strong. It is definitely wealthy, structured and well equipped. However, it draws its strength from the weakness around it. The systematic destruction of all the social structures in this region allowed it to grow. It is important to recognize that. However, in the current situation,

nothing is being strengthened. Every political and social organization in this region continues to be undermined.

Imagine that. An Iraqi army of 200,000 soldiers trained for seven years by the Americans at a cost of \$26 billion fled from a small group of 20,000 people who are not even soldiers. A few are, but most are militants. This Iraqi army bolted. Their training was a failure. It is a serious failure.

That is why it is so important to intervene with a UN mandate. We must also find our place within this coalition.

•(1300)

A number of countries including Norway, Sweden, Spain and Austria are focused on humanitarian aid. I think Canada should get involved as well. We would not be alone. We could talk about forming a coalition to provide aid. We have to think about the future. We have to do more than just trying to solve today's problems.

[*English*]

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his intervention. I have found him to be a very reasonable colleague in discussing these issues. He made some great points today in terms of the fact that military action alone would not solve this problem. On this side, we agree that military action alone would not solve the problem.

The member mentioned humanitarian aid. We are sending humanitarian aid into this area, and we will send it, but all of us know that humanitarian aid sent into an area that is totally chaotic, where there is no law or order or security of any kind, will not get to the people who need that aid.

The member said that our Prime Minister indicated that this will not solve the problem. Would he suggest that because my efforts on suicide prevention have not stopped every suicide in this country, efforts to minimize the number of suicides are not effective? Is he saying that we would allow the murder of hundreds of thousands of people and children? If we can at least reduce that to a few, would that not be better than the large number who are currently being decimated?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Denis Blanchette: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question. He will obviously understand that hard work is part of life. I think we will both agree on that and he will truly see it. However, when we say that this will not solve the problem, it means that we need to find other solutions and be more innovative. If we already know that our strategy is doomed to failure, that does not mean sitting on our hands, doing nothing and giving up. On the contrary, it is a call for action, for being innovative and finding other solutions that are much more effective.

[*English*]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is encouraging to see some movement from the official opposition with respect to their position on what is taking place in Iraq. I will read the specific clause of the amendment, which I think is a positive move forward:

a. call on the Government to contribute to the fight against ISIL, including military support for the transportation of weapons for a period of up to three months;

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When I questioned the member's colleague, the New Democratic member for Toronto—Danforth, on this issue, he indicated that the Canadian Forces could play other roles. I wonder if the member might be able to expand on that. Does the NDP now feel that the Canadian Forces could and should be playing a role, as is implied in the amendment that it brought forward? That is something we have suggested. I wonder if he can expand on that point.

● (1305)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Denis Blanchette: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question. Clearly, once again, this question is strictly based on the rationale for a military intervention. Throughout my speech, I have said that we must go beyond armed intervention.

One of the questions I had no time to address in my speech is the following: how is this tiny group—because that is what it is—so wealthy, and why has no real effort been made to starve it financially?

Just last week, Secretary of State John Kerry said how important it was to eliminate the group's source of funding. What I am saying once again is that, if we want to root out this evil, we need to look at the big picture, not just at a small specific part of the problem that would call for a targeted intervention, which is already expected to fail.

Ms. Ève Pécelet (La Pointe-de-l'Île, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is no secret that I am not good at being brief, but I will do my best to keep it short.

Could my colleague comment on the fact that the government failed in its responsibility? I do not want to make assumptions about whether this conflict was inevitable, but it was probably aggravated by the fact that the government refused to help the hundreds of thousands of refugees who have been scattered across Syria since the civil war. It is a burden for countries to take care of thousands of refugees. The Government of Canada failed in its responsibility.

Could my colleague comment on that?

Mr. Denis Blanchette: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her very relevant question. It connects to the idea behind my speech, which is that humanitarian aid is not an end in itself, but the beginning of something else.

What happens when groups like Daesh, for example, take control of a territory? They organize services. What we do is relieve hunger. There is something we can learn from that, not only to help relieve hunger, but also to help these people have a better life one day.

[*English*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Before we resume debate, I have noticed that there is great interest in participating in the question and comment period that is permitted after each of the interventions today, and that is quite understandable, considering the gravity of the question that we have in front of us today.

As a result of the great interest, I and other Chair occupants have allowed members a great deal of latitude in time so that they can express the arguments that they wish during what is usually only a five-minute question and comment period. If hon. members could make their interventions as succinct as they can, it would afford the

opportunity for other hon. members to participate in this important debate. I say that as a possibility that members might consider.

Hon. Deepak Obhrai (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and for International Human Rights, CPC): Mr. Speaker, before I start, I would like to say that I will be sharing my time with the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade.

It is with great sadness that I again have to rise to speak on a motion that is very clear, contrary to what the opposition is saying, about another campaign out in the Middle East. As I was the parliamentary secretary when we had a mission going on in Afghanistan, I participated in the special committee on Afghanistan. Now, I am standing here again today, discussing another motion where we will be asking our great soldiers to take part in stopping a murderous organization from killing all kinds of people, including women and children.

Terrible atrocities have been committed, as we have seen. As the Prime Minister has said, it is very necessary to stop this organization. If we do not, it is a threat not only to the region but to Canada.

Let me talk about my first-hand experience on this. I represent a riding in the city of Calgary. Numerous reports have indicated that Calgarians have been radicalized and gone to the region to join this terrible organization to fight.

A couple of months ago in my riding, the mother of Damian Clairmont came to see me. For those who do not remember, Damian Clairmont was a young Calgarian who became radicalized and went to Syria to fight. He lost his life in Syria. His mother came to me to talk about the pain, suffering, and grief that had hit her family. She was absolutely astounded that this radicalization had taken place and that her son had gone over there. She could not understand how it had happened. She came and talked to me at length about how we could stop this radicalization. We discussed matters of how it is possible to help.

I must strongly commend her. Not only did she do this at the time of her sorrow and the loss of her son, but she has picked up the fight to stop this radicalization from taking place. She is fighting to set up a support group for other families who are losing their children to the propaganda that has been coming out from the terrible organization in this region.

We have had a debate going on with the official opposition and the third party, talking about how they do not want to participate, and they have given various reasons for it. Of course, their focus has been on humanitarian assistance. Indeed, humanitarian assistance is extremely important. We have seen that these people have been uprooted from their homes and that women have been sexually violated. The Minister of Foreign Affairs has just announced money going toward counselling services and other help.

Humanitarian assistance is necessary. Both of the critics have indicated that they have gone down to the region. They have seen humanitarian assistance. Indeed they have, and it is a priority for Canada as well. Canadians are very generous and they are quite strongly willing to do that, and they will continue doing that.

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However, Canadians are also appalled by the reports coming out of the murderous rampage of this organization. How do we stop it? We heard in the debate about a coalition of 40 nations going out there. Others are doing air strikes. Others are providing humanitarian assistance. We have been given numerous examples by the NDP that Germany is doing that. Germany is giving humanitarian assistance.

The NDP is picking at everyone here to fit into its thinking.

• (1310)

The NDP leader got up and read an actual newspaper editorial out there by this person. Anybody can read that. However, there are also numerous other editorials saying the opposition is wrong, and of course he did not bother talking about those.

The fact of the matter is this. How do we stop them? We have the expertise, we have the capability, and we have the means to stop them. That is why, after careful consideration, this government came along and said that we will be joining in the air strikes with what we can do, refuelling aircraft and reconnaissance, to the best ability we have. In the past, we have always stood up when our values have been under attack. In the First World War, the Second World War, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Bosnia, we have always been there. Now it is happening again in this region.

There are lots of excuses. I have gone to the region many times. I have attended many conferences with friends of Iraq, and all this time we are seeing what we can do to help Iraq with friends. We all came along and we all tried to see how we could put Iraq back on its feet. I remember attending a conference in Istanbul. I remember attending a conference in Kuwait, which was called by the friends of Iraq and its neighbours, and all of us were very much committed to bringing Iraq back to its feet as a nation.

Despite our efforts and everything else here, there is no point in blaming Mr. Maliki, who as we all heard and we know was not a very inclusive man in creating the situation over there, which antagonized the Sunnis and the Kurds. Henceforth all of this is part and parcel of what is happening today. We should forget all that. It is something that we need to learn and is one of the reasons why strong pressure was put for Mr. Maliki to go and for bringing in another government in Iraq, an inclusive government that would include the Sunnis and the Kurds, as well as the Shiites, as they all share one country called Iraq.

However, the point at this stage is this. What do we do now, today? As we speak today, the fight is going on in the city out there, Kobani, about to fall to ISIS. The Kurds over there have appealed that, if we do not stop it, there will be massacres. We see that today the reports are that air strikes are taking place to dislodge the ISIL fighters. This is one of the ways we have decided we would contribute toward stopping this murderous regime from killing innocent people.

Henceforth, our motion is very clear as to what we are going to do, that it is for six months, as well as which aircraft and what the capacity would be. We are all agreed on our side that there will be no boots on the ground. We have learned that the people who live in that region are the best fighters for their own safety. As it is their country, the Kurds and the other Sunnis and the Shiites should be fighting for their rights, and their rights are the same rights as ours. Therefore it

is natural that we provide them with air support, but we are also providing them with ground-training support so they can fight to maintain their dignity and their home, which is of critical importance.

Therefore, I fail to understand. Yes, there is no question about the fact that we need humanitarian assistance, and I agree with my colleagues on both sides here that humanitarian assistance is an important part of it. However, as the Minister of Foreign Affairs has said, when the firefighters combat a fire, so does the ambulance come at the same time. The firefighters have to come first to put out the fire. To put out this fire here is to stop ISIL from killing people, and the only way we can stop ISIL is by joining in a fight to stop it.

What the government has proposed in this is the right course of action. As I have indicated, there is radicalization taking place, but the message is clearly being sent that we are protecting not only the region but our own country as well.

• (1315)

Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest to the comments of the parliamentary secretary, particularly the first part about one of his constituents and the loss a mother was experiencing of her son who had become radicalized and gone to Iraq and lost his life. I am assuming it was Iraq—

An hon. member: Syria.

Mr. Jack Harris: It was Syria, Mr. Speaker. The notion of radicalization of young Canadians is a serious one. In fact, as the Prime Minister states our role here, it is somehow a direct threat to Canada.

We have some information that 100 or more have gone and maybe 80 have come back. I wonder if there is any insight into what is going on in the minds of these young men who were radicalized. When they come back, are they coming back disillusioned? Are they coming back trained? Do we have the capability of dealing with that? Did the mother have any suggestions?

How is it that bombing is going to solve that problem? That is what I want to know. It has been suggested by some that bombing is in fact counterproductive and leads to more recruiting.

• (1320)

Hon. Deepak Obhrai: Mr. Speaker, first, I will talk about the issue of bombing, which I have already explained. It is to stop this group from killing other people and creating the humanitarian crisis that we are talking about, which we need to go and help, and at least we agree on this.

Coming back to the radicalization and to the tears of this mother, the mother herself could not understand what had transpired or what made her son go; although, at one stage she did point out to me that he was on the Internet chatting with a lady of the other faith, who probably had an influence on him.

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It is becoming very obvious that these guys are using social media to radicalize these young people. The mother is now working with another group in Germany that is facing the same problem, and bringing them together to see how best they can provide support to families where this is taking place.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the parliamentary secretary made reference to other countries and their engagement.

Also, through that, he made reference to the fact that countries like Germany are not participating in the air strikes. No doubt it had some form of an evaluation that ultimately determined that its role was better placed by not participating in an air strike.

I am wondering if the member could share with the House what options he, as the parliamentary secretary, looked into that go beyond Canada's playing a role strictly in terms of air strikes.

Hon. Deepak Obhrai: Mr. Speaker, as I said in my intervention, I attended international conferences to assist Iraq in building an inclusive country that would not give rise to radicalization and those things. All of those were done by this government, which took a strong part in it.

Then when ISIL came in, we went out to assist with the forces to help fight this terror over there, as we did in Afghanistan.

I must say, for the member opposite from the Liberal Party, that it was his party that sent us into Afghanistan without a debate like the one we are having. At least we are holding a debate and allowing the member to share what is on his mind.

We believe this is the right course of action to take. We are going to stand with the people of those regions, and against those who threaten Canada.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Maria Mourani (Ahuntsic, Ind.): Mr. Speaker, as my colleague knows—it is no secret—Canadians have reportedly gone abroad to join the jihadists. This is outlined in the report from the Department of Public Safety. Apparently, there are even some Canadians who have come back and are like sleeper cells.

I asked the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness whether there were specific programs, with specific budgets, to prevent this and limit violent radicalization of young people. He was not able to respond.

Could my colleague tell me whether any such programs exist, with their own budgets, to prevent violent radicalization here in Canada?

[*English*]

Hon. Deepak Obhrai: Mr. Speaker, as I am sure the member knows, the RCMP has already indicated that it is one of the areas it will working with and looking at.

As I said in my speech, the Germans have already done it, but it was again done outside, by people who are already retired and with the families out there.

There are others way to look at how we can help. That is what the RCMP is doing. That is why I commend the mother of Damian for doing what she is doing.

• (1325)

Mr. Erin O'Toole (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is my honour to rise on this important day in the House of Commons, and I do so with a deep sense of responsibility as a member of the House.

I have said on numerous occasions, both in this place and outside, that one of the most important debates that a member of the House of Commons will take part in is the decision related to putting the men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces in harm's way. It is a decision that should be used sparingly, but as a democratic leader of middle powers in the world, we should exercise it when our values and indeed freedoms are at risk.

It is also a deep responsibility for me as a Canadian, because it is by decisions like this that we define the type of Canadians we are. Are we Canadians like our forebears, who with a young and small country stepped up in the past and served in a way that was much larger than its population might have dictated? Are we a nation that does not move to the other side of the road as we pass people whose freedoms and very lives are being threatened, hoping that someone else will tend to them? Are we the type of Canadians who in a global age benefit immensely from trade in one of the wealthiest countries in the world, but who allow ourselves to fall asleep under the blanket of security that our distance from these conflicts always allows us to have?

Before the House is a debate on the motion for the next phase in our response to the ISIL threat. On September 5, the Prime Minister outlined that Canada's initial response was to send military advisers to help Iraqi and Kurdish forces in the defence of their territories and to stop killings on a genocidal scale.

That mission is now over, and it is being extended. It is evolving into an air strike role for Canada.

But who is that threat that is ISIL?

All Canadians have been horrified by the accounts we have seen on television: beheadings of journalists and aid workers, the selling of women and young girls into slavery, rape as a weapon of war, mass killings on a scale that is truly genocidal. ISIL is an enemy of freedom, an enemy that follows no creed except death and destruction.

As Canadians, indeed as part of the developed and democratic world, if we learned anything from 9/11, it is that navel gazing and turning a blind eye to these threats because they are far away can allow them to gather to a point where they also touch us. Therefore, when we see some of the children being impacted by this horrific violence in Iraq and Syria, we should also see the faces of our own children. We should not allow this threat to gather, because we have already seen, sadly, that a few radicalized Canadians are taking part in these horrific acts. ISIL terrorists have already threatened Canada. With the vast amount of territory and financing they have gained in recent months, they are a threat not just to that region but to the entire world.

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With our immense freedoms and wealth as a nation comes a duty to safeguard and promote these same opportunities for others. That is why I stand in full agreement with our evolving role in combatting the threat that is ISIL. We are now going to extend the training mission and the advisory commission with select members of our special forces unit. We are also going to deploy surveillance aircraft, an air-to-air refuelling Polaris, and up to six CF-18s to join our allies, both our NATO allies and our allies in the Gulf, in combatting the advance of ISIL.

• (1330)

This is an appropriate response because it can be effective. It can cut off supply and financing lines for ISIL. It can isolate them geographically and allow domestic ground forces to defend their own territory. We see how close this conflict is drifting to our NATO ally of Turkey.

Air strikes can have a limited but impactful role in stopping genocide and stopping the advance of ISIL.

It is also a much lower risk for our men and women of the Canadian Forces. There is risk whenever they are flying in combat, but it is a limited risk. I know the exceptional men and women of our Royal Canadian Air Force train and accept these risks as part of their duty for our country and for our values.

Most importantly, these would be targeted and precise strikes that are assessed to minimize collateral damage, both before the strike and after. We learn from these assessments, and we learn if an impact is being felt on the ground and if we are saving lives and preventing the advance of ISIL.

I want to address some of the concerns raised by the opposition in the debate in the weeks before this mission.

First, the opposition suggests that Canada is running into this air strike role, or rushing into battle, as I have heard some members of this House say. If that were the case, we would have joined the first round of countries implementing air strikes.

On September 5 the Prime Minister outlined our position, which was an advisory one for the first month, and said that we would speak to our allies to see what would be needed going further. Canada has always played a role that is helpful but that is commensurate with our size and scope as a country. That is what we are doing here.

Members of this House have also said what our exit strategy is, throwing out suggestions like that as an excuse not to stand with our allies in the face of this threat.

An air strike role is limited. Our crews are able to return and assess the impact of their last mission; they are not on the ground. As the Prime Minister said in the House, no combat troops are being deployed on the ground with this motion.

Another element of debate has been, "How do we measure success?" Once again the idea is that if we can't measure success, we shouldn't stand alongside our allies and we shouldn't hear the cries from the thousands suffering as a result of ISIL.

However, with air strikes, as I said, we can measure the impact of our role in that area. We can measure if we have isolated ISIL and

allowed Kurdish or Iraqi ground forces to safeguard their own interests.

This cries out for a quote from Winston Churchill, who said, "...no one can guarantee success in war, but only deserve it." The coalition forces, in the face of horrific acts of violence and genocide, certainly deserve success.

As the Prime Minister said, this is not a case of either humanitarian aid or counterterrorism operations, but a case of both, and without security on the ground, as we have seen through the tragic beheading last week, we cannot deliver humanitarian aid to the people who need it.

The NDP opposition in this House is understandable. It is a party that has been very reticent about deploying Canadian forces throughout its history. What is deeply troubling to me as a parliamentarian has been not just the position of the third party, the Liberal Party, in this debate, but its approach to the debate itself.

To highlight that, I am quoting another Liberal leader's speech in this place on September 8, 1939.

Prime Minister King, in response to Conservative support for his motion, said:

It shows how deep in the breasts of men lies the determination to preserve, to maintain and to defend freedom and all that freedom makes possible in the enjoyment of life itself. This deep-lying instinct for freedom is, I believe, characteristic of the citizens of Canada from one end of this great country to the other.

A "deep-lying instinct for freedom": these are comments from the Liberal leader in 1939, in response to the Conservative Party's support for his motion in the House regarding the deployment of men and women at a time of need.

• (1335)

We can contrast that with the comments of today's Liberal leader, flippant when it comes to the situation that ISIL poses and derogatory of our ability to project force alongside our allies.

Where has the Liberal Party gone? That is the question I am leaving with the House. Where is the Liberals' deep-lying instinct for freedom? I hope they find it soon.

Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I would remind my colleague on the opposite side that in 1939 the CCF party also supported the Second World War. Although the leader was a pacifist, the rest of the caucus fully supported Canada's involvement there, and of course we supported the mission in Libya initially in 2011, when it was directed at the responsibility to protect.

However, I want to put this proposition to him. The effectiveness of the air strikes being proposed is being seriously questioned by many, and others with substantial experience have even suggested that air strikes are counterproductive. Even those who accept that tactic are aware that we will run out of targets very soon.

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My concern is with the costs that might be involved. In Libya, we were talking about \$350 million. Why would the government's money and efforts not be better spent in providing direct humanitarian aid to the 1.8 million people whose lives are at risk immediately and who need—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Order. The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Erin O'Toole: Mr. Speaker, I would like to refer the member to the Prime Minister's speech in the House last Friday, when he said the argument that the NDP is putting to the House is a false one. It is not that either we are involved in military action or we play a humanitarian role. In fact, we have been playing a humanitarian role, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs enhanced that yesterday in the House.

It is clear that Canada's role should be and always has been commensurate with our size and our ability to support our allies in support of our freedom and our values. We cannot cross to the other side of the road and ignore what is going on.

Mr. Arnold Chan (Scarborough—Agincourt, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade for his comments and pay tribute to him for having served in the Canadian military as a member of the Royal Canadian Air Force. He is also one of the co-founders of the True Patriot Love foundation. I know that any decision he makes in terms of sending our armed forces into combat will be considered carefully, given his past service.

Last week the Liberal leader laid out four principles. I want to highlight only one, and that is the issue of capacity. We have heard nothing on this side with respect to whether, in fact, we have the appropriate capacity to exercise this type of force in theatre.

Has that question in fact been appropriately addressed before the members?

Mr. Erin O'Toole: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for his question and his kind comments and use this occasion to congratulate him on joining the House of Commons. In fact, he is making a good contribution already, and he is certainly a welcome change from the previous member for Scarborough—Agincourt. It is good to see him in this place.

I would refer him to my remarks on the ability of Canada and the RCAF to assess the impact air strikes are having in concert with our allies. This is about making sure that we assess prior to every strike and then after every strike.

However, I would ask him as a new member of his caucus to ask his leader where the Liberals' deep-lying instinct for freedom has gone in their position with respect to these limited strikes, which are similar to the Kosovo mission their previous government introduced. Their absence on this file is of deep concern to many Canadians, including some Liberal Party members in my riding I was speaking with on the weekend. I would ask him to be a new voice in caucus to make sure Liberals bring their leader on track.

• (1340)

Ms. Peggy Nash (Parkdale—High Park, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to join the debate today on behalf of my

constituents in Parkdale—High Park. I am splitting my time with the member for Davenport, a neighbouring riding in Toronto.

This is a very important debate. There is no more serious decision that can come before the House than a decision for military action, a decision to send Canada's children, our sons and daughters, our wives, our husbands and our parents to war. It is one of the most grave decisions that we have as parliamentarians.

There are many dangerous places in the world today. I have, like many here, been engaged in international work as a parliamentarian, but certainly for many years before my time in Parliament. I have worked with people from the Democratic Republic of Congo, where sexual violence has been a horrific tool of war, a place where it is estimated that even to this day, over 40,000 people a month are losing their lives, and many more lives are destroyed through displacement and violence of various kinds.

The Central African Republic is another place where, since December, it is estimated that more than 5,000 people have been killed.

Syria has been a very high profile area of conflict. It is estimated that close to 200,000 have lost their lives. This has evolved into a major humanitarian crisis, where many are in refugee camps or are seeking refuge in Lebanon, Syria and Iraq.

There are places that are just very violent. Saudi Arabia, for example, has capital punishment. One of the most common tools for execution is beheading. Just this past August, more than 20 people were executed by beheading.

There are many dangerous, violent places in the world, but certainly the actions of ISIL have particularly gripped the public media, the public debate, the consciousness of people around the world because of its violence, its tactics and its skilled use of social media as a tool to terrorize.

Many thousands have been killed. ISIL has been using horrible tactics such as conscripting of children and sexual violence to conduct its terror campaign. It has left many people displaced, more than 1.8 million civilians in Iraq alone. However, about 5.2 million are in need of humanitarian assistance.

Let us make no mistake. The actions of ISIL are reprehensible, horrific and deplorable, and there is no question that people being subjected to its terror campaign are looking for help.

Incredible humanitarian assistance is required. Certainly the UN has highlighted this. The Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs at the UN has said that humanitarian conditions in Iraq continue to deteriorate, and 5.2 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance. That assistance ranges from water, sanitation, hygiene, access to food and very basic needs like shelter. We are coming into the fall and it will soon be winter. People do not have adequate shelter.

Government Orders

•(1345)

Also, there are: Mobile health units, especially in hard to access areas; protection for minorities, because these are the people who have been especially affected by the fighting; gender-sensitive responses for women and children who are being targeted for sexual assault; women and children who are trafficked, abducted and forced into recruitment, fighting, marriages, and as I said, sexual-based violence. There are children who not only have basic humanitarian needs, but they also need education and counselling for this trauma.

The United Nations has declared the situation the highest level of emergency. If we want to save lives and provide immediate assistance, it is with humanitarian aid that Canada can best assist the people who are affected by ISIL.

The United Nations passed resolution 2178 on September 24, which did not advocate military intervention. It advocated for UN member states to ensure that people who financed or otherwise supported terrorist activity, including and specifically that of ISIL, would be held legally accountable and brought to justice. The resolution did not authorize military action.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon commented that, “Over the longer-term, the biggest threat to terrorists is not the power of missiles – it is the politics of inclusion”. I would argue that military aid is not the biggest need; it is humanitarian aid.

The question the New Democrats ask is, will military aid help or hurt?

There has been some suggestion that the bombing missions by the United States have in fact prompted more recruits to join ISIL and become engaged in its struggle. Therefore, are we spreading the problem as these fighters disperse to avoid bombs, and they disperse among the civilian population? Are we creating a bigger problem than would otherwise have been?

In other words, would a bombing mission help or hurt? What is the plan? What is the goal? How do we know if we are succeeding? How do we know when we have succeeded? Will there be ground troops and what is the plan for that?

It is a little different to say to Canadians, or to any country, that we will be dropping bombs from a very high altitude and nobody on our side is going to get hurt. However, as we have seen in conflict after conflict, that becomes a slippery slope and quickly evolves into boots on the ground because there are always reasons, such as we have to finish the job, or we are not effective enough or there is more we could be doing.

We need to know what the plan is. What is the duration? Is it going to help or hurt? Are we dealing effectively with the humanitarian needs?

We have many questions that have not been adequately addressed in spite of the many passionate speeches from the other side of the House.

On behalf of my community in Parkdale—High Park, and I do not want to by any stretch of the imagination say that public opinion is unanimous, of the people who have contacted me by email, phone and those who have walked in the door, overwhelmingly the opinion

is that people do not want us to engage in a bombing campaign against ISIL. They support humanitarian aid and whatever assistance we can provide. They understand the seriousness of this threat, but they do not want us to become engaged in what could be another long, open-ended war against what or who, wondering who would be allies and who knows when it will end or what the finish line even is.

•(1350)

I am proud of our leader, our critics on this file and our party. We will vote no to the motion when it comes to a vote.

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the NDP has been clear on where it stands with respect to this motion. That party has been clear on where it stands with respect to this mission as well as with previous military deployments. My question is not specific to this mission, because as I said, the NDP has been clear that it is not prepared to support this one.

In future, what circumstances would guide an NDP decision to support a Canadian combat mission abroad? What initiatives would those members have to see put in place to support a Canadian military combat role in the future, not this specific mission? If one of those elements is supporting the United Nations, could she comment on the problem we always seem to have with the United Nations with respect to a veto by one of the permanent members of the United Nations?

Ms. Peggy Nash: Mr. Speaker, as the member can wisely understand, I will not speculate on what could be or possibly might be an acceptable bombing mission or military intervention. Our hope is that we do not have to engage in a military mission.

There is something we know now. We have the facts. We do not have to speculate. Lives can be saved today with an even greater humanitarian intervention. We do not have to hypothesize about that. Millions of people are in misery today and their lives may be at risk because of the humanitarian crisis.

Rather than getting our mindset on what mission we might support, let us focus on the mission today, which is a humanitarian mission. Let us save lives today. That is what Canada should do.

Mr. Adam Vaughan (Trinity—Spadina, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, our party and the member's party share a perspective on the urgency and the need for a much more substantial humanitarian gesture and engagement in protecting in particular the refugee camps along the Turkish border. We also share that party's apprehension and worry that the bombings will not result in either an immediate peace, a lasting peace, or a situation stabilized to the point where human rights are respected.

Statements by Members

The amendment that the NDP moved calls for the shipment of arms. I am curious as to what arms would be shipped, to whom they would be shipped, if not shipped to some depot, who would they be intended for and how would they be expected to be used?

Ms. Peggy Nash: Mr. Speaker, let me clarify the amendment. We accept that a local force needs to be capable of defending itself in order to maintain international peace and security, so we have argued that we need to boost our aid to the humanitarian effort. We need to provide assistance for the investigation and prosecution of war crimes. We call on the government to not deploy Canadian Forces in combat. We call on the government to seek House approval for any extension of the mission, to report back the costs of the mission and to offer wholehearted support to the men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces. Our goal is not to engage in a military mission. We want that deleted from the motion.

It is unfortunate that our colleagues in the Liberal Party supported the initial involvement in a mission in Iraq, because that was the slippery slope that has led us to this point today. We are now facing a bombing mission in Iraq because of my colleagues in the Liberal Party.

• (1355)

Mr. Andrew Cash (Davenport, NDP): Mr. Speaker, as always it is an honour for me to rise in this place on behalf of the good people of Davenport in the great city of Toronto to debate the motion at hand, which is essentially the most important motion and the most important decision that Parliament is ever seized of, and that is to send Canadians to war.

The government would like us to believe that the only choices are its proposal, its motion, and inaction. However, I think there has been a healthy debate here today. What Canadians have heard is that it is not true. The response Canadians and Canada should make is far different than the response that the government is making and far different from the response the government wants Canadians to believe is the right way to go.

However, on some level what we perhaps also need to think about are the voices coming from our constituencies, what people are saying on the ground, and the concerns people are raising. I think I speak for many here.

I have received a steady stream of correspondence and concern. I thought it might be helpful to read a couple of the letters I have received into the record because it would help to frame this debate in a slightly different way. Oftentimes it is perceived that all we are doing is scoring partisan points in this place. In this particular instance, in this debate, I believe that is far from the case. It is a difference in values and of direction. I know that I stand here as part of a party, a caucus, that has a strong history of standing up for the cause of peace, for the cause of peace in Canada and globally. I am proud of that history. That is one of the reasons that I and no doubt my colleagues in the New Democratic Party are in this caucus.

I have a couple of letters I thought I would read into the record so that it is clear that our position is one that is not just part of our history but part of our job representing Canadians. Therefore, before we take a break to discuss these issues in a different kind of way during question period, I will read this into the record. It states, "As a Canadian citizen, I am one of the majority who oppose entering this

conflict and want to maintain Canada's historic role as a peace-keeping nation. I believe strongly that Canada should not be entering the war in Iraq and sending 6 CF-18s and 600 personnel. This is a civil war and we have been asked for humanitarian aid, which we should supply".

In other words, it is not that Canadians do not want to engage, it is how we engage. What the government is doing with the motion and this direction is pulling us out of our historical role and rules of engagement.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The hon. member for Davenport will have six minutes remaining for his comments when the House next returns to the question.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*Translation*]

HUMANITARIAN AID

Mr. Louis Plamondon (Bas-Richelieu—Nicolet—Bécancour, BQ): Mr. Speaker, the members of the Bloc Québécois are committed pacifists. However, we cannot turn our backs on massive human rights abuses. The Quebec nation, Canada and the entire international community have a responsibility and a duty to protect those who are suffering barbaric acts.

Quebec and Canada must step up and provide a humanitarian response as a show of human and international solidarity. That is the only way to legitimize the use of force.

The motion moved by the Conservative government demonstrates a one-dimensional logic that calls for air strikes and in which urgent humanitarian assistance plays a secondary role.

The Bloc Québécois agrees with the UN Secretary-General: we need to address the underlying causes of this crisis.

The Conservatives are asking for the House's blind trust in a military mission but are vague about its objective and how it will be assessed. The Bloc Québécois will not give the government *carte blanche*.

* * *

• (1400)

[*English*]

ST. MAXIMILIAN KOLBE PARISH

Mr. Wladyslaw Lizon (Mississauga East—Cooksville, CPC): Mr. Speaker, on Sunday, October 5, I was very pleased to attend and bring greetings on behalf of our government to the celebrations of the 30th anniversary of St. Maximilian Kolbe Church and the 35th anniversary of St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish in Mississauga.

The church was named after a Polish priest who volunteered to die in place of a stranger in the Nazi German death camp of Auschwitz. The church received a blessing by Pope John Paul II while on a papal visit to Canada in 1984.

Statements by Members

Welcoming many families and individuals, this parish remains a gathering place for those committed to upholding Christian ideals of faith and service, while preserving a deep attachment to their Polish heritage.

I would like to thank Father Janusz Blazejak and his pastoral team, parish council and many parishioners who have blessed countless people through their community service for the past 35 years. Such service is a true example of the values upheld by Canadians. God bless them as they continue in growth for future generations.

* * *

[Translation]

MONT-TREMBLANT

Mr. Marc-André Morin (Laurentides—Labelle, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I was delighted to learn that new direct flights between Toronto and La Macaza/Mont-Tremblant will be offered this winter. Air Canada will be offering daily flights from Lester B. Pearson airport. These flights will be available during the ski season.

This is excellent news for Mont-Tremblant's visibility and accessibility. These flights will bring in tourists from the eastern United States and the rest of Canada. Mont-Tremblant will be easier to get to than ever before.

I hope that this announcement will prompt the government to finally give the La Macaza/Mont-Tremblant airport appropriate classification with a modified customs system that will eventually allow the airport to accommodate international flights.

* * *

[English]

CITIZENSHIP WEEK

Mr. Chungsen Leung (Willowdale, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to rise today to remind all Canadians that next week is Citizenship Week, a time when we reflect and celebrate the rights and responsibilities that Canadians share.

Our citizenship defines what it means to be a Canadian. It is a shared commitment to our country's core beliefs in freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law, values that we all hold dear.

Canada has welcomed generations of newcomers to our shores to help us build a free, law-abiding and prosperous society. For 400 years, settlers and immigrants have contributed to the diversity and richness of our country, which is built on a proud history and a strong identity.

During Citizenship Week, I encourage all Canadians to reaffirm their citizenship and reflect on what it means to be a citizen of Canada, the greatest country in the world.

* * *

MENTAL ILLNESS AWARENESS WEEK

Mr. Frank Valeriote (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, over the course of their lifetimes, one in five Canadians will experience mental illness. Millions of Canadians, our friends, family and loved ones will suffer a painful, though often invisible and isolating injury.

There is no better opportunity than this Mental Illness Awareness Week to ensure that those among us suffering from mental illness are not alone. Prejudices and misconceptions, which surround mental health issues, still exist and stigmatize sufferers. It is incumbent upon us to break through and fight stigma. It is our duty as parliamentarians to ensure that access to professional care is available to whoever is in need.

We cannot lose another soldier, or veteran, or police officer, or firefighter, or paramedic. We cannot lose another mother, father, brother or sister. We have to let them know that they are not alone.

We must ensure that awareness of mental illness extends beyond a week, or even beyond a year. Let us always keep in mind those among us who are suffering and resolve every day to do better with mental health treatment.

* * *

KYIV SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA AND CHORUS

Mr. Mark Warawa (Langley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, tonight is a once in a lifetime opportunity to hear conductor Wes Janzen and the world famous Kyiv Symphony Orchestra and Chorus.

For the past month, they have been travelling across Canada as part of their Canada-Ukraine friendship tour. An incredible demonstration of talent and dedication, their performances have brought the uniqueness and vibrancy of the Ukrainian culture to hundreds of Canadians. As many on the Hill witnessed earlier today, their sound and musical expertise are remarkable.

Tonight, they will be performing at the Christ Church Cathedral in Ottawa at 7 p.m. It is free and open to all. This is a must-see event.

Our Ukrainian friends are here today to remind us of the strong relationship that Canada and Ukraine share. I ask all members of the House to give Wes Janzen and the Kyiv Symphony Orchestra and Chorus a warm Canadian welcome.

* * *

●(1405)

[Translation]

FORESTRY INDUSTRY

Mr. Dany Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, NDP): Mr. Speaker, of the many cuts made to science in recent years by the Conservative government, I find one particularly shocking, and that is the significant drop in federal involvement in forest research.

Forestry in Canada has a history spanning more than a century and is an economic activity that is vital to the survival of over 200 Canadian communities.

Today, more than ever, the sustainability of the industry and forestry jobs depends on innovation, which, in turn, would stop declining if the federal government were to get more involved.

Statements by Members

To that end, why not give Forestry Canada the resources to fund projects with development potential or further tie basic research to experience on the ground, so that innovation is dynamic and adapted to reality?

To facilitate management, we need to reactivate and improve the Canadian Model Forest Network, an indispensable partner in the long-term renewal of Canadian forestry through community-based innovation.

Looking for new ways to develop Canadian forests as a whole needs to be a national priority. There are solutions out there, and the NDP is ready to act.

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[English]

BILL NIELSEN

Mr. Blaine Calkins (Wetaskiwin, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Bill Nielsen, a community leader who dedicated many tireless hours building running and walking trails in my hometown of Lacombe. Bill passed away this spring at the age of 73 from pancreatic cancer.

This past Saturday, I had the pleasure of joining hundreds of local runners at the sold-out inaugural Bill Nielsen Trail Run. Bill was an inspiration to all. He ran his first marathon at age 40, and he ran his 100th marathon in 2008. Amazingly, Bill ran more than 30 marathons after being diagnosed with Parkinson's disease.

Bill was a legend in the Lacombe running community, but perhaps his greatest contributions were the trails he built and maintained in our city. Preferring to ask forgiveness rather than seek permission, Bill carved out trails through undeveloped parks in town using hand tools to avoid loud noises. Surprisingly, it took the town six months to catch him. Bill's passion led him to join the board of the parks and recreation committee in Lacombe so that he could continue his work on our trail system.

Bill stood for everything good about running, and his legacy will be enjoyed by future generations. I thank Bill for keeping us on the right trail.

* * *

BRANT SCOTT

Mr. Garry Breitzkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a former employee and great friend of Canada's outdoors and firearms communities, Mr. Brant Scott, who unexpectedly passed away on September 16.

Hailing from Grimsby, Ontario, Brant wore many hats. In his younger days, he was a reporter and editor at the local paper. In Ottawa, he put those skills to good use as a legislative assistant to several MPs, myself included.

He was an avid photographer and a talented musician, but above all, he was an exceptionally gifted writer and communicator. A man of integrity, Brant honed those skills while on Parliament Hill. He worked passionately for the rights of firearms owners and tackled a variety of the issues affecting Canada's outdoors community through the outdoors caucus. He made many friends along the way.

To Brant's wife, Susan, and children, Graham and Mary, we extend our heartfelt condolences on this devastating loss. Our thoughts and prayers are with them. We will miss Brant. May God bless.

* * *

[Translation]

WORLD ANIMAL DAY

Ms. Isabelle Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine, NDP): Mr. Speaker, World Animal Day, which was celebrated last Saturday, October 4, provides an excellent opportunity to talk about the well-being and rights of animals.

I rise today to draw attention to the problem of the growing number of animals in Canada on the endangered species list. The economic and industrial development of our country is of course necessary. However, it is also essential to consider the impact of human activities on animal populations, especially endangered species.

● (1410)

[English]

I can refer members to many examples, such as the western chorus frog or the woodland caribou. Both populations have suffered a massive decline throughout Canada, mainly caused by habitat loss. Without appropriate government funding and the political will for recovery programs, their future is seriously at risk. On this side of the House, we want to make sure that everything is done to protect these endangered species.

[Translation]

The government has a duty to work actively to protect our wildlife.

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[English]

PAN AMERICAN GAMES TORCH RELAY

Mr. Mike Wallace (Burlington, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canadians from coast to coast are being invited to celebrate and share their Pan Am spirit by taking part in the Toronto 2015 Pan Am torch relay.

This national event will be fuelled by hometown pride, with stops planned in five Canadian cities that have previously hosted major games. They include Calgary, Winnipeg, Montreal, Halifax, and Vancouver as well as 130 communities across Ontario, including my hometown of Burlington. Three thousand torch bearers will proudly carry the flame and share the Pan Am spirit of the games during the 41-day journey toward lighting the caldron at our opening ceremony in Toronto.

I know this event will be an opportunity to showcase our diverse culture, accomplishments, vast geography, and proud history. Our government is proud to support the Toronto 2015 Pan American Games torch relay, and we encourage all Canadians to take part in this celebration.

I encourage those wishing to become torch bearers to check out the toronto2015.org website for all the details. Mr. Speaker, I have registered to be a torch bearer, and I hope you have too.

* * *

[Translation]

QUEBEC COMMUNITY CENTRE FOR THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED

Mrs. Anne-Marie Day (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to once again shine a spotlight on one of the achievements of my riding, Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles.

On Friday, September 26, we opened the new community centre for the visually impaired in Charlesbourg. This centre will host indoor activities for the Carrefour québécois des personnes aveugles. There are 11,000 visually impaired people in the region.

The Fondation Caecitas and the Lions Clubs in the Quebec City area worked together and raised \$100,000 for the centre. The centre was also made possible by technology developed by HumanWare, a Quebec company.

The centre provides such services as Internet access with adaptive software, speech synthesis of texts and text magnification. Furthermore, every computer has a braille keyboard. The services will be available from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., seven days a week. The centre is located at 523 Louis-XIV Boulevard in Charlesbourg.

Congratulations. This is a great achievement.

* * *

[English]

SNOWBIRDS

Mr. Ray Boughen (Palliser, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise today to mention that the 44th season of the Snowbirds came to a successful close in Moose Jaw last weekend. The Snowbirds continue to showcase the skilled professionalism and teamwork of our Canadian pilots and technicians serving in the Royal Canadian Air Force. This season, in 50 performances in 35 locations throughout North America, people enjoyed the Snowbirds' show.

This past weekend also marked the 50th anniversary of the Snowbirds' aircraft, known as the CT-114 Tutor jet. As part of the 50th anniversary celebrations, past and present Tutor instructors, technicians, students, and Snowbirds gathered with the general public to honour the jet's service.

I ask all members to join me in congratulating the Snowbirds on a successful season and in wishing the Tutor jet a warm 50th anniversary.

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[Translation]

ROYAL 22ND REGIMENT

Mr. Marc Garneau (Westmount—Ville-Marie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this year we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Royal 22nd Regiment, a regiment that has served Canada with pride and great distinction.

Statements by Members

I have a very personal connection to the regiment as my father served with them for most of his career, having commanded the 3rd Battalion, and his father Gérard served with the Royal 22nd Battalion, the predecessor to the regiment, during World War I.

The Royal 22nd Regiment has served with distinction in every major Canadian military engagement, including both world wars, Korea, Afghanistan and multiple peacekeeping missions.

Championed by Wilfred Laurier, the Royal 22nd Regiment, a French-speaking regiment, served in many of World War I's major engagements.

[English]

I am sure all Canadians join me in paying tribute to the Royal 22nd Regiment, our famous Van Doos.

* * *

●(1415)

TEACHING AWARDS

Mr. Scott Armstrong (Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today the Prime Minister will announce the recipients of the Prime Minister's Awards for Teaching Excellence and for Excellence in Early Childhood Education. This year's awards will be presented to 54 recipients from across the country, and 17 of these will receive the national awards from the Prime Minister at an event in Ottawa later today.

As someone who actually led a couple of schools in Cumberland—Colchester—Musquodoboit Valley, I was very fortunate to work with several very inspiring and excellent teachers. I know the rare qualities that teachers have to be able to deliver effective education to our young people.

The Prime Minister's Awards for Teaching Excellence recognize the outstanding elementary and secondary school teachers in all disciplines who, through the innovative use of communications and technology, help Canadian students meet the challenges of the 21st century, societally and economically.

I am very proud to wish the nominees all the very best and thank them for their hard work and dedication to ensure that Canadian youth live, grow, and thrive.

* * *

[Translation]

THE SENATE

Mr. Matthew Dubé (Chambly—Borduas, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Liberal and Conservative senators are angry.

Not only did the Auditor General have the nerve to question their spending, but he also had the nerve to send in young people. Some senators have never seen a young twentysomething accountant.

Oral Questions

Liberal Senator Joseph Day said he was concerned that the auditors were young.

One Conservative complained about a 22-year-old kid running around asking him questions about his spending, and he was critical of these young auditors sticking their noses in his business. Taxpayers pay for his business.

That is the Canadian Senate: useless, unelected officials who object as soon as they are asked to be accountable for their \$92 million budget.

What is worse is that the Prime Minister and the Liberal leader claim that this archaic institution, which refuses to be accountable, is still relevant.

The NDP will continue to get our young people involved, to be proud of them and to let them defend the interests of taxpayers while the Conservatives just neglect them.

* * *

[English]

NOBEL PRIZE IN MEDICINE

Mr. Patrick Brown (Barrie, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to stand in the House to congratulate McGill graduate Dr. John O'Keefe on winning the Nobel Prize in Medicine yesterday. He is the tenth McGill graduate or professor to bring honour and pride to Canada as a Nobel laureate.

Dr. O'Keefe was recognized for his contribution to the discovery of cells that contribute to the brain's inner GPS, which makes it possible to orient ourselves within our environment. Discovery of these cells may lead to a greater understanding of Alzheimer's, as this particular area of the brain is affected early on by those suffering from this terrible disease.

Our government has made record investments in science, technology, and innovation to improve our quality of life and to create new jobs and opportunities for Canadians. We announced the Canada first research excellence fund in economic action plan 2014, a \$1.5-billion legacy commitment to ensure that Canadian colleges and universities continue to contribute to this world-leading research we are celebrating today.

ORAL QUESTIONS

[English]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Leader of the Opposition, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Israeli newspaper *Haaretz* is reporting that more than 6,000 fighters joined ISIS in just the first few weeks after U.S. bombing began in Syria and Iraq. In one case alone, 73 fighters joined ISIS in Aleppo right after multiple civilians were killed in the first round of air strikes.

Does the Prime Minister not realize that these current tactics, the same ones he wants to follow, will only create more recruits for ISIS and can in fact be disastrously counterproductive?

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, what the world understands very clearly is that in the absence of any response, ISIL was growing like a cancer over the summer over an entire region. This constitutes a threat not just to the region but to the global community entirely and also to Canada. That is why it is essential that we work with our allies to undertake steps to make sure we limit the military capacities of this organization.

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Leader of the Opposition, NDP): Mr. Speaker, *The Wall Street Journal* is reporting this morning on the same failure of U.S. air strikes in Kobani.

As the U.S. bombing ramps up, ISIS has simply reverted to the same guerrilla tactics that it has been using for over 10 years. A senior Syrian Kurdish military official said:

We haven't received military aid nor humanitarian aid, and we don't know what these random airstrikes have succeeded in doing.

Why does the Prime Minister think that he knows better than commanders on the ground?

• (1420)

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, in fact, the intervention in question has been requested by the Government of Iraq, by a range of our allies, and in fact by a large part of the global community.

We know that when we face this kind of a threat, a terrorist Caliphate established in the open that threatens this country and threatens it quite explicitly and directly, that is not something we can just sit back and watch.

We are undertaking a range of actions, and we are very fortunate to have men and women who are prepared to put their lives on the line to undertake those actions on our behalf.

[Translation]

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Leader of the Opposition, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister does not seem to have a clear sense of his objectives in Iraq. First, he said that we would act with our allies to eliminate the threat. The following week, he said that the aim is to significantly degrade the capabilities of ISIL.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs set a whole other objective, saying that simply containing the problem would be a victory in and of itself.

Eliminate, degrade or contain: which is it?

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I referred to those objectives during my speech in the House. It is crucial that we degrade the terrorist military capabilities of the Islamic State organization. We cannot just sit back and watch as this organization grows and poses an increasing threat to our country. We are working with our allies around the world to limit the threat this organization poses.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Leader of the Opposition, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development confirmed that the Prime Minister failed to meet his watered-down climate change targets. The targets are light years behind the Kyoto targets.

Has the Prime Minister even tried to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Canada?

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, for the first time ever and thanks to our plan, greenhouse gas emissions have been reduced. At the same time, the economy has grown.

[English]

This is absolutely essential to our objectives going forward. We want to make sure that we continue to grow the economy while continuing to take steps to limit emissions and achieve our environmental objectives.

Our objective on this side of the House is not to kill jobs and not to impose a carbon tax.

Hon. Thomas Mulcair (Leader of the Opposition, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the environment commissioner could not be clearer. They will never attain those objectives.

Let us go back to what the Prime Minister has actually said, verbatim, about the Kyoto protocol:

Kyoto is essentially a socialist scheme to suck money out of wealth-producing nations.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Hon. Thomas Mulcair: They applaud, Mr. Speaker. That is shameful.

The Prime Minister lowered Canada's climate change targets. He killed Kyoto. He refuses to regulate our largest single source, oil and gas. He has done nothing. How can he face his children and his grandchildren?

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the fact is that when we have an agreement which covers only about one-third of global emissions, the effect of that agreement is not to reduce emissions, it is simply to shift emissions from developed countries to countries with lower environmental standards.

That is why, since we came to office, we have advocated an international protocol that would be binding upon all major emitters, which is something I am pleased to see is the recent position of a number of governments around the world.

* * *

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the war in Iraq and Syria has given the world millions of new refugees. In recent days, 140,000 Syrian refugees have entered Turkey, joining the 850,000 already there, all of them bracing for a harsh and cold winter ahead.

Oral Questions

What specific funding, resources and personnel is Canada deploying to meet this crisis?

• (1425)

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as members know, the government has announced a series of humanitarian measures and humanitarian funding, including by the Minister of Foreign Affairs yesterday on the issue of sexual violence.

Our position on this side is very clear. We do not think the fact that we are undertaking a military mission in any way precludes the humanitarian response. In fact, what refugees want is a country in which they can actually live. That is what our allies are hoping to do.

[Translation]

Mr. Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the current war in Iraq and Syria has given the world millions of new refugees. Nearly one million of them are now in Turkey and they are bracing for a harsh winter ahead.

What financial support and resources will Canada deploy to help these refugees?

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, a few weeks ago, the government began announcing a series of humanitarian measures in Syria and Iraq, including the funding to combat sexual violence that the Minister of Foreign Affairs announced yesterday. This humanitarian and military mission is necessary to ensure that we do not end up with a country governed by terrorists, but rather a country in which the refugees can live.

* * *

[English]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this morning, the environment commissioner released a damning report. The Conservative government has completely failed to tackle climate change.

[Translation]

The commissioner said that it is becoming increasingly clear that we will not meet our 2020 Copenhagen targets. The minister agrees with the commissioner's findings and recommendations.

Does the Prime Minister also admit that his government has failed in this regard?

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that is an unbelievable question coming from the Liberal Party, which has the worst record in the world on this issue.

[English]

The reality is that the Liberal Party signed these incredibly ambitious targets and then went in precisely the opposite direction, seeing some of the fastest increases in global greenhouse gas emissions in the world.

Under our government, we have lowered greenhouse gas emissions and, at the same time, have been able to grow the economy. That is why we will continue on track.

*Oral Questions***FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

Mr. Paul Dewar (Ottawa Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, today, the government is cutting off debate on Canada's role in Iraq. It has left the door open to extending the mission, without returning to the House. It has left questions unanswered about why we would be getting involved in Syria's civil war. It has given no new help for civilian victims of ISIL's terror who are threatened by harsh winter conditions in the refugee camps.

Why has the government failed to have announced any new support for refugee camps in Iraq?

Hon. Christian Paradis (Minister of International Development and Minister for La Francophonie, CPC): Mr. Speaker, this is not true. We announced several measures to help people in need in Iraq.

I need to remind my colleague that we are the seventh-largest contributor to assist the people in this crisis, but we need to take military measures to ensure we can have access to this human corridor and security.

We hope the opposition would support the motion and then walk the talk. This is the way we can reach people in need and deliver effective aid in a timely fashion.

Mr. Paul Dewar (Ottawa Centre, NDP): Mr. Speaker, that is hardly enough when people are threatened by a harsh winter and the government has announced no new money for refugee camps.

The question is how should Canada contribute while representing our strengths and values. The answer we have received from the government is plainly inadequate. More than that, its answer is, quite frankly, risky.

Nearly all our other allies explicitly ruled out a combat role in Syria. The Conservatives have explicitly opened the door to our combat role in Syria. Why is the government pushing us to war in Syria?

• (1430)

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have said that we are not going to war with Iraq and we are not going to war with Syria. We are going to war with ISIL terrorists, people who are decapitating humanitarian workers, selling girls and young women into slavery, people who are summarily executing people of different religious faiths who do not accept ISIL's radical interpretation of Islam.

We have said very clearly in the motion before the House that we will go into Iraq, where the democratically elected government has invited us, and we will take real and significant action alongside our colleagues, whether it is with military support, humanitarian support or encouraging the establishment of an inclusionary government.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Hélène Laverdière (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in its motion on the crisis in Iraq and Syria, the government is proposing a poorly defined plan with no exit strategy. Meanwhile, the need for humanitarian aid on the ground continues to grow.

Will the government agree to include humanitarian aid in its main motion on the mission in Iraq, as proposed in the NDP's amendments?

Hon. Christian Paradis (Minister of International Development and Minister for La Francophonie, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government has announced various measures involving the Red Cross, Mercy Corps, Development and Peace and Save the Children in order to address basic needs, whether it be food or hygiene kits.

Targeted military action is needed to meet these urgent needs. The ISIL's capabilities must be reduced. That is how we can get to the people in need. Military action and humanitarian aid are not mutually exclusive. I would like to remind my colleague that we are the seventh-largest donor in this humanitarian crisis.

* * *

CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

Ms. Hélène Laverdière (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the file on Syrian refugees currently awaiting entry into Canada is surely the best example of this government's inability to acknowledge the real needs of the victims of the many ongoing conflicts in the region.

Instead of fiddling with the numbers to make his performance look good, will the minister try to solve the problem of delays that are preventing the sponsorship of Syrian refugees?

Hon. Chris Alexander (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as the opposition already knows, there are 1,645 Syrian refugees in Canada. Those are the latest numbers.

Among them is the Dandachi family, whose case was brought to our embassy's attention in January. They arrived in Montreal in June, so processing is very fast.

Why does the opposition ask this question today and almost every day? Because the opposition members want to downplay their opposition to what Syrian refugees really need: military intervention. That is what the refugees, Iraqis and Canadians want.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in her latest report, the Commissioner of the Environment has confirmed that this government does not take the environment seriously.

The Conservatives are not going to meet their own greenhouse gas reduction target for 2020, and their environmental assessment process has been completely discredited. For instance, nothing has been done to assess the impact of several mines and factories that are major polluters.

Why is the government turning a blind eye to the environmental risks posed by several major industrial sites?

[*English*]

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of the Environment, Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and Minister for the Arctic Council, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government's record is very clear. We have taken decisive actions in a responsible way to protect our environment, as well as our economy.

Oral Questions

Thanks to our leadership and the efforts of the different levels of government, businesses and consumers, Canada's total greenhouse gas emissions in 2020 are projected to be 130 megatonnes lower than what they would have been under the Liberals. We will continue to move forward with the regulatory measures that will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, while creating jobs.

Our actions to address climate change continue to produce results for Canadians without—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Halifax.

Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Conservative record is very clear, thanks to the environment commissioner's report. She points out that the government is failing on the Arctic as well.

Many high-risk marine areas have not been properly surveyed for navigation. Only about 1% of Arctic water has been surveyed to modern standards and Arctic marine traffic is increasing, while Coast Guard ice-breaking is decreasing.

The Prime Minister pretends the Arctic is a priority, but his government is ignoring safe shipping. Where is the government's long-term plan for safe marine transportation?

• (1435)

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Transport, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we are very grateful for the environment commissioner's report and recommendations, and we have already indicated that we will accept the recommendations.

At Transport Canada, however, we have been working on this issue for a very long period of time. As most members should know and remember, we have a great world-class tanker panel that has been looking at safety, including specifically on shipping in the north.

We understand the panel will soon be completing its second phase. I am very much looking forward to the report because it shows that this government is on this issue.

Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP): Mr. Speaker, Conservatives will not spend money to keep the Arctic safe, but they will shell out another \$6.5 million to their friends in oil and gas.

The Conservatives are ignoring the polluter pay principle and Canadians are picking up the tab for more than a quarter of the cost for oil sands monitoring, when the Conservatives promised the so-called world-class monitoring system would be paid for by industry.

Why is the minister sticking Canadians with the bill to monitor pollution in the oil sands?

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of the Environment, Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and Minister for the Arctic Council, CPC): Mr. Speaker, responsible oil sands development is a priority and a responsibility of both the federal government as well as the provincial government.

We have made significant progress since the launch of the joint implementation panel for oil sands monitoring with Alberta and we will continue to look for opportunities to enhance this program.

This monitoring program is world class, uses some of the country's top scientists and is completely transparent.

[*Translation*]

Mr. François Choquette (Drummond, NDP): Mr. Speaker, under the Conservatives, environmental assessment has become a real joke.

Many industrial sites that are likely to be major polluters have undergone no environmental assessment whatsoever. Either the government is deliberately not assessing these sites in order to please industry or the selection criteria are inappropriate.

Either way, will the government heed the recommendations made by the environment commissioner and commit to greater transparency and clarity when it comes to identifying projects to be assessed?

[*English*]

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of the Environment, Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and Minister for the Arctic Council, CPC): Mr. Speaker, responsible resource development involves meaningful consultation with communities and aboriginal communities that may be affected by proposed projects.

We have increased funding and opportunities for consultation in the environmental assessment process and we will continue to strengthen our internal practices.

The Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency is committed to coordinating these consultations in a manner that is respectful, responsive and consistent.

Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona, NDP): Mr. Speaker, during the audit, the commissioner actually heard testimony on how the government was ignoring key duties to engage first nations and Metis in environmental assessments and monitoring of the oil sands.

The commissioner determined that the government had failed to collect important traditional ecological knowledge, ignored its duty to consult and made it harder for aboriginals to participate.

Why is the government neglecting its duty to consult and preventing effective engagement by first nations and Metis?

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of the Environment, Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and Minister for the Arctic Council, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have been working with first nations and Metis communities and we are proposing increased influence, dedicated funding and more opportunities for the use of traditional ecological knowledge in monitoring.

The oil sands, which are being developed responsibly and represent only 0.1% of the global greenhouse gas emissions, support over 275,000 jobs across Canada.

We will continue to work with Alberta, in partnership with aboriginal communities, to enhance this world-class monitoring program.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Marc Garneau (Westmount—Ville-Marie, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister told us that he will re-examine our combat mission in six months to determine whether the Islamic State has been sufficiently degraded. In light of that, I have an important question.

In concrete terms, how does the Prime Minister plan to measure the degradation of the Islamic State to the point where we can say “mission accomplished”?

[English]

Hon. John Baird (Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister and the government are authorizing, subject to the vote in Parliament this evening, that Canadian Forces troops go and provide combat support to help stop the terrorist group ISIL.

Humanitarian workers are being decapitated, women sold into slavery, people summarily being executed, and that terror threat could very well make its way here to Canada.

We are going to work with our like-minded allies, with President Obama, the United Kingdom, and France, to determine whether we have been successful at stopping that humanitarian and human rights disaster and whether we will be able to push it backwards.

* * *

● (1440)

[Translation]

CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

Hon. John McCallum (Markham—Unionville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, since this government came to power, the number of refugees admitted to Canada has dropped by 33%. This government has never made refugees a priority. The world is currently facing a serious refugee crisis. Will the minister change his priorities and promise that future refugees from Iraq and Syria will find the protection they need in Canada?

Hon. Chris Alexander (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the number of refugee claimants from safe countries has dropped because the government overhauled the system left behind by the Liberal government. This system was not working and did not allow us to focus our resources on the true refugees, as we are doing now. Since 2009, we have already welcomed over 20,000 refugees from Iraq and Syria.

What is scandalous is that the Liberal Party is getting ready to vote this evening against the military action requested by the Iraqis and the refugees, which will help millions of people.

[English]

Hon. John McCallum (Markham—Unionville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, that is not the whole story.

Under the Conservative government, government-approved refugees, which it controls directly, are down by 22%. The Conservatives do not care about refugees.

In the middle of this global crisis, the Liberal Party, as part of its ISIL proposal, would pay money to source refugees so that we could admit many more into this country.

Will the Conservatives do the same thing? Will they invest the money to process refugees from these regions who desperately need to come to Canada?

Hon. Chris Alexander (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member is so confused that he cannot even come up with the right term. They are government-assisted refugees. We have actually exceeded our goal in that regard for Syria. We have brought over 20,000 from Iraq and Syria and countries that are being discussed and debated in this House tonight. That is more than any of our allies have done and that is because of the focus of this government.

This government will continue to focus on the humanitarian needs of refugees by doing what Iraq has asked us to do and bringing military means to bear, the use of fighter aircraft—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Davenport.

Mr. Andrew Cash (Davenport, NDP): Mr. Speaker, last year the government committed to resettle 1,300 Syrian refugees by the end of 2014. In July, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration said that Canada had only resettled 284, less than one-quarter of its total commitment. An internal report from Citizenship and Immigration reveals that Conservative cuts are preventing sponsorship applications from being processed.

When will the minister stop misleading Canadians about the numbers? What is he doing to get the other 1,000 Syrian refugees here in Canada?

Hon. Chris Alexander (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the report to which the member is referring is way out of date. We have given significant new resources to the processing centre in Winnipeg and across our network to speed the processing of refugees. There are 1,645 Syrians in this country since the beginning of that crisis in 2011. There are more than 18,600 Iraqis in this country.

The real question is this. Why is the NDP voting against international action coordinated by President Obama in the United States to ensure military tactics are used to protect refugees on the ground? There are millions of them.

Mr. Andrew Cash (Davenport, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the real question is this. Why does this minister consistently mislead Canadians about these numbers?

He knows that around 1,300 of the Syrian refugees were already here before the government made these commitments. He admitted this himself to *The Globe and Mail* in July: only 177 government-assisted and 108 privately sponsored refugees are here.

When will the minister stop playing games with numbers to hide his own failure? When will he act to speed up processing, including for privately-sponsored refugees?

Oral Questions

•(1445)

Hon. Chris Alexander (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, 1,645 refugees have all arrived from Syria since 2011. The member opposite should get his facts right. On a per capita basis, 18,600 is the largest number resettled from Iraq by any country. These are real actions that speak for themselves, as will be Canada's military contribution, which will help millions more.

[Translation]

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé (Saint-Lambert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the minister has to stop playing games with the numbers. The truth is that 1,300 out of the 1,500 Syrian refugees he is talking about are already here. This government has just two and a half months to keep its promise to welcome 1,100 privately sponsored refugees. So far only 100 or so of those refugees are in Canada. In the past, temporary resident permits were provided to speed up the family reunification process, for example for the former Yugoslavia and Haiti.

Why does the minister not follow suit for Syria?

Hon. Chris Alexander (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our objective was 1,300 refugees. We already have 1,645 refugees in Canada. In speaking of her sons, Souhad Al Dandashi said, "Now I look ahead and I see, God willing, a future as I dreamed for them". These are real results.

The Dandashi family's case was brought to our attention in January. They arrived in Montreal in January.

Mrs. Sadia Groguhé (Saint-Lambert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, if the minister put as much effort into welcoming Syrian refugees as he does into playing with numbers, his department's bureaucratic problems would have been solved a long time ago.

The minister has to dispense with the nonsense. Yesterday, he explained that Sweden has welcomed more Syrian refugees than Canada has, saying that Syria was not far from Europe's borders. Come on. He made it sound like the refugees just had to walk to their host country.

Will the minister stop putting on such a sorry spectacle and start keeping his promise to welcome more refugees?

Hon. Chris Alexander (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the fact remains that asylum seekers are in a different category than resettled refugees. In Canada, we have already resettled more than 20,000 Iraqi and Syrian refugees. That is more than any other country.

The real sorry spectacle here is that of the NDP, which is not prepared to support any military measures whatsoever to help millions of refugees in Iraq and neighbouring countries, who need and have asked for our help.

* * *

[English]

PENSIONS

Mrs. Patricia Davidson (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our Conservative government has taken unprecedented action to put more money back into the pockets of Canada's seniors. That includes the tax-free savings account and one of the most popular tax relief measures in Canadian history, pension income splitting. Our

government is also leading by example by creating the pooled registered pension plans.

Can the Minister of State for Finance please tell the House about our newest step to ensure Canadians receive a secure and dignified retirement?

Hon. Kevin Sorenson (Minister of State (Finance), CPC): Mr. Speaker, today I was pleased to announce that five companies have been approved to provide federal pooled registered pension plans. This is a major milestone toward offering an attractive new retirement savings option for those millions of Canadians who do not have a workplace pension plan. I would like to encourage the provinces, such as Ontario, to bring forward the necessary legislation so that all Canadians can benefit from this new pension plan.

Canadian seniors and pensioners, all Canadians, can rest assured that we are standing up for them.

* * *

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the report tabled today by the Commissioner of Official Languages showed that the Conservatives are balancing their budgets on the backs of linguistic minorities, cutting services like the co-operative development initiative and the Hervé J. Michaud experimental farm in New Brunswick. When will the government stop these cuts and instead show some leadership to respect the linguistic duality across this country?

[Translation]

Hon. Shelly Glover (Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am very proud of our government. We created the roadmap for official languages. It is a very comprehensive investment, the most comprehensive in Canada's history. It represents an investment of \$1.1 billion. We would like to thank our Commissioner of Official Languages for his work. I believe that the report was balanced and that the commissioner thanked us for the work we have done. If there is time, I hope that I will be asked another question about the progress that we have made, which the commissioner pointed out in the report.

•(1450)

Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the minister wants us to ask the question and so we will.

Concerning official changes, the Conservatives have scored a big fat zero, and the official language minority communities are paying for it. The commissioner talks about that in his report.

The Conservatives continue to cut programs and services. In Moncton, the postal union had to file a complaint with the Commissioner of Official Languages because francophone employees do not have access to Canada Post information in both languages, and 75% of communications are in English only.

Will the minister tell us what she is going to do to correct the situation?

Oral Questions

Hon. Shelly Glover (Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for giving me the opportunity to quote our Commissioner of Official Languages.

This is what he said at the press conference: “I think that, in the vast majority of cases, the institutions are aware of their responsibilities”. There has been a steady increase in the number of people whose language level is appropriate to their position.

This is what he said in his report:

In 2013–2014, all federal institutions evaluated demonstrated that they take measures to create an environment conducive to the use of both official languages...

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ELECTORAL REFORM

Ms. Alexandrine Latendresse (Louis-Saint-Laurent, NDP): Mr. Speaker, in their unfair elections act, the Conservatives got rid of the Commissioner of Canada Elections with no reasonable explanation.

Some asked a very valid question about the cost of this administrative fiasco deemed useless by all the committee witnesses, including the commissioner himself. The Conservatives did not want to answer, claiming cabinet confidence. That is ridiculous.

Can the minister explain why he refuses to tell Canadians what he does with their money?

[*English*]

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of State (Democratic Reform), CPC): Mr. Speaker, the move has not actually occurred. As a result, there have been no costs.

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, if there had been no costs, they would have released that, would they not?

Just because something is embarrassing to the minister does not mean that he gets to hide behind access to information. He led a personal vendetta against the integrity of Elections Canada. He is now trying to hide the cost of this from Canadians. Now he tells us that it did not cost anything; yet he used cabinet confidence to keep it from Canadians.

He cannot have it both ways. Why does the minister not just stand up and tell Canadians why he is trying to hide behind cabinet confidence and using access to information to deny Canadians basic information about the spending of government?

Hon. Pierre Poilievre (Minister of State (Democratic Reform), CPC): Mr. Speaker, obviously, when the commissioner is housed in a new facility, that facility will have to be rented from somebody. That does cost some money. At this point, that move has not occurred. As a result, the costs have not been incurred.

That being said, we are very proud of the decision to create independent investigations so that we can have law enforcement that is fair and neutral. That is the right thing for the elections act and it is the right thing for Canada.

NATIONAL DEFENCE

Ms. Joyce Murray (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, two years ago, the Canadian Forces Ombudsman reported that:

...[a] chronic personnel deficit has strained the mental health system and is at the root of its most pressing challenges.

Then, last June, the defence committee learned that the Canadian Forces still have a shortage of mental health professionals for our troops.

In light of a new combat deployment of Canadian troops, what steps is the government taking to address the existing shortage of mental health practitioners?

Hon. Rob Nicholson (Minister of National Defence, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we have made an unprecedented investment in health and mental health professionals for our armed forces. The budget is at its highest level ever. We have made this a priority, and we will continue to support our men and women in uniform, something that was not done under the previous administration.

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VETERANS AFFAIRS

Mr. Frank Valeriote (Guelph, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the government's response to the veterans affairs committee report on the new veterans charter should have been a strong signal to veterans, but instead the minister merely kicked the can further down the road.

After tonight's vote, we shall be engaged in a war in Iraq. That means more members of our forces will someday be veterans without the resources they need and deserve.

Canadian Forces members are willing to put their lives on the line. Why must they return with doubt that they will be cared for by a government more willing to invest in self-promoting advertising than in the well-being of our veterans?

● (1455)

Hon. Julian Fantino (Minister of Veterans Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, first I want to thank the committee for its diligent work and the product that resulted, which is 14 well-thought-out recommendations. Those recommendations are presently being worked on.

We have all along worked very hard on supporting our veterans and their families. Unfortunately, through eight budgets, that member's party as well as the NDP have not supported our efforts to increase the benefits and support for our veterans. We will continue to treasure and appreciate their work and also ensure they are well looked after.

* * *

[*Translation*]

CANADA POST

Mr. Alain Giguère (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, NDP): Mr. Speaker, some of the suburbs north of Montreal have lost their home mail delivery service. Now, a private company is preparing to take over from Canada Post by providing a home mail delivery service. For \$240 a year, people will be able to receive their mail at home twice a week. That is a perfect example of a two-tier service.

Does the minister understand that many Canadians cannot afford to pay for home mail delivery?

[English]

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Transport, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that currently in Canada two-thirds of Canadians do not receive their mail at their door.

More importantly, this issue has come up with municipalities across Canada and collectively, as one single voice, they considered a resolution asking the government to tell Canada Post to reverse its decision on community mailboxes. The result of that was a resounding defeat of that resolution. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities and municipalities across the country understand the issues Canada Post is facing and they are supportive.

* * *

RAIL TRANSPORTATION

Mr. Matthew Kellway (Beaches—East York, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is being reported that a train carrying hazardous materials has derailed near Wadena, Saskatchewan. The RCMP has cordoned off the area eight kilometres around the site. Witnesses report flames 30 metres high coming from the train. Thankfully, no one from the crew has been reported injured.

Could the Minister of Transport update the House on this situation?

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Transport, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the government is aware of this incident in Saskatchewan. Obviously, we are thinking of those who are involved currently. As well, we are thinking of the first responders who are responding to the fire that has ensued as a result.

Our government has done tremendous work on rail safety in the country, but this does show that accidents like this can happen. The Transportation Safety Board, of course, will conduct its study to determine what the cause of this was and until then we just hope everyone is going to be safe and sound in that part of the country.

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MARINE TRANSPORTATION

Mr. Ryan Leef (Yukon, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to environmental protection in the north and to our Arctic sovereignty.

While increasing the opportunity for sustainable economic development, Canadians want to know that it is possible for us to ship goods in a safe and responsible way. Could the Minister of Transport update the House on the MV *Nunavik's* recent travel through the north and Arctic region?

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Transport, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for the excellent question. This is a historic occasion. The MV *Nunavik* successfully navigated the fabled Northwest Passage. It is the first vessel to carry an Arctic cargo the full length of the Northwest Passage unescorted. The fact is that it is a polar-class vessel, independently capable of breaking ice without the help of an icebreaker in extreme and harsh Arctic conditions.

Oral Questions

The *Nunavik* is scheduled to complete its journey on October 14. I know members of the House want to congratulate that great Canadian company, Fednav. I too applaud the entire team of Fednav on this historic northern voyage.

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THE ENVIRONMENT

Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this morning the environment commissioner stated that “the federal regulatory approach was unlikely...to meet the 2020 Copenhagen target”. We also learned that the Minister of the Environment has not met with the oil and gas industry since March 2013.

Strangely enough, the department agrees with the commissioner's findings. Does the minister agree with her department and the commissioner that Canada will miss our 2020 targets because there has been no meeting with that industry since March 2013?

● (1500)

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of the Environment, Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency and Minister for the Arctic Council, CPC): Mr. Speaker, our government's record is clear. We have taken decisive action on the environment while protecting the economy. Everyone internationally has to do their fair share and Canada is doing its part as we emit less than 2% of the global greenhouse gas emissions.

Building on our record, I announced a number of actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and pollution from vehicles recently. I also recently announced our intent to regulate the HFCs, one of the fastest growing greenhouse gas emissions in the world. We are accomplishing this without a job-killing carbon tax.

[Translation]

Mr. Philip Toone (Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Chaleur Terminals project to export oil through the port of Belledune is a major concern for the people of Chaleur Bay. The port has to be dredged to accommodate tankers. Unfortunately, they are going to dredge up toxic sediments.

The Chaleur Terminals report sent to the Department of the Environment is silent on the issue of sediments.

Can the government reassure the fishers and residents of Chaleur Bay that those sediments will not simply be thrown into the sea, right in the middle of the fishing grounds?

[English]

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Transport, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I understand the member's question has to do with a dredging matter. I will consult with Transport Canada for any information that we may have on this particular matter.

I can tell the House from experience that when dredging is done in ports and harbours across Canada every precaution is taken to ensure the safety of the people around it and of course the economic well-being of the industries, too.

*Government Orders***INTERNATIONAL TRADE**

Mr. Mark Warawa (Langley, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada has been steadfast in its support for the Ukrainian government and in its opposition to Russian aggression.

In July, I was honoured to join the Minister of International Trade on a trade and development mission to Ukraine that built on Canada's strong economic and cultural ties and explored deeper economic co-operation with Ukraine.

Could the Minister of International Trade please share with the House the latest developments in the Canadian-Ukrainian relationship?

Hon. Ed Fast (Minister of International Trade, CPC): Mr. Speaker, we continue to stand with the people of Ukraine in the face of aggression from Russia. When President Poroshenko visited Canada last month he and the Prime Minister agreed that our people-to-people ties are the strongest in the world and that we should renew efforts to deepen our partnership.

I am pleased to report that members of the Kyiv Symphony Orchestra and Chorus are on Parliament Hill today. Music Mission Kiev has been sharing Ukrainian music with the world while reaching out to the widows, orphans and refugees of Ukraine.

I invite all members of the House to attend its Ottawa concert tonight at seven o'clock—

The Speaker: The hon. member for Gatineau.

* * *

[Translation]

SERVICE CANADA

Ms. Françoise Boivin (Gatineau, NDP): Mr. Speaker, last Friday we learned about the closure of the Service Canada office in the Gatineau sector. Once again, the government is making service cuts in secret.

Imagine seniors, veterans and unemployed workers—often people in crisis—having to sit on a bus for over an hour to get to the Service Canada office on Saint-Joseph Boulevard in the Hull sector. That makes no sense.

Why are the Conservatives creating obstacles for people who simply want to access the services they are entitled to?

Hon. Jason Kenney (Minister of Employment and Social Development and Minister for Multiculturalism, CPC): Mr. Speaker, there are several service centres available to people in the region. The public can also access good services online and over the phone.

* * *

[English]

NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Dean Del Mastro (Peterborough, Cons. Ind.): Mr. Speaker, there is no tar in the Canadian oil sands. In truth, the oil sands represent one of the world's richest deposits and largest reserves of energy. They drive investment in job creation, technology and innovation in every corner of Canada while related revenues support

many of the government's services, which millions of Canadians rely on every day.

Despite years of misinformation and attacks presented by special interest groups, the European Union announced today that it will not single out oil sands crude. It is a clear victory for Canadian energy, and I would argue, an acknowledgement of the tremendous technological progress that has been made in improving oil sands extraction processes.

Could the Minister of Natural Resources please comment on today's announcement?

• (1505)

Hon. Greg Rickford (Minister of Natural Resources and Minister for the Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario, CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada has a secure, responsible and reliable source of energy that can make a growing contribution to global energy security. We support the intent to reduce transportation emissions. Any directives to that effect for implicating energy products should be based on science and facts.

That is why our government will continue to advocate for Canada's interests and Canadian jobs in new energy markets.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

MILITARY CONTRIBUTION AGAINST ISIL

The House resumed consideration of the motion, and of the amendment.

The Speaker: Before statements by members, the hon. member for Davenport had the floor and he has six minutes left to conclude his remarks.

Mr. Andrew Cash (Davenport, NDP): Mr. Speaker, prior to question period I had been reading into the record some of the comments from people in my riding around the mission at hand, the decision by the government to send CF-18s and our Canadian troops to Iraq.

I just wanted to give the House, and read into the record, some of the examples of the concerns that are coming from Toronto, from my riding. Just in part, one constituent said, "We should be supporting refugee efforts. We should be offering humanitarian aid and support. Stop deploying our military and foreign affairs and bring our attention to the vast array of trouble right here at home: health care; housing; food supply and security; violence against women, particularly first nations women; destruction of science and muzzling of research communications; and a whole host of issues including climate change, rising tuition and minimum wage".

This is not the only constituent who has raised the issue or made the links between the cost of this mission in dollar terms, what it costs to our international credibility, and what it costs in terms of what we can do domestically to be an example to the world of the kinds of democracy, peace, justice and fairness that we stand for.

Government Orders

It is often said, and it bears repeating today, that when we talk about programs that we think are important here in Canada, we always talk about how much they cost. We try to wring every penny of savings out of every program. What we have seen in Canadian society over time has been a squeezing of the middle class and the creation of a huge gap between the rich and the poor. We have seen otherwise middle-class families in cities such as Toronto spending close to a mortgage payment just to provide day care for their children. We have seniors living in poverty. We have a whole host of issues around youth unemployment. We have young people in Ontario graduating with up to \$40,000 of debt. These are serious issues.

The reason I am bringing up these issues is that the Conservatives are constantly saying to us, "This will cost too much money to implement; we cannot implement this and we cannot implement that". However, when we ask them for a dollar amount on this mission, they go silent. Suddenly, we cannot get answers. Suddenly, it is not proper. The Conservatives question our Canadianness in asking these very questions. These are questions that Canadians want answered.

We asked whether we offered air strikes or whether it was something that the U.S. government asked us. We got no answer. In fact, what the Conservatives try to do is belittle the question. It is not leadership on the global stage when we cannot get the kinds of answers that we need from the government.

We asked the Conservatives what the rules of engagement are and what the exit strategy is. These are important questions, especially given our recent history. The Afghanistan mission was supposed to be very limited. It was supposed to last only a few months and contain a very small number of Canadian men and women in uniform. We know what happened there. Gradually over time Canadians were asked to approve a more expanded mission and then at a certain point it was impossible to reel that in. This is part of our concern here today. Given the fact that the Conservatives are not answering questions, it only ratchets up the concern around mission creep and mission leap.

The Afghanistan mission produced around 40,000 veterans. We have battled with the current government ever since to hold its feet to the fire to properly take care of the brave men and women who went to Afghanistan and came back with a variety of needs that we are duty-bound to administer to.

● (1510)

We are not supporting the mission. We believe that Canada must have a real, robust international role, and that role is a humanitarian role. It is a significant role. It is one that the international community has looked historically to Canada to fill. It is one that the countries in the region have asked us to fulfill. That is the role that the NDP believes is the best course for Canada in this conflict.

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, the member talked specifically about aid. As he knows, the Minister of International Development has highlighted that Canada is the seventh-largest contributor to international aid efforts, and it is something that we have been doing for quite some time in the region.

It is also one of the principal things that we also accomplished in Afghanistan.

The minister talked about all the things we have been providing in terms of aid. I wonder if the member would identify what additional items he would suggest, over and above what we are already providing?

He also talked a lot about the costs. Could he provide us with a cost estimate for the additional aid that he is suggesting Canada provide?

Mr. Andrew Cash: Mr. Speaker, first of all, the House has been seized with the issue of Syrian refugees. We cannot get a straight answer from the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration about why on earth it is taking Canada so long to settle 1,000 Syrian refugees.

There is a very simple answer to the question: the current government could redouble its efforts around refugee resettlement. That is one thing it had already committed to before it made this commitment. The reason that process has been so bogged down is the cuts made to the very people who process these applications. This is about priorities and it is also about efficiency.

If the government wants to take some direct measures to alleviate the misery, we can start by fulfilling the commitments we have already made and doing them promptly.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, with the odd possible exception from the New Democratic caucus, it would seem as if the NDP has recognized the value of what the Liberal Party has consistently been saying, which is that Canada is in fact compelled to play some role in the Iraqi conflict with respect to ISIL.

This is a question I have posed to others within his caucus. In its amendment, the NDP calls upon the government to contribute to the fight against ISIL, including military support for the transportation of weapons, for a period of up to three months.

Would the member be able to expand on that particular amendment that the NDP has put on the floor?

● (1515)

Mr. Andrew Cash: Mr. Speaker, first I have to take a step back and say that there is absolutely nothing consistent in the Liberal position on this conflict. The Liberals are making it up. They are saying, "What should we do? One day we're here. One day we're there." However, we have been firm about our position. We do not support these military strikes.

With our amendments, we are trying to pull the government toward a more progressive, positive role in this conflict. The part of the amendment that the member is referring to calls upon the government to contribute to the fight against ISIL, including military support for the transportation of weapons for a period of up to three months, which is consistent with article 14 of the UN resolution, which talks about reinforcing the capacity of countries affected.

This is where we need to be clear. In the NDP we have consistently looked to international actions under the auspices of the UN. The UN had called for this in article 14, so we are responding to that call through the UN, which is what we always do.

Government Orders

Hon. Christian Paradis (Minister of International Development and Minister for La Francophonie, CPC): Mr. Speaker, first of all, I will be splitting my time with the member for Cypress Hills—Grasslands, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

I appreciate the opportunity to speak today about Canada's action in response to the crisis in Iraq, particularly our response to the growing humanitarian situation.

Canada has been active in its support since the beginning of this crisis. During the last two months alone, ISIL's terrorist violence has displaced an estimated 850,000 people in Iraq. Over 1.7 million people have been forced to flee their homes since the year began. Iraq is witnessing the largest cases of internal displacement in the world.

Under terrorist threat, people are in dire need of water, food, shelter, and medicine. That is why we authorized the deployment of Canada's emergency stockpile of humanitarian goods. These goods have already been distributed and are saving lives in northern Iraq.

[*Translation*]

These stockpiles are designed to meet the most urgent needs. The emergency supplies include things like tents, blankets, kitchen sets and hygiene kits. These items are being deployed from Canada's new warehouse in Dubai. These stockpiles are a key example of the strong relationship that exists between Canada and the United Arab Emirates. This relationship has become even stronger and more sustainable in recent months.

This new, strategically located stockpile will allow Canada to intervene rapidly on the scene of events in Africa and Asia. By maintaining emergency relief stockpiles on both sides of the globe, we will reach people more rapidly and ultimately save more lives. It is a question of time, and the sooner we take action, the more lives that can be saved.

This stockpile of emergency supplies will be managed by the Canadian Red Cross, as is Canada's other facility in Mississauga, Ontario. The stockpile in Dubai is now fully operational, and the deployment to Iraq was the first from this new stockpile.

[*English*]

These stockpiles were distributed on the ground by Save the Children, a trusted and active partner. Save the Children has made sure our supplies are distributed in the most effective and efficient manner and that they help the most people possible, because in time of crisis, access to the most basic necessities can be the difference between life and death.

● (1520)

[*Translation*]

Canada remains very concerned with the escalating humanitarian and security situation in Iraq. We know that the violence has displaced well over a million people, and countless more remain under threat. Canada continues to condemn the terrorist actions of ISIL and the killing of civilians in northern Iraq in the strongest possible terms. Canada is particularly concerned about the ongoing, targeted persecution of religious minorities, which only adds fuel to sectarian tensions among Iraqis.

I remind the House that Canada has committed over \$28 million in humanitarian assistance this year. We remain steadfast in our support of the people and Government of Iraq, as they confront this terrorist threat. The humanitarian needs of innocent civilians are particularly pressing in northern Iraq.

[*English*]

That is why just in the last month, Canada has contributed \$12 million in humanitarian aid to key partners, including the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, Mercy Corps, Development and Peace, and Save the Children Canada. These funds are providing emergency shelter, food, and medical supplies, as well as repairing essential facilities, establishing child-friendly spaces, providing psychosocial support services, and providing access to education.

Just yesterday my colleague, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, announced on top of this \$28 million, an additional \$10 million for victims of sexual violence and for investigations into these crimes.

It is clear that the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant represents a significant threat. If ISIL consolidates territory in Iraq and Syria, it would have an autonomous area from which it could operate and from which it could transfer weapons and personnel across borders. ISIL would be able to impose oppressive control over populations in both Iraq and Syria. This would further degrade the humanitarian outlook in the region.

The methods ISIL has used to seize control of territories across Iraq have been brutal. This is a morally reprehensible group whose actions have included wilfully killing innocent children, enslaving women, barbarically murdering American journalists, murdering a British humanitarian aid worker, and the use or threat of rape to advance ISIL's cause. That is why Canada has been steadfast in our position and so strong in our humanitarian reaction.

The provision of humanitarian assistance is one of the clearest expressions of Canadian values. Canada cannot and will not stand idly by while people in the world suffer needlessly.

[*Translation*]

Canada is deeply troubled by the rapid rise of this extremist group and by its cruel and barbaric tactics. Its progress leaves little room for doubt: we need to support allied efforts to bring the ISIL to its knees and drastically reduce its ability to act, particularly in light of the humanitarian impact that this crisis is having on the people of Iraq.

Canada will continue to provide a significant amount of humanitarian, diplomatic and military aid to Iraq. We are in it for the long haul. In June 2014, I added Iraq to Canada's list of development partner countries. As the Prime Minister said:

Left unchecked, ISIL [this bloodthirsty terrorist group] is a threat not only to peace and security in the region, but to global security as well.

As a result of its commitment, Canada, along with its allies, will continue to support the people and the Government of Iraq in their fight against terrorism. Canada will continue to carefully monitor the situation and work closely with its allies. We will continue to determine how to best meet the needs of Iraqi civilians, particularly those of religious minorities who are in such profound need.

[English]

Regardless of our political stripes, we can all no doubt agree that the threat posed by the terrorist regimes taking greater control of Iraq is of grave concern.

[Translation]

The targeted military measures that we are taking are not in any way preventing us from also taking humanitarian measures. They are not mutually exclusive, quite the contrary.

We are providing emergency shelters and medical assistance to thousands of Iraqi civilians and large-scale financial assistance to other governments in the region that are affected by the crisis in Syria.

It is essential that there be security on the ground so humanitarian assistance can be provided. It is therefore imperative that we reduce the ISIL's capabilities in order to provide that assistance and reach those most in need.

That is why military intervention for a defined period of time, as set out in the motion, is needed to accomplish this goal. Then, we will be able to work with our Iraqi partners on medium- and long-term development in order to strengthen the country's civil institutions and civil society. Moreover, we will give hope to young children and give them access to education by protecting them from the horrific acts of barbarism that we have witnessed recently, unfortunately.

Canada is the seventh-largest donor of humanitarian aid in this crisis. It provides food, hygiene kits, cooking equipment, bedding, tents, medical supplies and other essentials, while making urgent repairs to water and sanitation facilities, just to name a few measures.

We will continue working closely with our allies to determine the best way to meet the needs of Iraqi civilians, particularly persecuted religious minorities.

For all of these reasons, we should clearly all support this motion.

•(1525)

[English]

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, there are a couple of principles I am hoping we can establish.

Obviously the horrors and atrocities that are taking place in Iraq right now are not the only condition for Canada's involvement, because unfortunately, and tragically, over a number of years, be it in the Congo, Darfur, or Syria prior to this, there have been many international tragedies and atrocities that have taken place.

My question is specifically about the contribution Canada is willing to make. We have asked a number of times about what the cost of the mission described will be militarily for the government.

Government Orders

To this point, the government has refused to answer. We know that in Afghanistan, the ratio came in at about 10 to 1. For every \$10 we spent militarily in Afghanistan, we spent \$1 on aid. My explicit question for the minister is whether there is any guidance for his department that this is about the ratio the government is going to apply in the crisis in Iraq.

Second, clearly the Conservatives are associating the need for bombing with the need to deliver aid and to provide that security. Does he feel that this is the only condition under which Canada can deliver aid to places of conflict?

The vast majority of aid missions Canada has conducted over our entire existence have been done without the Canadian military performing bombing missions. It is obviously not a criterion that Canada is required to bomb in order to deliver aid.

Second, can the minister report to us whether his government has accepted any ratio of the amount of military spending Canada will contribute versus the amount of international assistance?

Hon. Christian Paradis: Mr. Speaker, on the first part, my colleague knows that the motion we have here is proposing a targeted action in time.

This is what we are proposing.

[Translation]

The government does not intend to get embroiled in an endless quagmire. It intends to take targeted measures.

[English]

What we have in front of us is ISIL as a world threat. It is as simple as that. We are not immune in the world. Our allies have decided to take action. We cannot just watch and do nothing. On the contrary, we have to participate. That goes with the second part of the question. Yes, of course we need to secure a humanitarian corridor. What we see on the ground are religious minorities being constantly persecuted. We see people being beheaded. Humanitarian workers have been beheaded. There is ethnic cleansing, human slaughtering, and rape used as a weapon. We are also seeing human smuggling, and so on.

These are all barbaric actions that are just intolerable and unacceptable. It is a very concerning situation there.

In terms of absorption capacity, we need to deal with the best, credible organizations in the world. That is why, so far, we have had interaction with the Red Cross, Mercy Corps, Save the Children Canada, and Développement et Paix.

•(1530)

[Translation]

We want to ensure that these organizations have access to people in need, but we have to do more. However, targeted measures go hand in hand with humanitarian aid. We cannot have one without the other.

Government Orders

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the minister, like others before him in the Conservative caucus, talked a lot about compelling reasons. No one questions that. He made reference to people being beheaded, slaughters that have taken place, and rapes. There is a litany of offences against humanity that are taking place.

The government has chosen air strikes as the best way to use Canada's resources in a combat role. Does the minister not recognize the value of non-combat roles that Canada could be playing?

Germany has chosen not to participate in the air strikes, but it is contributing. It believes that there is a better way for Germany to contribute.

To what degree does the minister believe—

The Deputy Speaker: The hon. minister.

Hon. Christian Paradis: Mr. Speaker, our government has a very balanced and reasonable approach.

The way we see it is that we have been active in a non-combat mission for the last 30 to 35 days, but as we see now, the cancer continues to grow. Canada and our allies have had to decide to take further action to make sure that we stop this cancer from growing. Otherwise, world peace will be jeopardized. As the international development minister responsible for humanitarian aid, I need to reiterate to this House that it is not either-or, targeted military action or humanitarian aid delivered on the ground. It is the opposite. We need to secure a humanitarian corridor to make sure that we reach people in need. That is exactly what we are doing.

Mr. David Anderson (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am glad to rise today to address this issue.

I am proud to be part of this government. I hear a balanced, responsible, and reasonable approach to what is being suggested. We have certainly been involved in humanitarian aid in the area we are speaking about today, and for a number of years. We have been responsible in that direction. We have spent some time evaluating a non-combat role and have come to the conclusion, as the minister said recently, that a decision needs to be made to participate in a combat role in Iraq and in this area.

When I look at a couple of the other parties, I am not entirely surprised by the position of the New Democrats, because they have a history of isolationism, of turning their backs on international involvement. They do it through both history and by choice. Over the last few years we have thought that perhaps they were moving to a position that was a bit more relevant to Canadians. It seemed that they were trying to do that to perhaps expand their base. However, it also seems that in the last couple of months they have made a choice to go back to the place they have been in the past. I think it will not turn out well for them, because typically it means opposition to trade deals, resource development, and the sale of resource products around the world. It means opposition to most international development. Now we hear from them that they have taken a position of strong opposition to what I think is a good decision by our government.

I was a bit surprised last Thursday to hear that the height of their suggestions was that we send international investigators into this area to try to gather data. I think every one of us understands that when we are talking about the kind of viciousness, brutality, and barbarism that is taking place right now, the safety of those investigators cannot be guaranteed at all. I saw that as being naive and foolish, if that is the extent of the request they will be making here. It is up to them to make their decision, but I am a bit disappointed.

The party that has actually been surprising has been the Liberals, because in the past, they often have come out in a position of support. We have been able to stand together when we have had to face bad things. In this situation, it seems that they cannot make up their minds as to what it is they want to do.

We first heard their leader talking about supporting involvement. We have heard that some of their old guard, members like Lloyd Axworthy, Dosanjh, and Bob Rae, have come out and said that there needs to be a commitment. Canada has to make a commitment that needs to move ahead. It needs to be a military one if we expect this to be effective.

We thought the opposition leader was going to take that position, and then a couple of days later, the position changed. It seems that they shifted the Liberal car into neutral, then put it into reverse and backed away from that position. It is interesting that they have taken the position that they do not want Canadians to engage far from here with one of the most vicious and aggressive terrorist organizations that exist on the face of the earth. I guess the alternative is to wait until they come here, and we are not prepared to do that.

Three positions in two weeks is probably not a new record for them. It just does not seem responsible, given the seriousness of this issue we are dealing with. It is not particularly unusual to see this kind of pattern of irresponsible positions taken. I would just like to run through a couple, because I think that is important for setting out where the Liberals are going and what it is they think is important across this country.

If we go back over the last year or so and look at the positions the Liberals have taken internationally, I think we need to be concerned. For example, who can forget the Ukraine gaffe, the comment that the events in Ukraine would be determined by the Russian hockey team's success at the Olympics? This was in a situation where lives were being lost. People were joking while other people were dying.

There was a flippant answer to a question about what government the Liberal leader liked and admired. The comment was, "there's a level of admiration I actually have for China because their basic dictatorship is allowing them to actually turn their economy around on a dime". It was a commitment to admiring a dictatorship where rights are routinely violated, where free speech is limited, and where freedom is restricted. When the leader was offered the chance to apologize, he said that the comments were reflections on a growing economy. There was not a sense that he needed to apologize or that he had made a mistake. Rather, it was a justification.

Government Orders

We heard that the first response to the Boston Marathon bombing was that we needed to discover the root causes of what those men had going on in their lives so that we could better understand them, never mind the carnage that resulted from that.

•(1535)

We were also told that we could not call honour killings barbaric, because that would make some people feel uncomfortable, people who may be more familiar with that practice than we are.

There is a pattern, I have to say, on the Liberal side. It is basically a pattern of failing to understand even the basic values Canadians see as important. I think it is an inability to see that Canadians have values worth protecting, and it is a lack of understanding and thinking through these issues.

We have some tough decisions to make. That is what government is all about, and we are willing to make those decisions, but avoiding decisions, changing one's mind daily, or waffling to deflect attention by making jokes about situations is not a recipe for good leadership or good governance.

I wanted to bring up the things that have happened in the past, because it establishes a pattern. That is why I am not so sure there was a lot of surprise about last week's joking comments about military engagement.

When we heard it, I did not think people would say it was unusual to hear someone talking about whipping out our CF-18s and showing them how big they are. Is that the extent of the understanding the Liberal leader has on this issue? I would say it certainly shows the depth of his analysis and his reaction to a serious question.

It was inappropriate to use that time and space to make a juvenile joke that somehow our military aid and assistance in that area is nothing more than a display of sexual prowess in some strange way. I do not know if that offends anyone in the House. I think it should, and I think it should offend Canadians right across this country, from sea to sea to sea.

Is it unreasonable to ask how it is that this person expects to lead our country on these kinds of issues, when that is the response? It is not that he is new at the job, because he is certainly not. I think it shows an inability to grow in understanding and an unwillingness to learn or listen to other people.

Just recently, some of his former colleagues made a comment about how the abortion issue was being dealt with in the Liberal Party. His reaction was to say that people who have not had direct personal relationships to or experience with an issue really should not comment on it. Someone at home asked me what a middle-aged person who has lived off a trust fund has to say.

•(1540)

Mr. Nathan Cullen: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

I regret interrupting my friend. I know relevance is often a question that has some looseness to it. I am not going to disagree with his comments about the lack of judgment, as he perceives it and as many others have, of the Liberal leader. However, as he was speaking, I was reading through the motion in front of us today very specifically put forward by the government about bombings in Iraq.

It stretches the limits of connection to suggest that the Liberal leader's opinion on issues like abortion somehow bear some relevance to Canada's role and mission in Iraq.

We have very limited time. We only have 10 minutes for our speeches, and this is under time allocation, so all speeches are limited. I would ask the Speaker to give direction to focus in on the motion as presented to us and what he believes the merits of that motion are.

Of course, the Liberal leader's opinions on global affairs may be relevant, but the member seems to be extending this now beyond that to questions of character and to issues that clearly have nothing to do with the motion at hand.

The Deputy Speaker: I have to take issue with the member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley. It seems to me that the parliamentary secretary is raising a relevant point as to the quality of leadership coming from a certain individual in the House. That is relevant to the position that particular party has taken. It may be stretching it a bit, and I would ask the member to bring it a little closer to the motion before the House, but I do not believe it is out of order.

The hon. parliamentary secretary may continue.

Mr. David Anderson: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleague across the way, but if he would have listened for another minute or so, he might have had an answer to his concerns, because it is relevant what the leader opposite listens to.

He has former colleagues who are telling him that they do have a personal connection and experience with these events. They are telling him that he needs to change his position, but again, that is not being listened to. When senior statesmen across the spectrum come to us and ask us to reconsider our position, the party opposite needs to do that.

We do provide humanitarian need. The opposition is telling us that we need to do that in this situation. We have done that from day one.

There is certainly a need to play a larger role if we want to protect Canadians. It is not just a military decision that is being made here. Our government is proud to make that proposal and we will be supporting it.

We provide international leadership in this area. I am honestly questioning both parties on the other side for what I would call their inability to step forward in the proper fashion on this issue.

The NDP wants to isolate itself. That is fine, and everyone expects that is the case. However, the Liberals have taken three or four positions over the last week. A pattern is taking place in that party. Canadians need to be aware of it prior to us ever getting to the point where we come to making a decision about who should be guiding our country. Clearly our Prime Minister has done an excellent job of leading the country. There is no comparison in terms of the leadership.

We are a multicultural, multifaceted society and Canada is uniquely called to promote peaceful co-existence around the world, particularly in this situation of Iraq's various groups and communities. We have a rich and proud tradition of diversity, respect and tolerance in our country, and that tradition has yielded peace and prosperity for our people here.

Government Orders

Through our engagement in Iraq, we will honour Canadian tradition by acting against hate and persecution by championing the values of pluralism and religious freedom, and supporting Iraqis as they build a more stable future.

Mrs. Carol Hughes (Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusksing, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of International Development as well as the parliamentary secretary said that it was not one without the other. Yet when we have been asking for a national inquiry on murdered and missing aboriginal women, it seems we cannot have both.

On this issue, what we have seen over and over is a demand for more humanitarian aid with respect to water sanitation, hygiene, food security, shelter, health, protection and gender-integrated responses. This is what is needed.

We have seen over and over that this is not an isolated case. We have seen other countries that have done the same thing, but we do not rush into a war with them. We do not rush in and say that we will take over and help them whether they ask for it or not.

Could the parliamentary secretary confirm whether it was humanitarian aid or was it actually military aid that the governments of that country asked for? Who specifically asked for us to get involved as a military? How much will this cost and will the Conservatives be transparent about the cost?

We know what happened with the war in Afghanistan. The Conservatives were not transparent with that cost.

• (1545)

Mr. David Anderson: Mr. Speaker, I have heard the same kind of discussion a couple of times from the other side. It is as though those members see us as going into a place where there has been, for example, a natural disaster, a drought or famine with no conflict taking place. I am not sure if they are trying to mislead Canadians or if they just do not understand that we are dealing with one of the most vicious, barbaric organizations in the world which has taken over control of an area, will not surrender it willingly and do not want to see peace in an area.

If we are going to come to the point where there is going to be an ability for those refugees to go back home, for that society to rebuild itself, somebody is going to have to step up and play a role in seeing that come about, and that is going to take military engagement. Now the opposition, particularly the NDP, want nothing to do with the fact that somebody has to go and sometimes deal with it in a military sense. We are willing to make that commitment.

I can talk about the other commitments we have made. We have provided \$15 million to support security measures in Iraq. We have provided more than \$28 million to respond to humanitarian needs there, \$20 million of which is for populations affected by civil unrest. There is another \$10 million for Syrian refugees. We have added Iraq to the list of Canada's developing country partners.

We do not believe this needs to be isolated as either military or humanitarian. We think there is a package there that we can put together. We would really like to see the other side support that complete package instead of defending one small part of it at a time.

Mr. Lawrence Toet (Elmwood—Transcona, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my question for the parliamentary secretary is in regard to the

conversations I have heard throughout the day today. It has been really disturbing to me.

I am the son of immigrants from the Netherlands who came to Canada after being liberated by Canadian Forces in 1945, and there was a humanitarian aspect to that. There was Operation Manna in which the Canadian Forces were deeply involved. It helped many people from the Netherlands get through the hunger winter as they called it. Without actual forces coming in and pushing out the oppressors, that humanitarian aid basically got people through a period of time, but they were still barely hanging onto their lives.

I look back at history and if the attitude I hear today had been in the Canadian Parliament at that time, I shiver to think of what would have occurred to my parents and their families.

Could the parliamentary secretary speak to that issue and how disturbing it is to those of us who are descendants of immigrant parents?

Mr. David Anderson: Mr. Speaker, this is why Canadians will need to ask themselves who they want to lead the country as we move forward into the next several years.

For example, Iraq's religious minorities have been targeted under a campaign of sexual and gender-based violence. I would point out the situation for Iraq's Christians. Hundreds of thousands have fled their homes, joining an estimated 1.8 million now displaced by the violence. There is a near total disappearance of Christians from the region. The population included more than one million Christians prior to 2003, 600,000 in Baghdad. As of late July, these numbers are estimated to have dwindled to less than 400,000, with many more having already fled Iraq.

We could talk about other minority communities if I had more time, but that is why this question and the answer are relevant. We need to do what we can to stop this organization.

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I will be splitting my time with my friend from British Columbia Southern Interior.

I looked forward with some trepidation to being a part of this important debate. It is with trepidation only in the sense that the time is so limited, particularly because the government has now moved to shut down this most critical debate. It is with trepidation because the complexity of this issue requires all of us, as members of Parliament, to rise to our very best and attempt to decipher and interpret one of the most complex regions of the world and what Canada's role should be.

I represent the northwest of British Columbia. It is a beautiful part of the world that often knows peace. It has proud and courageous people. It has a history and stories that invoke great pride for me as a Canadian. These people are proudly Canadian. They sent me here to speak on their behalf as best as I am able.

When I think of the people of northwestern British Columbia and how proud they are to be Canadian when they travel both abroad and here at home, I speak with a voice of the deepest held Canadian values of compassion, courage, understanding and engagement for the world.

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I seek not to degrade the debate, as some of my friends across the way have, by talking about those who have no spine and no courage for simply opposing the government's intentions and plans. To rise up and stand against the government's intentions if we think that they would do harm to our country is a courageous thing to do.

For those who have spent any time in a refugee camp or with international aid workers who have, under cover of darkness and under the threat of their own lives to deliver aid to those most needy, to suggest that delivering such aid is not a courageous act, I say shame. Shame on my friends across the way. Shame on all those who suggest that the only courageous thing Canada can offer the world is a bombing mission in Iraq.

Let me show the government's sense of disproportion around this issue. The rhetoric that it offers in this place is that it is a global threat, a threat that is a direct and immediate danger to Canada. Then it suggests that to counter such a threat is some allegory to the Second World War, as was purported here just minutes ago, and the equivalent of what is going on in Iraq today. Then it suggests Canada's military response will be six planes. That is incoherent.

If ISIS represents a clear and present danger to our country on the order that was represented by the Nazis in the Second World War, as was just suggested, one logically would conclude that Canada's response would be more than six fighter jets over six months. That is what the government is suggesting.

The government is also making another false suggestion between false choices. It says that the only way in which Canada can offer aid is in conjunction with a military bombing mission and that there cannot be one without the other. That is false. Canada has a proud and noble history of delivering aid into war zones around the world for generations, without the assistance of Canada's military performing bombing missions at the same time.

What we have is the repetition of history. It has often been said that the first casualty of war is the truth. When the Prime Minister stands in the House of Commons, in our Parliament, and says, "I have neither the will nor the desire to get into details here" on the eve of an engagement of war, it is shameful. He may be frustrated with the questions. He may find it frustrating when the opposition leader asks such tough questions as: How many military personnel do we have on the ground in Iraq? What is our exit strategy in Iraq? What will the cost of the mission likely be in Iraq?

The Prime Minister may grow frustrated with that. He may not have "the will nor the desire" to answer such questions, but Canadians deserve answers to these questions before we send our troops into harm's way.

The U.S. has provided such answers. It has costed the war out to this point and made projections for the American people. We cannot even find out where our planes are going to be based. The U.K. government has told its people that, yet we find the Canadian government unwilling and unable to offer the truth. It simply says "trust us".

The New Democrats will not rubber-stamp a mission into the Middle East. There have been hard fought lessons just learned over the last decade that it is easy to get into an incursion, but it is very difficult to get back out. A mission that starts off as a 30-day non-

combat role turns into a six-month bombing mission, which turns into something else.

● (1550)

The other contradiction in the so-called plan offered up from the Conservatives is that, as every military expert has said, we cannot defeat ISIS by bombing from 35,000 feet alone; there must be boots on the ground. However, the Conservatives have promised not to offer that; the Iraqi forces in Iraq will take care of that.

Somehow contradictorily, the Prime Minister of Canada has said that we will not bomb Syria, even though that is where many of ISIS actions are taking place, without the permission of Assad, a dictator and despot whom Canada has been forcefully trying to remove from office. We will wait for his permission to conduct a mission. The contradictions that are rife in the Conservatives' proposal to this point fill us with grave concern over Canada's role.

As we have seen in Afghanistan and we have seen in other places, when military aid and humanitarian aid are offered by the Conservatives, the ratio comes in somewhere about 10 to 1. For every \$10 we spend militarily, we spend about \$1 on the humanitarian side. That is a ratio with which the Conservatives might feel at peace, when 1.7 million refugees have left Iraq.

I was in Turkey before the summer, meeting with Turkish officials there who were pleading with Canada to get engaged, because the more than one million refugees from Syria and Iraq who were in southern Turkey at that time were receiving no assistance from the Canadian government. The Turks' concern was that people in those refugee camps without shelter, without assistance, and without hope can very easily be turned into soldiers for ISIS. Canada showed no concern for that. The disproportion of response and the inadequate response do not match the rhetoric that has been offered by the Conservative Party and the Prime Minister to this point.

The fact is that we are shutting down the very debate that is being held now. Some Canadians might ask why a debate around six planes going to Iraq should matter and why they should have so much concern about that. We concern ourselves whenever we send our military into combat, but we also know that this is the first step of likely many, because it has been a moving target.

The Conservatives have claimed that the Liberals have had a position that has also wavered, and I will not argue with them on that, but when we ask a simple question of the Conservatives and of the Prime Minister—how would he measure success, how would his government measure success—we have three distinct answers when it comes to ISIS. We will contain them; that would be a success for Canada. No, not contain them, we will degrade them, so that they cannot attack anymore. At one point, we were to eliminate them.

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Those are all three very different things, when we are dealing with a guerrilla group that commits such horrific acts as this one does. If elimination is Canada's term for success, then let us all agree on one thing. A six-month bombing campaign with six planes, Canada's contribution, will not satisfy that, and we cannot pretend otherwise.

Clearly, the humanitarian crisis that is happening in Iraq and Syria right now is not the only qualification for Canada to get involved, because clearly, we would have been in the Congo, we would have been in Darfur, and we would have been in Syria before this. Five million people were killed in the Congo. Did we talk about bombing missions then? Did we talk about Canada's military getting involved then? No, so clearly this is a combination of events that has drawn this Conservative government into a war in Iraq.

We all know that, when Canada was debating the first Iraq war perpetrated by George W. Bush, the Prime Minister, as opposition leader, actually went into the United States and chided and scolded Canada for not going into Iraq with the U.S. in its ill-fated mission. That was the Prime Minister's position when he was in opposition. He thought Canada was wrong to stay out of Iraq the first time. Now he thinks he has the terms and judgment to dictate a new war in Iraq.

I must ask one question about the politics of this. My friend across the way alluded to our position, having something to do with a reach-out to a base or against a base. We have seen the Conservatives actually launch a fundraising campaign on this issue. Because of the insensitive and ridiculous comments from the Liberal leader, the Conservatives have now sent out a fundraising email.

We question the tactics of this party. Could the Conservatives, for a minute, take this option to remove the narrow-minded base-playing politics and do something that is right for this country, and bring forward a resolution that can be supported by this country? Bring the opposition leaders into the room. Find common ground for Canada's role in the world, rather than the divide-and-conquer strategies we so often see from the government.

We can do better. New Democrats demand better of this government. We see a better role for Canada in this world, and we will insist on it and form that government in 2015.

•(1555)

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, that was a rather sad and unfortunate speech, given the high quality of debate that we have heard over the last couple of days.

I have been in the chamber and I have heard a number of members, including myself, highlight the fact that we have a difference of agreement here. With respect to this particular mission, the NDP has been clear from the outset that it was not going to support the motion that was brought forward. A number of members on this side have enunciated that.

We also heard the Minister of International Development talk about the importance of Canada providing, and continuing to provide, humanitarian assistance. We have talked about the fact that Canada is among one of the highest contributors in the world. We have been doing this for many months.

The member for Elmwood—Transcona talked about some of the important initiatives that Canada has taken in the past with other allies.

Not specific to this motion, because we understand the NDP is not going to support the motion, but in the future, under what conditions would the NDP ever support a Canadian combat mission in times of world strife? Under what conditions would the NDP support Canadian Forces moving abroad to protect communities or countries that need our help?

•(1600)

Mr. Nathan Cullen: Mr. Speaker, first allow me to address the criticism I received from my friend about the quality of debate in the House of Commons and the quality of my interjections. It is a bit rich coming from somebody who has declared that his job is to avoid giving proper answers, who had to apologize—

Mr. Brad Butt: You were asked a question. Answer it.

Mr. Nathan Cullen: Another one is entering the debate, Mr. Speaker, on the quality of conversations in Parliament.

I must address that first, because the member raised it in his question. For the parliamentary secretary to suggest that he is somehow now the judge and arbiter of what passes for quality of conversation and debate in the House is a bit much.

With respect to his specific question, unlike his government, New Democrats have proposed actual ideals and principles when Canada seeks intervention in the world—for example, United Nations resolutions. The Conservative government has said the UN resolution on Iraq permits and encourages this bombing mission, which is an absolute and outright falsehood. I have the UN resolution right in front of me, and what it does say is that countries signatory to this and countries in agreement with this must do several things—

Mr. Paul Calandra: So never, never.

Mr. Nathan Cullen: My friend asked, Mr. Speaker, and now he cannot hear the answer to his question, that a UN resolution would have some strength. The UN has not given such a resolution. The UN has said a number of things Canada could do—prevent fighters from entering ISIS, stop the funding to ISIS—and we hear nothing of this from the government. We hear about CF-18s. When one only has a hammer in the toolbox, every problem looks like a nail.

Mr. Adam Vaughan (Trinity—Spadina, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will repeat a question I asked of another member who rose in the House today.

We share the member's apprehension about bombing. We have clearly seen that bombing one's way to a solution in that part of the world has not led to problems resolving themselves.

We are onside with the call for a much stronger response on the refugee issue both inside the area of conflict and in neighbouring countries, as well as bringing refugees to this country.

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The amendment that the NDP has moved raises the issue of transporting weapons. I asked the question earlier and I am looking for an answer. To whom would these weapons be transported? How would these weapons be used? What accountability would be put in place to make sure these weapons do not fall into the hands of yet another group that then causes even more trouble in that part of the world? How would transporting more weapons to that part of the world solve this problem? If that party is opposed to military action, how would those weapons be used in a non-military way?

Mr. Nathan Cullen: Mr. Speaker, the direct response in the motion we moved and will vote on tonight, an alternative motion to what the government is proposing, comes directly from the groups that members met with when in Iraq. The problem that was being faced in many situations was the actual access to weapons at all to defend their communities.

The suggestion from my friend is a good one in identifying those key groups and working with our UN allies to do that, because anyone who stands in this Parliament and pretends to be an expert on the history, the sociology, and the layer upon layer of complexity that typifies the region, particularly when engaged in war, is perpetrating a falsehood.

It is incredibly complex. Canada must have the strength and humility to take guidance from those whom we seek in the region as true allies. This is not easy.

However, the suggestion that we can somehow stand idly by, as the Conservatives have said, is false—as if participating in humanitarian aid is standing idly by, as if seeking to bring those who have committed the crimes to justice is standing idly by, or as if enabling those who are defending their communities is standing idly by—and an option is contained in the NDP motion here today.

● (1605)

Mr. Alex Atamanenko (British Columbia Southern Interior, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to share this time with my hon. colleague, the member for Skeena—Bulkley Valley.

As the Leader of the Opposition stated in this House:

There is no more important decision that we make in the House, no more sacred trust for a Prime Minister, than sending young Canadian women and men to fight and risk making the ultimate sacrifice in a foreign war.

As a former member of the Canadian Armed Forces, I believe that the deployment of troops into combat has to be a very last resort, the ultimate decision, when everything else has failed.

Afghanistan took a heavy toll on Canadians as a result of a former Liberal government's decision to send our troops into combat in 2005. There has been a lot of discussion as to why we did this. Some say it was to appease the Americans for our lack of support in Iraq. Others say it was to test equipment and combat readiness. The list goes on.

This mission was prolonged by the current Conservative government, and according to an article in the *Vancouver Sun* on October 3, the Afghan Islamist insurgency is not defeated and there is no peace. In addition, sadly, our veterans have not received the necessary help they need, not to mention the 160 who lost their lives.

As a result of the western bombing campaign in Libya, there is now a patchwork of warring factions. Many of our allies to topple Gaddafi in 2011 are now fighting for the Islamic state, and North Africa has been destabilized.

The terror unleashed today in Iraq is a direct result of the wrong-headed mission in 2003. According to Tom Engelhardt, in an article entitled "How America Made ISIS" on September 2, 2014:

In the process, the U.S. effectively dismantled and destroyed state power in each of the three main countries in which it intervened, while ensuring the destabilization of neighboring countries and finally the region itself.

Engelhardt goes on to state how the deaths that ran into the hundreds of thousands and the uprooting of millions of people proved to be "jihadist recruitment tools par excellence."

In other words, the U.S. destroyed the Iraqi state, supported the Shia who suppressed the Sunnis to create a welcome situation for ISIS. As our leader has stated:

...it is literally the same insurgent group that U.S. forces have been battling for over a decade.

The question before us, therefore, is this. Will Canada be stuck in a prolonged war that we wisely avoided in 2003?

We are entering into a bombing mission. Can we be certain that the civilian death toll will not increase?

To date, the U.S. has not provided any information about civilian or combatant casualties and is denying on-the-ground reports that civilians are being killed or wounded.

According to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, civilians are dying as a result of the bombing, and Human Rights Watch estimates that, on September 23 alone, 24 civilians were killed in air strikes.

Peter Certo, editor of *Foreign Policy In Focus*, states in an article entitled "Here's Everything Wrong with the White House's War on the Islamic State":

War planners are predicting that the latest conflict could rage for three years or longer....

...U.S. intelligence agencies have confirmed that IS presently poses no threat to the U.S. homeland.

Further, he states:

This plan won't work....

...you can't bomb extremism out of existence.

In Yemen and Pakistan, al Qaeda has not been destroyed and the drone attacks have recruited more terrorists.

Many have said that bombing alone will not win this war. Therefore, some U.S. generals are calling for ground forces. Does this mean that Canada will be drawn into another Afghanistan?

To my knowledge, there is no post-bombing plan. Will the Iraqi army, the Shiite militias, or the Kurds take up the call to consolidate control on the ground? In Syria, which rebel forces should the west co-operate with? Will arms delivered to moderate rebel forces wind up in the hands of ISIS? Will Assad triumph in Syria, thanks to U.S. air power?

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This is an extremely complex conflict into which we are being drawn. The more bombs fall, the more enemies we create. We are not even sure who our friends are. Both Qatar and Saudi Arabia have given cash to ISIL, and yet they are supposed to be our allies.

• (1610)

We are rightly outraged by the atrocities committed by ISIL, yet as pointed out by CBC's Neil Macdonald in a post on September 29, the Congo war has left five million dead, and the west has hardly reacted to the atrocities committed by both government and rebel forces.

It gets more confusing. We are reacting to the beheadings committed by ISIL, yet we remain silent when our ally, Saudi Arabia, has so far beheaded 46 people this year, some for sorcery. Can anyone imagine that?

Bernard Trainor, a retired U.S. Marine Corps lieutenant general, stated the following in an article that was published in *The Washington Post*. It appeared as well in the September 26 edition of the *National Post*:

The Islamic State presents a problem to be managed, not a war to be won....

The U.S. role should be limited to helping Kurdish forces and the new Baghdad government better organize to keep the pressure on, with U.S. airstrikes contingent on their progress....

The idea of destroying the Islamic State,...is nonsense....

The situation in Mesopotamia is a violent game of mistrust and self-interest. The Saudis despise the Iranians but will cut deals with them if doing so is in their interest. Iran will play any card necessary to achieve regional hegemony, while Turkey is coy about its own quest for pre-eminence. The Gulf states talk out of both sides of their mouths. Syrian dictator Bashar Assad uses the Islamic State to create problems for other rebels. Iraq plays at democracy as long as it can subjugate the Sunnis. Shiites and Sunnis fight each other while carrying on intramural warfare with their kinsmen. The double-dealing is almost endless. It doesn't make sense to us, but it does to the players.

After more than a decade of frustration and humiliation, the United States should have learned that the Middle East is no place for Wilsonianism on steroids.

I believe it would be very prudent and in everybody's best interests to let the U.S. attempt to resolve this crisis, as General Trainor suggests. After all, it created this situation in the first place.

Our energies and efforts would be much better spent on humanitarian aid. As we have seen in this debate, my party has presented some very concrete and workable suggestions as to how this could be accomplished. In other words, rather than spending something like \$40,000 an hour per plane to fly bombing missions, would it not make sense to add this money to the \$43 million already committed, justly and rightly, by the government? Thousands, if not millions, of people could receive desperately needed assistance. Since January 14, an estimated 1.8 million people have been displaced, and conditions are worsening every day.

According to Peter Certo, the U.S. also has other options. According to him, the U.S. could freeze the bank accounts of IS funders and negotiate partnerships with villages where oil pipelines run to cut Islamic state oil revenue, work with Europe and Turkey to stem the flow of western fighters, and dramatically increase support for UN humanitarian assistance support to Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey, which have absorbed millions of refugees.

The U.S. must recognize that the Islamic State flourishes because of political breakdown on both sides of the Iraqi-Syrian border. One

would think, then, that a priority has to be to build a strong, stable government in Iraq. We could help in this regard.

Certo went on to say that on the diplomatic front, the U.S. could work with Syria to convene rebel groups, the regime, Turkey, Iran, Russia and the Gulf States to restart negotiations for a political solution to the war. It could also link its nuclear negotiations with Iran to the political crisis in Iraq. For example, it could allow Iran to enrich uranium for peaceful nuclear power generation in exchange for support to rein in Iranian-backed militias in Iraq.

It should be clear to all that there are many options to explore. Instead of blindly jumping into war, Canada could be a leader in offering some creative solutions to this tragic conflict. There is no easy way out, but we must try. We owe it to our men and women in uniform and certainly to the millions of innocent victims already affected by this tragedy.

• (1615)

Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to my colleague across the way. He quoted a number of other people in his speech, but I would like to quote someone he might be familiar with, former premier Gary Doer, who recently said, "...I'm proud of the recommendation the prime minister's made, and I respect what Parliament will do with it. ... The government, I think, is making the right decision."

Now we are hearing from former Liberals and former NDP members who are clearly on side with what our government is proposing.

More importantly, just this week my staff received a call from a husband and wife who were born during the Holland crisis. They said during the call that Holland could not have freed itself from the yoke of the Nazis without the help of many people. They are forever grateful to the Canadian government and army and Allied soldiers for freeing them. They feel that ISIS cannot be confronted with humanitarian aid, that it needs force, and that people cannot free themselves from ISIS brutality. They wanted me to know that they stand behind the government and that their thoughts and prayers are with us

I would welcome my colleague's response to the question that my colleague raised earlier about what Holland would be like today had not Canadian soldiers on the ground and in the air stood with them in a time of need.

We have to do the same today with those who are facing this brutal regime.

Mr. Alex Atamanenko: Mr. Speaker, we seem to pick and choose. We did not do anything in the Congo, where five million people have been slaughtered under conditions that are just as atrocious as, if not even worse than, what is happening right now. We have not gone into other areas where we could have helped.

This conflict then presupposes, if we look at the example given about Holland, that we need troops on the ground. My answer to the hon. member would be as a question. Would he then agree that air strikes are not enough, and that eventually Canadian troops will be on the ground in the same kind of situation that we had in Afghanistan? That would be my answer to his question.

Mr. Adam Vaughan (Trinity—Spadina, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will preface my question with the same remarks. We share the concerns that the member's party has spoken to around the effectiveness of air strikes and also the damage that air strikes can do. As a result, we are taking a position in opposition to using air strikes as a way to resolve the significant challenges in this part of the world.

I am asking the question again through the Speaker. The NDP amendment to the motion says it wishes to transport and supply weapons to people on the ground in the area. The previous member from the same party said they are going to transport those weapons and arm people they met in Turkey over the summer.

That still does not define exactly which forces the NDP seeks to arm, what weapons it seeks to ship, how those weapons would be used, or what accountability there is to make sure we do not just dump more weapons into a troubled area and find them in the wrong hands.

Which groups does the NDP want to arm in this part of the world?

Mr. Alex Atamanenko: Mr. Speaker, that is a good question. What we are debating in the House is a motion to go either one way and start bombing attacks or to change that part and say we will transport weapons to those who need them.

If the government motion passes today, it will put in regulations. It will decide exactly how this will happen. If our amendment passes today, then it would be up to the government to decide on the needy group and how we make sure these weapons do not get into the hands of those people who could use them against us.

Details are worked out after decisions are made here in Parliament. That is how I would interpret our amendment as opposed to the current government motion.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Lisa Raitt (Minister of Transport, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am quite certain that everyone here rejects ISIL's extremist ideology. We also recognize the threat that ISIL represents, not only to Iraq and Syria, but also to the region and the whole world, including Canada.

• (1620)

[*English*]

I am not going to attempt to demonstrate that ISIL is an evil and brutal organization, nor will I try to convince members of the necessity to defeat it. The question that is on everyone's mind today is this: how can we defeat ISIL, and what should be our country's role in defeating it?

These are very important questions, and Ottawa is not the only capital where such questions are being discussed.

Mr. Speaker, before going further I should note that I am sharing my time with the member for Etobicoke Centre.

French and British parliamentarians, among others, have debated these important issues. These same questions are also being discussed in the Middle East and in regional capitals with an even greater sense of urgency. On September 11, ten countries from the region met in Jeddah and joined the international coalition against

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ISIL. A few weeks later, five of them—Saudi Arabia, Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, and Bahrain—joined the air campaign against ISIL in Syria.

On October 2, the Turkish parliament authorized the government to carry out military operations in Syria and Iraq to fight ISIL and also approved the use of Turkish military bases by foreign troops for the same purpose.

[*Translation*]

ISIL has made no secret of its expansionist aims. To Iraq's neighbours and Canada's friends in the region, ISIL is not some remote threat. It is a clear and present danger.

[*English*]

It is at their border. It is even inside their borders, as we know that the issues of terrorism financing and foreign fighters that also affect western countries are particularly acute in countries in the region. ISIL is actively recruiting fighters in several countries of the region, including in the Maghreb, where it has set up clandestine cells, and we were recently reminded of ISIL's reach in the region when an Algerian group loyal to ISIL beheaded an innocent French hostage in retaliation for French air strikes in Iraq. Some 2,500 Tunisians are fighting in ISIL's ranks.

Countries in the region are also affected by the humanitarian situation. Jordan is hosting hundreds of thousands of refugees who have fled ISIL, and Saudi Arabia has provided half a billion U.S. dollars in humanitarian assistance to help displaced Iraqis. Other countries, including Kuwait, are also providing assistance.

The active participation of regional powers in the international coalition against ISIL marks an important step, and the countries' participation in air strikes contributes to the weakening of ISIL. It also destroys a myth that ISIL is desperately trying to keep alive. According to that myth, ISIL's opponents are enemies of Islam.

This statement is false. Several Muslim religious leaders are raising their voices against ISIL. ISIL's war is not between Muslims and non-Muslims, nor is it between Sunnis and Shiites. ISIL is a megalomaniac terrorist group that recruits all over the world. Its opponents are a growing number of countries and peoples, including Sunni-majority Muslim countries that reject ISIL's violent and extremist ideology.

ISIL's horrific levels of violence have resulted in common cause among Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Jordan, Turkey, Egypt, Israel, and others. Like Canada, these states consider terrorism to be the single greatest threat to the region. This includes Sunni extremist groups such as ISIL, as well as the state-sponsored terrorism of the Iranian regime and its proxies and allies, including Hezbollah.

ISIL is not the only source of threat in the region. In fact, some of the region's states themselves pose a significant security threat. Of course, I am referring to Iran and Syria.

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Both are state sponsors of terrorism and both are now opposed to ISIL. Given that they share a common enemy with coalition members, they may currently claim to stand on the right side of history, but let us not fall for the tales being spun by these dictators. These regimes are not allies for peace and stability. They helped create the conditions that spawned ISIL and their only aim is to replace one brand of violence with another one, just as cruel, and to continue to destabilize the region.

The Assad regime in Syria has violated international law on many occasions and has lost its legitimacy as a member of the international community. As documented by many sources, the regime has repeatedly used chemical weapons against its own people. The regime has routinely used indiscriminate weapons, both chemical and conventional, to kill combatants and civilians alike. It has targeted medical facilities and denied access to life-saving humanitarian assistance to civilians in areas under the control of its opponents.

Reports of rape, sexual violence, torture and murder in regime detention facilities are absolutely shocking in their scale and depravity. The atrocities perpetuated by the regime have fueled the rise of violent Islamists including ISIL and Jabhat al-Nusra. If Iraqi security forces supported by an international coalition manage to halt or reverse ISIL's gains in Iraq, ISIL would likely continue to threaten Iraq and other states in the region from its bases in Syria.

That is why Canada welcomes intensified U.S. efforts, now joined by Gulf states, to destroy and degrade ISIL's capabilities in the region. We also welcome efforts aimed at ensuring that the Assad regime does not unduly benefit from this situation.

As for Iran, despite deploying a so-called charm offensive over the past year, the toxic reality of Iranian meddling in Iraq remains. Iran continues to run its Iraq policies out of the Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps., IRGC, Qods Force headquarters. Members will recall this is a listed terrorist entity responsible for some of the deadliest terrorist attacks of the past decades. This force can only compromise efforts to bring peace and stability to Iraq and the region. It is arming Shia militias within Iraq, which undermines the attempts by the new government to gain the trust of its Sunni population and build a fully inclusive government in Baghdad. That is no accident.

A truly inclusive government representative of Iraq's diverse communities would not be in Iran's interests. While the Iraqi government is trying to bring its people together, regardless of region or ethnic background, Iran is promoting discord and violence among Iraqis. Iran is stoking the fire for a longer-term conflict, one that risks inflaming sectarian tensions throughout the region. Syria and Iran cannot be part of the solution, when they are in fact a large part of the problem.

Four years ago, ISIL was considered defeated in Iraq and the only way to defeat ISIL once and for all is to address Iraq's sectarian and ethnic divides. Closing these gaps is something only the Iraqi government and people can achieve. Canada will support their efforts through concrete action and programming because we know that a stable, secure, prosperous Iraq is a key factor for regional stability.

• (1625)

[*Translation*]

Canada is making a major humanitarian aid and security contribution to Iraq.

[*English*]

We are supporting air support and military advice to Iraqi security forces. We passed the Combating Terrorism Act. We passed the Strengthening Canadian Citizenship Act and now Canada has been asked to make an additional contribution.

Iraqi authorities have been clear that they do not want foreign ground troops, but they need air cover. The United States has asked Canada to join air strikes along with other countries. ISIL is recruiting its fighters all over the world, including in Canada. They are posting online videos, threatening to destroy Canada. ISIL is building a network of cells throughout the region. We cannot in good conscience leave this burden to others.

We should do everything we can to stop ISIL.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Dany Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I thank the Conservative minister for her speech. I have two questions for her.

Since the Conservative government's plan includes air strikes, will the CF-18s stationed in Bagotville be used during the six-month mission?

During that same mission, will soldiers stationed at Bagotville also participate in the six-month mission?

• (1630)

[*English*]

Hon. Lisa Raitt: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question on the specifics of the initiative.

What I can tell him, and what we have told the House already, what the Minister of National Defence and the Prime Minister have indicated, is that for a period of up to six months, Canada will launch air strikes against ISIL with our allies and partners with six CF-18s, and will contribute one air-to-air refueling aircraft, two surveillance aircraft and the necessary crews and support personnel.

It will be the Canadian Armed Forces who are going to be undertaking this mission for us. We know that they will be ready and willing to answer the call of their country. We thank them very much for their service and we commend them for their bravery.

Mr. Adam Vaughan (Trinity—Spadina, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as a party, we have supported the need to get military intelligence and the need to train on-the-ground indigenous militia to defend both the refugee camps and national interests, as has been eloquently expressed by the member opposite.

The concern, and the reason that my party is standing in opposition to air strikes, is that we do not know how to measure their success and we do not know their exact mission.

Government Orders

I appreciate that the government cannot define targets and cannot define in debate exactly what the nature of the mission is. However, I think it is a fair question and Canadians deserve an answer on exactly how the success of that mission will be measured. It is the success of that mission that will allow those service personnel and aircraft to return to this country to be deployed elsewhere if needed.

How is the government prepared to measure success and how will it report that success back to the House of Commons? More importantly, what will define that success on an ongoing basis?

Hon. Lisa Raitt: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for his question. Also, I would like to welcome him to the House. It is my first opportunity to welcome him. We spent a lot of time in Toronto on different sides of the fence and here we are again doing the same.

Often we like to try to measure plans against benchmarks and markers. Sometimes the reality is that when we bring into the picture the sanctity of human life, the protection of minorities, the helping of those who are truly in dire straits, that does matter in the calculation. I can think of no greater need for our government and for humanity to join together to protect the women in these areas in these countries who are experiencing incredible amounts of pressure, threats to their lives, threats to their ability to function as human beings.

We talk about human rights in this great place a lot. This is a very clear case of defending the human rights of 50% of the population. As a woman here in Canada, I am very proud of the decision our government has taken. I hope that we do have a measurable success, but I do know one thing. Protecting them and making every effort we can to protect the women in these areas is absolutely something that we can do and have to do regardless of what benchmark, measure of success or metric the opposite party wishes to try to put us to.

Hon. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary—Nose Hill, CPC): Mr. Speaker, as we all know, there are many uncertainties when we are dealing with these kinds of situations so it is difficult to state with a lot of clarity what might happen down the road, especially when we are looking at some months down the road.

I wonder if the minister could assist the House and Canadians by outlining the reasons and interests of Canada that will be served by Canada joining our international partners in pushing back against ISIS and ISIL.

Hon. Lisa Raitt: Mr. Speaker, I can say that we are approaching this on all fronts. We are aiding our allies with respect to our assistance with our CF-18s. We are also providing humanitarian support. We are providing expertise. We are putting together the entire package of what Canadians can do. I am very proud of our role.

Canadians have always been leaders in the world when it comes to helping those who are in need. It is no different this time. We do not approach this from the point of view of wanting to get into this situation. We need to be there. We have to be there. It is our moral duty to be there, and that is exactly why we are going to be doing the best we can in a Canadian way.

• (1635)

Mr. Ted Opatz (Etobicoke Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have listened to this debate with great interest. I think it is clear to

Canadians, to our allies, and most certainly to this side of the House what kind of threat ISIL poses to the world and to Canada. It is clear to respected Liberal statesmen such as Lloyd Axworthy, Ujjal Dosanjh and Bob Rae, who so ably led the Liberal Party in the interim. All of these very well-respected Liberals agree that joining the coalition mission against ISIL is the right course of action.

Another Liberal, Mr. Duncan Nyberg, an Afghan war veteran, wrote to me yesterday describing his disappointment with his own party. He wrote, "I'm proud of your government today Sir. As a Liberal, I will be very disappointed if the [Liberal leader] and the Liberals do not support the motion before the house today! Feel free to share my sentiments with colleagues. This is a good motion, this is absolutely a necessary motion! I'm finding it difficult to support my party when they pull stuff like this!"

Mr. Nyberg also told me that he registered his disappointment with his NDP MP as well, the member for Scarborough Southwest. I urge that member to respond to Mr. Nyberg and explain why his party is not willing to do what it takes to defend Canada and Canadians to the fullest of its ability. How do the Liberals explain their hypocrisy and the clear split in their party to Mr. Nyberg, a Liberal and a Canadian veteran, and to all Canadians, as to why they are prepared to compromise the safety of Canadians, something that Mr. Nyberg served in Afghanistan to defend?

Instead, the Liberal leader makes anatomical jokes about CF-18s, which dishonour our people in uniform. I was speaking to some friends today who are still serving and one in the RCAF told me that CF-18 pilots are very upset with the Liberal leader's comments. They have families they wish to protect and are ready and willing to undertake this mission on behalf of all Canadians.

In *The Globe and Mail* today the Liberal Party said it plans to support the Canadian Forces combat mission in Iraq once it is approved by the House of Commons, even though it will vote against Canada's participation in this vital mission. I truly remain confused by its position. Its dithering is on a national scale. All Canadians are confounded by the Liberal and NDP positions.

The member for Westmount—Ville-Marie is a military man, someone I truly respect and admire. He is a navy man with a military tradition in his family, and a proud one, which I heard him remark upon today in the House. I simply do not understand his defence of his party's lack of leadership, lack of vision and lack of understanding on this grave issue, because for him this must be entirely counterintuitive and most certainly against all that he was trained to be and to do in the Canadian Armed Forces.

Canadians are widely in support of this mission because they recognize the threat to us all and they recognize that it is necessary to take our rightful and necessary place amongst our allies and contribute to our collective global security.

Hillary Clinton recently said of ISIL:

...military action is critical.... In fact, I would say essential, to try to prevent their further advance and their holding of more territory. Because by holding territory, they both gain weapons and they gain revenues.

Mrs. Clinton said it very simply and I hope that this somehow resonates with the opposition parties.

Government Orders

The NDP cry loudly about this mission as being solely a humanitarian mission. Canada has given significant amounts of humanitarian aid already. We are currently the seventh-largest contributor to humanitarian assistance. We are adding Iraq to Canada's developing country partners. We have given money, material, and have already and continue to resettle refugees from the region.

The New Democrats' position makes it clear to me that they are not and may never be ready to accept the awesome responsibility of defending Canada and Canadians.

We have provided strategic airlift to other coalition partners so that they can deliver arms to Kurdish forces. That is a humanitarian act. Stopping and killing ISIL prevents it from killing innocent people in the region for just being there. It stops it from raping and selling into slavery girls and women. It prevents it from committing mass atrocities and beheadings, which have all been very well-documented. It will prevent it from coming to Canada.

I remind members that radicalized youth fighting abroad with ISIL and threatening to return home is a global reality in many countries. Approximately 130 Canadian youth have done so, and in my view, have forfeited their right to return, and where the law allows, to retain their citizenship. The opposition pointed out that this is not easy. It is right. It is not. That is why we are debating this in Parliament.

• (1640)

However, it is clear, and this government has been clear, as to why we are going to war against ISIL terrorists. The case for participating in this coalition is because children have been beheaded and, as I have already mentioned, women have been raped and sold into slavery to depraved individuals. They are absolutely depraved because who but depraved people buy slaves? What has been the fate of these women and these girls to date?

ISIL has killed en masse. It has beheaded journalists, humanitarian aid workers and others, and it has broadcast that to the world. It has said that it is coming here to advocate attacks on Canadians. It has attempted to perpetrate genocide on whole groups of people. What more justification do the parties opposite want? They speak a great deal of history most recent and generally out of context.

If it is history they want, what about the policy of appeasement? What about hoping that this will all just sort itself out? Appeasement is not an option. We cannot allow appeasement to lead to its inevitable tragedy.

The answer to terror is not negotiation. There is simply no negotiation or any dialogue with terrorists. It is foolish to think so. It is wrong. This government will not appease terrorists and their tyranny. This government will always stand up for freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law. We will always stand up for the rights of people around the world, especially minorities. We will stand with our allies in a mission that is internationally sanctioned.

The Security Council stresses:

—terrorism can only be defeated by a sustained and comprehensive approach involving the active participation and collaboration of all States, as well as

international and regional organizations, to impede, impair, isolate and incapacitate the terrorist threat.

The world is united against ISIL. The Iraqi government has asked us for assistance. That is precisely what Canada is going to do. This government and our Prime Minister will always do the right thing and this nation, Canada, will stand to be counted with our allies to fight to stop a global scourge, one that has no basis in religion because no god would sanction what this enormous gang of killers has done, and continues to do.

Mr. Jamie Nicholls (Vaudreuil—Soulanges, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the member mentions appeasement. He mentions terrorists and terrorism. I am disturbed by the gross simplification in the House, in the debate, and the ignorance of the complexity of this region.

I lived in the Turkish Republic for five years. I experienced terrorism first hand, the terrorism of the PKK, the Kurdistan Workers' Party, which bombed places I went to in Istanbul, which bombed and killed in foreign capitals, in western European capitals. This terrorism was prevalent and I experienced it first hand. I understand what terrorism is and the effect that it has on a population.

The PKK is a currently listed entity by Public Safety Canada, yet what is the government's response? How is it preventing the participation of this terrorist group in its fight against ISIS?

Does the member not see the complexity of getting into this regional war where there are numerous listed entities there, some that are fighting alongside allied troops and some that are fighting against them?

• (1645)

Mr. Ted Opitz: Mr. Speaker, we certainly understand the complexity of this world. It is a very dangerous world in which we live. I appreciate the fact that he lived in a part of the world where he experienced some of this.

However, let me simplify it for him. This is simple. ISIL is a terrorist organization on an unprecedented scale: beheadings, rapes, slavery, genocide, murders. To me, this is pretty black and white, and I think pretty much the rest of the world agrees.

Hon. K. Kellie Leitch (Minister of Labour and Minister of Status of Women, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I do not think many Canadians have not seen this extreme level of violence. We may not have a complete comprehension of what it means, whether it be women being sold into slavery or these heinous acts, including rape and killings, that are taking place against women.

I had the good fortune of being on-call here at our children's hospital over the course of the weekend. Even the nursing staff were saying "Please act now, Dr. Leitch". They said that we needed to send the Canadian military to ensure that, if nothing else, humanitarian assistance could make it to the people who required it.

I know the member opposite is very passionate about this and has personal experience in ensuring that the armed forces also allow for humanitarian opportunities to take place.

Government Orders

Could he tell the House what Canada is doing to stop these attacks against women and minorities, individuals who truly are the most vulnerable in society? What is the focus of both our Canadian military and other aid workers to ensure these individuals receive the support they need?

Mr. Ted Opitz: Mr. Speaker, I know how hard the minister works and her passion on this. As well as being the Minister of Status of Women, she is very concerned about this issue.

The Canadian Forces are a multi-role organization. We have ships deployed at sea. We have our aircraft, both transport and fighter, and we have our ground forces. As everyone knows, there are some ground forces already positioned as advisers in Iraq today. They are helping, guiding and creating the conditions for the Iraqi army and others on the ground to be able to fulfill their role, train their soldiers and effectively counter the ISIL threat on the ground.

What we will do is support those Iraqi ground troops and others with air strikes on strategic locations. That will be done as a member of a coalition. It will be done as a coordinated effort between various air forces, and that is the way it has to happen. Those targets and identified results will be something that we will see unfold in the coming months.

Hon. John McCallum (Markham—Unionville, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with my colleague from Scarborough—Guildwood.

As members have heard before, the Liberal Party is desirous that Canada plays a substantial role in this war but, for reasons I will explain, we are not in favour of a combat role. Therefore, we do not support the government motion.

Before getting into the reasons for that position, on the subject of Iraq in general, I do not think we can trust the judgment of the Prime Minister.

[*Translation*]

I say that because I remember that in 2003, Mr. Chrétien's government said that Canada would not help the Americans invade Iraq. I remember it well because I was the defence minister at the time. More than ten years ago, the Prime Minister was completely in favour of going to war against Iraq.

[*English*]

The Prime Minister in those days in 2003 went so far as to write a letter to the *Wall Street Journal* denouncing the position of the Canadian government to not join in the invasion of Iraq led by George Bush at the time. He was so rabidly in favour of war at that time. If we flash forward more than 10 years, he is rabidly in favour of war again.

It is true that the circumstances of the two occasions are dramatically different, but the fact that the Prime Minister was rabidly for war in the invasion of Iraq in 2003, when history has shown that was a terrible decision and indeed the root of many of the problems today can be laid at that misguided invasion, leads one to the conclusion that if he was wrong then, one has no trust that he will necessarily be right the second time.

That is one reason why the Liberal party really does not trust the judgment of the Prime Minister on this issue, and that is why we

came to our own conclusion. Our own conclusion is that yes, the situation is entirely different, yes, ISIL is evil, and I do not use that word lightly, and has to be combatted, and yes, Canada should play a major role in that struggle against ISIL.

However, the war has more than one dimension. A part of the war involves fighter jets and another part of the war involves assistance for those on the ground who are suffering untold horrors as we speak. Therefore, as important as dropping the bombs is the need to assist those people, to provide humanitarian support, to provide medical support, to provide refuge for those people as refugees in our country, possibly also to provide non-combat military support in terms of reconnaissance, transport or things of this nature.

One side of this war is not more important than the other side, but in our judgment, the capabilities of Canada, the comparative advantage of Canada favours us on the non-combat side in this war. We know that a number of countries have already lined up to take part in air strikes, but there are less resources being applied to the humanitarian side of the war. We therefore believe that is where Canada can add the most value added and make the greatest contribution to a solution in that troubled region.

I note the government says that it can do both. That is like a millionaire saying to a pauper, "We can both have the fruits of this world". The millionaire has a whole lot more fruits than the pauper. The point is that the government's military contribution to the war will cost in the hundreds of millions of dollars. We do not know exactly how much. The Conservatives have not told us. However, I know a bombing mission of that kind would be in the hundreds of millions of dollars. Yesterday, the Conservatives announced with great fanfare a humanitarian gesture, which is a few million dollars.

● (1650)

We can do both, but we are putting virtually all the eggs, in terms of money, on the combat side and very little, in comparison, on the other side. The Liberal position is that we want Canada to have a major effort, which means putting significant resources into the humanitarian side, something roughly equivalent to what would be spent on the combat side.

I will give the House one example, which came up in question period today. The government's record on refugees since coming to office has been abysmal. The number of refugees in total under the Conservatives' watch has dropped by 33%. The number of government-assisted refugees has dropped by 23%. Those are the ones it controls directly.

It takes money to bring in refugees. Our position is that the government should invest money in the staff and resources required to process refugees more rapidly so that we could bring in much larger numbers from Syria and Iraq and other places in that region. The government's record in that area has been dismal.

As one component of our non-combat, substantial proposal for a Canadian contribution, we would propose that significant resources be devoted to beefing up the resources in our immigration department so that we would be able to admit a substantial number of refugees.

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Listening to the minister in question period today, my sense was that he did not display a great deal of enthusiasm for that proposition. While the Conservatives say they can do both, combat and humanitarian, it is clear from their body language and from the dollars involved and from just about everything they say that their heart, if that is the right term, is truly in the military mission, and only a few little trinkets are left over for the humanitarian side.

We in the Liberal Party think that the great bulk, indeed all, of our effort should be on the humanitarian side in terms of medical help, humanitarian help, absorbing refugees, providing transit, and all those other issues that are crucial to this war effort in its entirety. I for one do not think Canada's role would in any way be diminished or reduced because we in the Liberal Party chose to focus our efforts on that side of the war rather than on the combat side of the war.

•(1655)

Mr. Paul Calandra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister and for Intergovernmental Affairs, CPC): Mr. Speaker, if I am not mistaken, the member for Markham—Unionville was the minister of national defence when Canada deployed a significant force to Afghanistan without any debate in this country. He sent a significant force of Canadians to a war zone with inappropriate equipment, with old outdated jeeps, and with the wrong colour of uniforms. It was described by military leaders at the time as a decade of darkness.

Having said that, I wonder if the member could identify for us what the differences are between this mission against ISIL in Iraq and the mission we undertook in Afghanistan fighting the Taliban. What would have led the Liberals to send our military forces to fight the Taliban, when today they are not willing to send our forces to fight ISIL? I wonder if the member could highlight what the differences are and why the Liberals have now flip-flopped. I am not sure. We have a couple of hours until the vote, so they might change their minds before then.

Hon. John McCallum: Mr. Speaker, in terms of the hon. member's opening comments, I know he relied on PMO talking points today, but he has to have gone back 10 years to find the leader of the opposition's talking points at the time. Ninety per cent of what the member said about what transpired back then is false.

We are very comfortable with our position on this mission today. What they have in common is that in each case, Canada was determined to make a major contribution. In this particular case, we choose to focus on non-combat. The previous time, when I was defence minister, it was not even a combat mission. It was an ISAF security-maintaining mission in Kabul. The two are not at all comparable. In my case, it was a security-maintaining mission, and today we are talking about a very severe combat mission.

Mr. Mike Sullivan (York South—Weston, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to my colleague's dissertation. I wonder if he could answer a very simple question. Will he and his colleagues in the Liberal Party be supporting the NDP's amendment to the motion?

Hon. John McCallum: I do not know the answer to that question, Mr. Speaker. I am not the critic in this area, so I will have to leave that to the critic to respond to.

Mr. David Sweet (Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Westdale, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my colleague mentioned that he agreed

with us that ISIL was evil and that Canada should participate. He did not mention that Canada was actually directly threatened as well by ISIL.

I do take umbrage in respect of his comments regarding how this government has handled refugees. We have had over 12,000 refugees from Iraq alone.

I was on the border of Jordan and Syria back in January, and the brigadier-general who was in charge of that unit and was receiving Syrian refugees made sure that we knew that Canada was the only one that delivered on its promises to help those refugees. Inside and outside of our country, that has been our record.

I want to ask the member a question. He has seen what has happened with the delay in degrading ISIL's capabilities. What is going to happen if we continue to delay? Should we be responsible for the proliferation that is going to happen because of the delay?

•(1700)

Hon. John McCallum: Mr. Speaker, I would say that in its totality, the refugee policy of the government has been extremely poor. We have seen the total number of refugees, both government assisted and in total, go down. Within that terrible record, the Iraq case is perhaps a small shining light in an otherwise dismal picture, because certainly, the record on refugees from Syria has been really terrible. Syria, for many months now, has probably been, arguably, the world's worst refugee crisis in many decades.

The government's record on that one has been really pathetic. That is why I am suggesting that as part of our non-combat proposal, a major effort to bring in more refugees from that region would be a good idea, but it is not something Conservatives seem to be prepared to listen to.

Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, there are not that many times in the life of a parliamentarian when we get to speak on the issue of sending men and women in uniform into harm's way. I am appreciative of the privilege.

I regret that more colleagues are actually not able to stand in their places to talk about the significance of this moment. However, it is what it is, and the government has chosen to limit the amount of commentary on this matter.

The rush to war is frequently done in terms of these being the good guys and those being the bad guys. The problem with this entire conflict is that the good guys and the bad guys are a bit of a mix.

I thought we should do a canvass of the countries that are in the immediate area. For instance, one of the allies, the so-called good guys, is Saudi Arabia. Now, Saudi Arabia is the spiritual home of Wahhabism and Salafism. That is the touchstone, the spiritual home, of ISIS.

Within Saudi society, there is a great deal of conflict. Some argue that wealthy Saudis are those who sponsor ISIS. That puts the House of Saud, the government of Saudi Arabia, in a very difficult situation.

I join with our ambassador for religious freedom, who called upon Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and a variety of other countries in and around that Middle East area to deal with this particularly pernicious form of Islam.

These kinds of internal conflicts within our allies undermine the effectiveness of our presence. I would say that we are responding to a moral imperative. In that respect, all members of this House are on the same page. Having said that, our interventions in this part of the world have not gone well in recent history, and even in history further back.

Saudi Arabia is a society that does not tolerate forms of religious expression other than a very strict form of Sunni Islam. Indeed, it is known that there are beheadings if, in fact, this kind of rebellion against this kind of Salafism or Wahhabism takes place in Saudi Arabia. This makes it very difficult for us, as a western society, or even as a country motivated for the best reasons to intervene, because there is this spiritual support for the founders of ISIS.

If we go around the horn a bit, there is Iran. Iran has been the chief beneficiary of the Bush Iraq war. Baghdad is a satellite office of Tehran. That is, arguably, some of the source for ISIS: the grievance of Sunni Muslims against Shia Muslims.

Up until recently, much to the chagrin of the U.S. and other western powers, the manipulation of Baghdad by Tehran has in some respects created the difficulty ISIS is responding to. That, in and of itself, makes it very difficult.

• (1705)

Until recently, it was the view of the current government that Iran was the chief sponsor of state terrorism. It was considered to be the number one state terrorist threat in the world. Now Iran is apparently going to be our ally in fighting the ISIS threat.

As members know, Iran has been the supporter of Hezbollah, and Hezbollah has been the chief Shiite terrorist entity, threatening Israel on the one side and Lebanon on the other. It has joined in with President al-Assad in the Syrian conflict, which has created literally hundreds of thousands of refugees and literally hundreds of thousands of deaths.

Until recently, the papers were full of what President Assad had done to his own people, including gassing them, so it becomes a little complicated, since the chief sponsor of Hezbollah, and therefore the supporter of President Assad, is now our ally in the support of this conflict with ISIS.

Then we can just move over beside Iran to Turkey. Turkey has been in a 30-year fight with the PKK, which is a supporter of the Peshmerga. The Peshmerga are the chief fighters on the ground resisting ISIS, so Turkey is in a difficult position, shall we say, because it has had this conflict over quite a number of years and it regards the PKK as a terrorist entity.

Mr. Jamie Nicholls: As does Canada.

Hon. John McKay: Mr. Speaker, a colleague has said, “As does Canada”. I am not quite sure he is right. Nevertheless, we recognize a number of the militias in the area as terrorist entities. Sometimes

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they are on our side, as in this particular fight; most of the time, or up until recently, they have been on the other side.

We are entering into an area where, on any given day, it is hard to tell good guys from bad guys. I do not know how Turkey's parliament arrived at its decision as a NATO partner to enter into supporting the ISIS mission, but Turkey has a lot of internal conflicts, a lot of which will work out in Kurdistan, which is really the centre of this particular conflict.

Therefore, the Peshmerga will have to keep one eye on ISIS and the other eye on the Turkish forces. Simultaneously, the Peshmerga will have to keep an eye on ISIS and another eye on the Iranian National Guard, which is fighting in parallel against the ISIS threat, all of which makes it very difficult to pick out moral high ground.

Let me give an example of where we are. We supported the Libyan conflict, for instance, and I think we actually did the right thing. However, we will be bombing the people that we were supporting in the Libyan conflict, so it becomes somewhat difficult to pick out the good guys from the bad guys.

As I said earlier, we actually have had no record of success. Ultimately there are those, including the religious ambassador, who think this is ultimately a dispute between Sunni Islam and Shia Islam, and in that conflict, I doubt that we will have much to contribute.

• (1710)

I join with the Liberal Party in its hesitation and I recognize that we are entering into a conflict in which we have had no history of success.

Hon. Gary Goodyear (Minister of State (Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario), CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am getting a bit concerned about the Liberals' attempt to position us as having an ally in some of the evil that exists over there. I say this with great respect for the member.

These are not our allies; we happen to have a common enemy. That in itself should tell the member how serious the ISIL threat really is. If ISIS—which is beheading innocent people right now, at this moment, while we deliberate—is not our enemy, then how did the Taliban ever become our enemy? How does the member reconcile sending Canadian troops, on the ground and ill-equipped, to fight someone that is not even as bad as ISIS, if that is possible? How does the member reconcile those decisions?

Hon. John McKay: Mr. Speaker, it is interesting that the Taliban was initially created by the CIA. The CIA created the Taliban in Afghanistan in order to push the Russians out of the country. That in turn led to al Qaeda. Al Qaeda then perpetrated its misery on Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the rest of us for the last decade or so.

Once that conflict was over, it went to Syria. In Syria, it then got into a dispute with the ISIS folks. The ISIS folks do not actually think that al Qaeda is a serious enough terrorist Islamic organization.

The irony is that we have put our foot in it and have created difficulties way beyond our imagining. Therefore, we should be very hesitant to get involved in this conflict.

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I buy the argument that we have to give support to those who are being persecuted, the Kurds, the Yazidis, the Christians, et cetera. I am on side for that. However, the government should not be so naive as to make the same idiotic mistakes all over again.

• (1715)

Mr. Jamie Nicholls (Vaudreuil—Soulanges, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am glad to hear the member's considering the complexity of the region and bringing up questions such as the Kurdistan Workers' Party involvement. He mentioned the Libya mission. We also supported that mission when it was clearly outlined and sanctioned by the UN.

My question for the member, though, is this: given his understanding of the complexity and the involvement of the Kurdistan Workers' Party in this conflict, how could the Liberal Party originally approve the 30-day mission, knowing that some of these terrorist groups might have been involved in the conflicts?

Hon. John McKay: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that question because I think it is an approach.

I buy the argument that this is a very serious conflict. I buy the argument that there is butchery going on. I buy the argument that one could even argue that it is a genocide. When the Prime Minister came to the member's party and mine and invited us over to see what was happening, we could support that limited engagement. He has made no such effort since then.

Here we are, an hour from the vote, yet has the Prime Minister offered to disclose to the member's leader or mine information that he cannot disclose in a public setting?

Mr. Massimo Pacetti (Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the member is a former national defence critic, what does he see as our military's role? How does he see the Liberal Party taking a role in this mission?

Second, he just spoke about the Prime Minister and, as many of us have said, the lack of trust or transparency the Prime Minister has shown. Could he expand on that?

Hon. John McKay: Mr. Speaker, as members know, I have played a number of roles in Parliament over the years. One of my favourites, frankly, was as defence critic for the Liberal Party. I became a huge fan of our military folks. We in the Liberal Party support these folks to the hilt.

Once this vote is taken, we will know what will be asked of them, and what will be asked will be very serious.

We do take objection to the mandate of their mission. We think that we need to tread very lightly. Only fools rush in where angels fear to tread, and in this particular instance, history, complications, and as Jeffrey Simpson said in *The Globe and Mail*, the whole cauldron of conflicting issues should make us all very cautious indeed.

Hon. Tony Clement (President of the Treasury Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am splitting my time with the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Development.

I am rising to participate in this very important debate. It has been called historic by other members of this chamber and I think it is. When we are dealing with a situation where we are putting people

who serve our country in harm's way, we do have to have a considered debate. Incidentally there has been more debate about this in this chamber prior to action than there was during the Afghanistan mission at the inception of that mission.

We take it seriously. To those who say and I have heard the words "naive" and "not serious", and so on, for us on this side this is very serious. We go into this situation with our eyes open, knowing full well that this is a complicated situation, absolutely. This is a situation that requires a lot of coordinated activity, but it also requires clarity of thought and attention. This is where we perhaps diverge from the hon. members who insist on voting against this resolution.

From our perspective there is a general consensus in the halls of the United Nations, but also throughout the halls of democratic society and in the neighbours around the affected area, that something has to be done. I would only say this to the hon. members opposite. If we do not act in this situation, when are we supposed to act? If we are not to act with these people being affected by positively medieval tactics, whether it is beheadings, the potential genocide, raping, murdering, if we do not act in this situation, when do opposition members propose that Canada acts? When is it appropriate to act? If we cannot act in this situation, then it seems to be the logical conclusion of the other side that there is no situation that is serious enough to act upon.

I believe that Canadians think differently on this for probably two main reasons. They think differently because Canadians are generous people and compassionate people. They understand that there are people on the other side of the world who are under dire threat. In fact they have already been affected by this. There have been murders, rapes and the potential genocidal situations that have already occurred in this environment. They look to help and that is why there is a significant portion of our expenditure that will be in the humanitarian area where we can help.

However, Canadians also expect this chamber, particularly the government side but also a majority of the opposition side to be concerned about potential threats to and against Canadians. Canadians understand that this is not just some faraway place about which they know nothing. They understand that whatever happens over there tends to have an impact over here at some point. They understand that part of our role and responsibility, not only as a government but as a chamber that represents the democratic impulse and pulse of Canada, is that it is our duty to consider these issues, to come to a conclusion that will better protect Canadians from these forces of decivilization, from forces that seek to create some form of caliphate in their own mind, which not only has a dire impact on their own subjects and has the potential of having a similar or greater impact on people in close neighbourhood but also around the world.

This is a time to act. This is a time to take our responsibility seriously and it is a time to heed not only the warnings but the call for others in high power and authority, such as our allies, the United States of America, the United Kingdom, France, others who are helping in a kinetic and real way, to be part of this coalition. We understand this is not a simple situation, but there is clarity in the activity, the intention, the motivation, and of course, the end result that we would like to see.

• (1720)

This is important, too. This is a carefully calibrated mission. This is not rushing, as fools rush in. This is taking some of our assets, particularly our air and refuelling assets, and contributing to the coalition. Ultimately, we would be assisting in a defined mission for a defined timetable that would have a defined impact.

What would that impact be? The impact would simply be the degradation of the targets' assets, with the targets being this ISIL-ISIS metastasizing organization. It would be the degradation of its ability to attack us, to attack our citizens, to attack our allies and their citizens, and to render anarchy and a truly medieval situation in a part of the world where its neighbours are afraid of it, and for good reason. It would be the degradation of its ability to have an impact on citizens, either of their own religion or of other religions, who simply want the ability to live in peace.

That is the mission. The containment that is possible has been judged by our Chief of the Defence Staff and by our allies to be a doable mission in that period of time.

No one is saying that ISIL or ISIS is going away any time soon or that it is going to be eradicated from the picture any time soon. We understand that, but we also understand activity of the sort that the House is contemplating can have a real impact on ISIL's ability to project itself in an obviously disastrous and horrifying way on citizens in that area and citizens here in Canada.

That is not too much to ask of the House.

Yes, this is a mission that has risk. We take the assessment of that risk seriously and with the forethought that the brave women and men who have volunteered to represent their country and our forces have a very important job to do. Even though we are on different sides of the House, I hope that we are on the same side on this issue. We wish them success. We wish them Godspeed. We wish that the mission can be accomplished as soon as possible and as effectively as possible, with as little impact in terms of tragedy as humanly possible. We wish that.

The burden is great on this chamber. The chamber is debating an issue of Canadian Forces in a place that is far away. However, we have a duty not only to our constituents and fellow citizens but quite frankly to future generations as well to make the right decision, to make a good decision, and to make a considered decision that will have a positive impact for future generations. That is why I will be voting in favour of this resolution.

• (1725)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Christine Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the President of the Treasury Board seems to be saying that air strikes are the only option.

How can he be sure that bombings will not just prompt more people to join ISIS? How can he be sure that it will not lead to more retaliation against the people or more rapes?

When we give tangible help, humanitarian aid, to people in refugee camps, we are protecting ourselves by reducing the possibility that those people will go fight alongside ISIS. How can

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he be sure that the bombings will truly stop? He himself said that bombings alone will not eliminate the threat posed by ISIS.

How can he be sure that the bombings will stem these atrocities?

Hon. Tony Clement: Mr. Speaker, that is a very important question. That is the point we are at right now. Today, there are people in that region who want individuals from Canada, the United States and Great Britain to join in the fight against us. That is the current situation. I think that there needs to be a clear response. Our responsibility is to take immediate action before this becomes a situation that we are unable to respond to.

[*English*]

Therefore, we have to respond now before the situation gets further out of control. I say it again in English. The situation that members are worried about is happening now. They are recruiting. They are getting more adherents, and we have to degrade the possibility of that occurring in the future.

The Deputy Speaker: The member will have roughly three minutes remaining for questions and comments when we resume debate on this motion.

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• (1730)

[*English*]

NATIONAL FIDDLEING DAY ACT

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill Gordon (Miramichi, CPC) moved that Bill S-218, An Act respecting National Fiddleing Day, be read the second time and referred to a committee.

She said: Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of Bill S-218. The bill would designate the third Saturday in May as National Fiddleing Day. This would encourage the celebration and the appreciation of the beauty and the history of fiddle music and would be in honour of Antonio Stradivari, the renowned crafter of stringed instruments.

I was born in a family of five in a rural area of New Brunswick called Escuminac. As in many other areas of this nation at that time, we had no television and were without all of today's technology, so the fiddle became king, and so it was in many other parts of this great country.

Fiddlers come from every part of this nation with an incredible diversity of background. From the earliest of times, Europeans took fiddles down every river system and on expeditions across this land. The earliest French fur traders carried them. The Scottish, Orkney, and Shetland men, stationed in the icy confines of Hudson Bay, had them. Native peoples traded for them, and they were regarded as a most prized possession in thousands of homesteads.

Clearly, the fiddle was a cherished instrument for many reasons. It was compact, easy to fix, and easy to tune and always brought a smile when played. Indeed, it could be argued that the fiddle was the reason for gatherings and not the other way around.

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What made the fiddle so prominent was the dance. People across this land partied and danced whenever opportunity allowed, to break the tedium of hard-working lives and to add to their sense of community spirit. Fiddlers were highly respected and regarded in their communities, especially if they were good ones.

In Canada there are many regional styles of fiddling, which survived mainly due to the isolation of many communities: the Red River style, popularized by Andy De Jarlis; the Quebecois style of Joseph Allard, Joe Bouchard, and “Pitou” Louis Boudreault; the Ottawa Valley style of Brian Hebert and Reg Hill; the Acadian style of Eloi LeBlanc; the native and the Métis style; the western swing style of the Prairies; and styles that have originated in various parts of Europe.

The most popular was the down-home style as characterized by the playing of the late Don Messer. Don Messer was born in Tweedside, New Brunswick, and began playing the violin at age five, learning fiddle tunes with Irish and Scottish influences. As a young boy, Messer would play concerts in the local area and, later, throughout southwestern New Brunswick.

During the 1920s, Messer moved to Boston, Massachusetts, for three years, where he received his only formal instruction in music.

Messer left Saint John in 1939 and moved to Charlottetown, P.E. I., and worked as music director at CFCY. Here he formed the Islanders, and this music group began to make regular television appearances on CBHT-TV in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

CBC Television began a summer series called *The Don Messer Show* on August 7, 1959, which continued into the fall as *Don Messer's Jubilee*, produced out of Halifax. *Don Messer's Jubilee* was a must for us every Monday night throughout the 1960s.

How we loved to hear the sound of the twin fiddles of Don Messer and Earl Mitton. The show won a wide audience and reportedly became the second most watched television show in Canada during that decade, second to *Hockey Night in Canada*.

Another down-home style fiddler was Ned Landry, who taught himself to play the fiddle at an early age. Ned Landry was winner in the open class of the 1956, 1957, and 1962 Canadian Open Old Time Fiddlers' Contest.

Landry appeared in the 1950s on CFBC Radio, Saint John and in the 1960s on *Don Messer's Jubilee* and other TV shows. Landry was made a member of the Order of Canada in 1991. Landry was also later inducted into the North American Fiddlers Hall of Fame and the Nova Scotia Country Music Hall of Fame.

• (1735)

Ivan Hicks, another famous New Brunswick player, has played the fiddle for over 60 years. He and his wife Vivian have shared their talents with many students, young and old alike, and have been an inspiration to countless others. Ivan is actively involved in promoting, attending, and instructing at workshops. He continues to judge fiddling contests throughout Canada.

Many awards and honours have come to them, including the induction into the New Brunswick Country Music Hall of Fame for

both Ivan and Vivian and the North American Fiddlers' Hall of Fame for Ivan.

I assure members that Miramichiers look forward to the regular visits of Ivan and Vivian Hicks to Miramichi.

Then, of course, there is Miramichi's very own Matilda Murdoch. At the age of eight, her father gave her a fiddle, and later that year, through her own determination, she played her first tune. Since then, she has become an icon in fiddle circles throughout North America.

Murdoch has been part of the cultural community of Miramichi and New Brunswick for most of her 94 years. Her style of playing has been admired and studied by not only local fiddlers but also fiddlers from throughout North America and, more recently, from Ireland.

Entertainer Don Messer was one of those many who admired her. He invited Matilda to play on the popular *Don Messer Show* and he also recorded several of her tunes, to show his respect and love for her music.

Another great admirer of Matilda was one of our very own, the late Jim Flaherty, who visited Miramichi and was able to enjoy Matilda's music in his ancestral home of Loggieville.

Matilda has garnered regional, national, and international recognition for her abilities as a composer, as a player, and as a teacher. She was inducted into the North American Fiddlers' Hall of Fame and the New Brunswick Country Music Hall of Fame.

Matilda Murdoch has reached, and has way surpassed, the definition of “success”. Organizations and musicians have recognized her on a worldwide scale. Matilda also was a recipient of the Order of New Brunswick, as well as the Order of Canada.

Loggieville also boasts another very accomplished fiddle player, Samantha Robichaud, who represents a new generation of fiddlers. Now in her late twenties, Samantha has released seven critically acclaimed albums and has earned many awards.

Our province also hosts a unique annual festival in the town of Plaster Rock, New Brunswick. It is the annual Fiddles on the Tobique. The event coincides, of course, with fiddlehead season.

This festival started with a lone fiddler, many years ago, and today attracts people from all over the world. Quite possibly, it is the only event of its kind anywhere. This event combines two honoured New Brunswick traditions: fiddling and canoeing. Imagine the beautiful sight and the sound of a flotilla of canoes carrying almost 200 musicians down the Tobique River while they play old-time fiddle music. Those attending are treated to concerts, jam sessions, dances, and even an instructional fiddle camp.

Our Atlantic Canada region, in general, has had great fiddlers.

Winston “Scotty” Fitzgerald, 1914 to 1987, was a renowned Cape Breton fiddler. He was a pioneer in recorded performances of the music and has heavily influenced the style and the repertoire of later generations of players.

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Another award-winning Cape Breton musician, Natalie MacMaster, began her fiddling career at 16. Her musical venture now spans over three decades, completing 11 albums, performing thousands of shows, and collaborating with a multitude of world-renowned artists.

MacMaster's sought-after talents are in demand by her musical peers, all from a range of genres. She has collaborated with countless artists, including a recording with Yo-Yo Ma, which won a Grammy award.

With her Cape Breton roots, her dedication to her craft, and her love for her family, Natalie is a musical force with a long and successful career in music, who will, without a doubt, continue to warm the hearts of fans for years to come.

● (1740)

Al Cherny, a great Canadian fiddler, was born to Ukrainian parents in Medicine Hat, Alberta. Cherny won the Canadian Old Time Fiddlers Contest in Ontario under the novelty class from 1959 to 1961 and the open class in both 1960 and 1961.

In the early 1970s, he was a leading studio musician, recording with musicians like Tommy Hunter and Sylvia Tyson. He released more than 10 studio albums and received an RPM Big Country award for top country instrumentalist in 1978.

He also performed regularly on *The Tommy Hunter Show* until his death in 1989. Cherny was posthumously inducted into the Canadian Country Music Hall of Fame in 1989.

Although these aforementioned fiddlers are giants in our country, along with many others, I would like to speak on a more personal level.

We were very fortunate growing up to have a cousin residing with us who we endearingly called Uncle Mike. He was Michael Jimmo and he played the fiddle on a daily basis until his death at 93. Very often he would be joined by our Uncle Ray Jimmo, and an evening of entertainment we would have. We grew up listening to other local fiddlers, such as Mont MacDonald and his sons, Elmer and Joe.

To this day, all of us recognize great fiddle tunes such as *Maple Sugar*, *St. Anne's Reel*, *Liberty Two-Step*, *Ontario Swing*, *Orange Blossom Special*, and most recently, of course, *Loggieville Two-Step*.

Today, my riding of Miramichi is blessed to have a large group of musicians called the Miramichi Fiddlers. This group can be heard during summer festivals like the Miramichi Irish Festival, the long-running Miramichi Folksong Festival, and Miramichi's own fiddle festival.

This group is composed of 30 distinguished men and women. Besides festivals, members of this group play regularly at fundraisers in and around Miramichi, giving of their time and talents to help others.

I have mentioned only a small number of Canada's fiddlers. We all know there are many more. They have all contributed greatly to communities across this country. With the absence of today's technology, I guess one could say that, as we were growing up in rural Canada in the 1950s and 1960s, the fiddle was our form of social networking.

It brought us good times, good music and, of course, good memories. I truly believe the fiddle has created bonds through our musical family from coast to coast to coast in this nation, and those who play it deserve the honour of a national fiddlers day.

As Father John Angus Rankin, the Cape Breton musician, said:

The music comes from the fiddler's heart, through his strings and straight into your heart.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate my colleague on her speech. I really liked her analogy when she said that fiddling back in the day was like our social networking. How true.

Nevertheless, does my colleague not find it a little strange that this bill came from the Senate, when it should have been a government bill? While our parliamentary friends may find the topic of a fiddling day a bit too frivolous, I think it is good to talk about other things from time to time.

However, it would have been better if this had come from the government, especially considering that we are still waiting for information about the 150th anniversary of Confederation.

Would my colleague not agree that this kind of initiative would have been more appropriately showcased if we had talked about it in the context of celebrating Canada's 150th anniversary?

● (1745)

[English]

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill Gordon: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for his question. Regardless of where the question came from, I certainly am honoured to support it.

I assure the member opposite that these fiddlers have contributed greatly to our communities right across our nation. It does not exist in just one area, as I said in my speech.

I am happy to support this, regardless of where it came from. I just know it is one of those things that we need to deal with.

Hon. Laurie Hawn (Edmonton Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleague presenting this bill. Relative to the previous question, it is quite appropriate that the bill come from the Senate because people seem to think there is a lot of fiddling going on in the Senate anyway.

At risk of dating myself, I grew up with Don Messer on black and white television, and he was always entertaining.

Again, I would like to congratulate my colleague because this really is an important bit of Canadiana that we preserve.

Could my colleague tell us what impact Canadian fiddlers, and she mentioned so many of them, have had internationally and what recognition that has brought to Canada?

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Mrs. Tilly O'Neill Gordon: Mr. Speaker, fiddlers across our country as well as outside of Canada have been acknowledged. As I said, Matilda Murdoch from Miramichi, whom I hold very dear to my heart, is certainly recognized worldwide, especially in Ireland. As well, we know that Don Messer was well known worldwide.

Fiddlers not only contribute to our country, but contribute everywhere in this great world as well. They have certainly made our lives that more enjoyable.

Mr. Massimo Pacetti (Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we were having a discussion in this corner and wondering what happened to violin day. Some people say that the fiddle and the violin are the same. Could the member expand on that? How about some of the other stringed instruments?

I am a piano player myself, but I would never present piano day. If members ever heard me play piano, they would not want to have a piano day.

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill Gordon: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure of the whereabouts of violin day, but I am focusing and happy to sponsor the fiddlers day. Whether we have a violin day, it will not hurt us supporting fiddlers day as well.

Ms. Elizabeth May (Saanech—Gulf Islands, GP): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to support the proposal for a national fiddlers day from the hon. member for Miramichi.

Having spent a lot of my life on Cape Breton Island where my family still lives, the member's story about social networking in our childhood being the fiddle reminds me of a story of one of our neighbours from Inverness county. When asked about his life as a fiddler, he said, "Well, you know, the greatest disappointment in my life was electricity. We thought when we got the electricity we'd have so much more time for dancing, singing and telling stories because the electricity would do the work. Instead we got television".

We do need to maintain our cultural traditions and heritage, and I fully support national fiddling day as proposed by the hon. for Miramichi.

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill Gordon: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member opposite for her story. It certainly does make a difference.

With the recognition of this bill, I hope we are able to spend more time away from the TV and enjoy our fiddling as we used to.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre Nantel (Longueuil—Pierre-Boucher, NDP): Mr. Speaker, here in the House, we often have to tackle subjects that are far more serious, and I have had to address my fair share of them, so I am certainly very pleased to talk about this subject.

That being said, I am sure we are all pleased to do so, but we will have to do it quickly, because several urgent situations are on today's agenda.

This bill is about a string instrument that is positively iconic in the music of our culture. That is why it is important to talk about this. It is at once a distinguishing feature of who we are and a unifying force, bringing together the many cultures that make up Canada, the federation in which we live.

It is a transcontinental bridge, transatlantic even, because this instrument also binds us to many other fiddling cultures, from the Celts to slave peoples, to their traditional cultures and avant-garde artists as they each borrowed from this art form and added their own unique twist.

This instrument and its melodies reflect our past and echo the memory of all the Irish and Scottish people who put down roots in Quebec. I myself am of Irish heritage on my mother's side; she was a O'Donoghue, and I grew up going to large bilingual family gatherings where the fiddle played a prominent role.

• (1750)

[*English*]

Fourteen years ago, my cousin, April O'Donoghue, founded, and still organizes, the Celtic Harmonies International Festival in Quebec's Eastern Townships. It is a festival that perpetuates the traditions of the region's many communities with Irish and Scottish roots.

[*Translation*]

There is also the cultural contribution of Brittany, which is also a Celtic nation. The Celtic Harmonies Festival has become a showcase in the Eastern Townships for square dances, reel dances and called dances. I invite everyone who would like to discover this festival to head to Cowansville, and then Waterloo, by way of Knowlton and Austin, this Thanksgiving weekend through to Monday. There will also be dancing, a sense of community and a contagious festive atmosphere that is very typical of fiddlers and their art.

This bill would play tribute to fiddlers: the artisans, craftsmen, musicians, composers, partiers and bon vivants who make these four strings come to life. It recognizes that traditional fiddling is an art that plays an important part in our cultural and social history, as our colleague was saying, and that this art has been enriched by generations of newcomers, who have brought in and shared their musical culture, styles and repertoires.

The bill also acknowledges the efforts of fiddlers, these wonderful violinists, to recognize a world fiddle day and, I quote, "to celebrate the appreciation, beauty and history of fiddle music". These people had the good sense to propose a day that would honour the greatest crafter of stringed instruments, Antonio Stradivari, who is well known to us all.

The purpose of this bill is clear: to ensure that the historical and contemporary importance of the fiddle, as well as its unique contribution to Canadian culture, are not only recognized, but made known to a broader audience.

I am convinced that the passage of this bill will also please the people of the Lanaudière region, the birthplace of traditional Quebec music and the place where the clerics of St. Viateur left their mark by teaching music. Lanaudière is still home to the oldest youth orchestra in Quebec, and some of the great names of Quebec music—Yves Lambert, Bottine souriante, Rêve du diable—came from the region. It is also home to the Mémoires et racines festival.

A large number of orchestra musicians call Joliette and the surrounding area home. André Brunet, professional fiddler and president of the Camp de violon traditionnel québécois de Lanaudière, is delighted with the idea of this tribute to fiddling.

He says that this is an opportunity to pay a vibrant tribute to an instrument that is integral to a culture, a people, a nation that defines itself by the sound of an air, a reel, a quadrille that fires up the jiggers and underscores the harmony of the dancers' steps.

He says that if any instrument is as authentic as our emotions in the whirl and swirl of a gathering, it is certainly the violin, an integral part of the dance that sweeps us away, that brings us together and tugs at our heartstrings! Each of us is a fiddler at heart.

[*English*]

We have heard from many fiddlers and fiddling enthusiasts who have offered their support for this initiative.

Graham Sheppard, vice-president of the Canadian Grand Masters Fiddling Association, has said:

“Amid the turmoil that surrounds us and the difficult decisions that this House must make, it is refreshing to stand and be part of this effort”.

“For the thousands of fiddlers and lovers of fiddle music in Canada, a National Fiddling Day will be a cherished annual event. Also, this will give each of us the encouragement to foster the preservation and growth of fiddle music in the regions that we represent and throughout Canada”.

Paul Lemelin has been a regular at the Canadian Grand Masters. He is also president of the Fiddle and Stepdance Competition committee in Chelmsford, Ontario. He has said:

“This act and its intentions very much hits home for me and is a very moving tribute to many of those that have attempted to revive Canada's fiddling heritage back to its former glory. As the president of a northern Ontario fiddle and stepdance organization which is the home of Northern Ontario's ONLY fiddle and Stepdance Competition, our prime objective is to “Preserve and promote our Canadian musical and dance heritage, specifically fiddling and stepdancing”.

[*Translation*]

I have spoken a few times about the idea of Canadian cultural diversity. As the New Democratic Party heritage and culture critic, I have worked closely with organizations and individuals who promote the idea of cultural diversity internationally, especially in the context of trade agreements, which are important from a cultural standpoint.

The closer we get to other cultures—and this might be the theme of our century—the more we become aware of the undeniable need to be ourselves, to foster, not dilute, the differences and the features that distinguish each cultural group, no matter how few its members and regardless of whether they have been forgotten by the technological homogenization of our cultures.

There is nothing frivolous about diversity in language, arts and culture, and cuisine. It is not a gratuitous search for unlikeness, nor is it a grand principle drafted by UNESCO only to be forgotten.

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On the contrary, this diversity is essential to the human condition, its evolution, its progress and, I would add, to enjoying life. Conversely, this diversity is what helps us feel at home and helps everyone find themselves and be more receptive to others. Some will call that protectionism. That is an easy buzzword. However, those are the same people who repeat the idea, straight out of an economics textbook, that nothing has value if it is not marketable, exchangeable or quantifiable.

Culture has value precisely because it is none of those things. It endures through time and it provides a wealth that is not accumulated but experienced.

The fiddle is also meaningful to aboriginal peoples and specifically to the Métis. They practice a form of fiddling whose sounds are reminiscent of Scottish, Atlantic and Quebec traditional music, for example, but it is special because of its innovative elements, style and balance that are unique to aboriginal and Métis culture, as well as its melodic, rhythmic traditions that are reminiscent of bygone eras.

We need to make this national fiddling day a reality in order to celebrate the traditions that these fiddlers have developed and passed on. These traditions continue to live on in the plains. The Festival du Voyageur in Manitoba, a 10-day winter festival that has been taking place for 45 years in Saint-Boniface, is a testament in snow and ice to the warm resonance of this musical heritage.

This is living heritage.

However, in two years and two months, we will have a great opportunity to showcase this heritage to as many people as possible when we celebrate the 150th anniversary of the confederation of Quebec and Ontario with New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. This will be the time to commemorate, to look back at these 150 years, to look at how far we've come and to reflect on where we will go in the future.

Instead of working on bigger and better fireworks displays, we should invest in heritage, culture and a new wave of cultural mediation, and we should showcase and promote as widely as possible the work of our artists.

We are two years and two months away. I am pointing this out because up until now, we have really not seen much from this government, so it is a bit sad to see that it took someone in the Senate to suggest this kind of symbolic idea as we move towards 2017.

Speaking of good ideas, the senator who introduced this bill, the senator from Prince Edward Island, had the good idea to stay in Prince Edward Island. That is a great idea.

It is rather odd to see the lack of initiative by the Conservatives with regard to the program for 2017. So far, they have come up with another television ad campaign—yes, another campaign—vague proposals for military commemorations, a major online poll, and a series of logos that have made people laugh for all the wrong reasons.

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Contrast this haphazard approach with the preparations for the celebrations in 1967: a decade of organization together with the premiers of Quebec and the other provinces. Indeed, they had discussions. Under Diefenbaker, seven years before the event, the government was already working on the festivities and the infrastructure that would be the legacy of the centennial of Confederation.

Under the current government, nothing, by all accounts. There is absolutely nothing. I could name municipalities and agencies that dream of benefiting from the legacy the government could have come up with for this event and especially for future generations.

The Minister of Canadian Heritage, whose role would normally be to guide the events of 2017, chose to spend the past few weeks imposing her views on the CRTC, which was in the thick of its study on the future of television in Canada. This can only be described as pathetic.

In 2017 the minister will have the opportunity to inaugurate a real year of heritage, a focal point and vibrant era for the arts, artisans and cultures in our country. Celebrating fiddlers, who hold a special place in our hearts and constitute a common thread through our cultures, could have been part of the plans for 2017.

It is not unreasonable to expect our Minister of Canadian Heritage to propose a framework, a timetable, or better yet, an independent committee for the 2017 commemorations. In fact that is one of the many very interesting recommendations made by the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage that the government quickly scrapped.

Nevertheless, it is reassuring to see the Conservatives' interest in this initiative. I just want to say that if Canada has a Department of Canadian Heritage, then it should be able to recognize fiddling's major contribution to Canada's culture and heritage. That is why the NDP is not voting against this bill, as small as it is, because when it comes to culture, it is the small gestures that make a big difference.

● (1755)

[English]

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it was 30 minutes ago that we were having a debate in the House with regard to the Middle East and what is happening in Iraq. It is somewhat interesting that we have gone from that debate to debating fiddles for an hour or so, depending on the mood of the chamber.

That is not to take anything away from Bill S-218. There is no doubt that Bill S-218 is an important piece of legislation, but it is a little ironic given the fact that we will be voting on the government motion with regard to the commitment of military personnel to carry out air strikes. I have not lost sight of the fact that what we are talking about right now is a national fiddling day.

Having said that, given the fact that it appears that all three political parties support Bill S-218, we could wind down this debate and get back to the debate on Iraq. However, before I conclude my remarks, let me say a few things about Bill S-218.

As it has been pointed out, this is a bill that comes from the Senate. A senator generated what Liberals believe is a positive idea in recognizing the third Saturday of May as national fiddling day. We

recognize it as an important piece of legislation because we believe it strengthens our commitment to Canadian heritage and diversity by increasing the awareness of the value of fiddling and the role it has played, continues to play, and will play into the future in all regions of Canada. We stand in our places to recognize that in a very strong and united way, based on the comments I have heard in the last 30 minutes.

We need to recognize that the fiddle is a lovely instrument to listen to. I personally have never played one. I have often sat in audiences and listened to it, and having done so, I can say that it is an absolutely delightful instrument to listen to due to the many different ways it can command all sorts of different emotions. It reflects regional diversity and culture. The French, Inuit, the Métis, first nations, Ukrainian, Scottish, Irish, and Acadians have various styles of fiddling.

I know first-hand how wonderful Folklorama is in my home city of Winnipeg. Every summer for two weeks, Winnipeg hosts the world with pavilions. It is two weeks of culture and heritage enrichment. Not only residents of Winnipeg but people from all parts of the world get engaged in Folklorama. It is all about heritage, and music is one of the centre points. In fact, there are pavilions that use the fiddle to express their culture and heritage.

I have had the good fortune to listen to good fiddling and jigging at the same time. If one has never witnessed that, I would really encourage people to make a genuine attempt at participating in a good fiddle-jigging contest. It is truly amazing to see.

What has been emphasized by some who have played the fiddle over the years is the fact that there seems to be a bit of a generation gap, but the fiddle is coming back. More and more young people are taking on this particular instrument as a sense of pride, and are wanting to use the fiddle more and more. That is encouraging.

● (1800)

It was commented on by Patti Lamoureux. I do not believe that she is related to me, even though she is from the Winnipeg area. She is a local fiddling champion and member of the Manitoba Fiddle Association hall of fame. She emphasized just how important it is that we pass this on to our younger generations.

There are all sorts of fiddling schools around today that were not there five, six or seven years ago. We are seeing more and more young people getting engaged with the fiddle. We see that as a very strong thing.

It is not my intent to take up a great deal of time on this particular piece of legislation. I believe that previous speakers have talked at length regarding the heritage and the importance of the instrument itself. As I have indicated, it is a wonderful instrument, and I do believe that it is an instrument that is going to continue to grow as it has been over the last few years.

I look forward to participating in the audience by listening, particularly in special events within Winnipeg North, but also outside of Winnipeg North. There is a younger generation that is getting more and more involved with things like jigging, which would not quite be the same, from my perspective, if the fiddle were not there. It is something that has a great deal of appeal, and there does seem to be a rebirth.

Private Members' Business

That is why I ultimately believe that recognizing the third Saturday in May of every year as national fiddling day will do that much more in terms of encouragement and involvement. Most importantly, it expresses an appreciation of just how much the fiddle has been a part of Canada's very rich culture and history.

With those few words, I feel very confident that the bill will pass, as it appears to have the support of all political parties. Given the limited debate on Iraq and ISIL and the vote with the bells ringing at eight o'clock, I hope that we will be able to get back to that debate as quickly as possible.

• (1805)

Mr. Rick Dykstra (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage, CPC): Mr. Speaker, today I am here as well to talk about Bill S-218, an act respecting national fiddling day. I would like to credit my colleague, the member for Miramichi, who sponsored the bill in the House.

Since the days of the voyageurs, fiddling has been part of Canada's cultural fabric. People from many different cultures have come to Canada, shared their ways of playing the fiddle and offered their own interpretations of traditional fiddle music. In fact, today the fiddle is commonly used in most genres of music, whether it be folk, new age, country, bluegrass or jazz. There even seems to be a resurgence of fiddle playing, with the fiddle appearing in the music of popular artists and groups in recording studios, at festivals, performance halls, and civic arenas across our country.

Today, in families, lessons, workshops, competitions and concerts, fiddling is being celebrated across Canada by all generations. In Canadian cities, towns and villages throughout the country, there are festivals taking place, and whether dedicated to the arts, music, or cultural traditions, one will often find a fiddler on a festival stage, continuing Canada's fiddling tradition.

In fact, many festivals across Canada bring fiddlers and their fans together to celebrate the fiddle and the cultural traditions associated with it. Many of these festivals are supported by programs such as the arts presentation fund and the building communities through arts and heritage fund. These programs support many festivals and Canadian performers by providing funding to organizations to celebrate their community, their past and their present, as well as to ensure that Canadians have access to the performing arts and artistic talent.

For instance the organizers of Festival La Grande Rencontre, which celebrated its 22nd season this past summer, takes pride in providing an environment where audiences can rediscover the richness of music right in the heart of Montreal. The festival offers a four-day program packed full of concerts, dances, workshops, master classes on the violin and fiddle, and much more. With such a variety of activities for any music enthusiast, the festival brings together artists and musicians to entertain audiences of all ages. Fiddle players from across Canada and the U.S. come and are happy to participate in La Grande Rencontre.

There is also Winnipeg's winter festival, the Festival du Voyageur, which has been celebrating Manitoba's francophone heritage since 1970. Over 10 days in February, organizers focus on revelling in Manitoba's rich history and culture reflecting the voyageur era. Visitors to the festival can actually visit l'Auberge du violon, where

fiddling is the heart of the entertainment and the voyageurs' joie de vivre comes to life. With homemade dinners, a large dance floor and a cordial feel, the Auberge is a giant house party, bringing together friends and family, surrounded by fiddlers. Today, after 44 years of revelling, the Festival du Voyageur continues to grow, going from a four-day celebration to a 10-day province-wide festival that attracts over 95,000 visitors. The festival certainly offers a welcome boost amid a Winnipeg winter, as it celebrates the voyageur era and the joie de vivre of Manitoba's francophone heritage.

A little further west, in Saskatoon, is the John Arcand Fiddle Fest, which is celebrating its 17th year and continuing to engage the community and create an awareness of Métis culture. Fiddle Fest offers fiddle workshops and presentations, and a showcase for youth and talent, all with the objective of promoting and preserving the Métis traditions of fiddle music and dance. With two full days of workshops, the Fiddle Fest offers festival goers an opportunity to nurture their creativity with the great fiddling masters of the world, and it has demonstrated its appeal to Canadians of all ages.

There are many other festivals across Canada that celebrate the fiddle, such as P.E.I.'s Rollo Bay Fiddle Festival, and Nova Scotia's Maritime Fiddle Festival, which is celebrating its 64th year in 2014.

This year also marks the 25th anniversary of the Canadian Grand Masters fiddling championship. The Canadian Grand Masters works to promote and preserve Canadian fiddling and its traditions and to recognize Canada's extremely talented fiddlers. Held every year in Ottawa at the end of August, the championship invites approximately 30 fiddlers to compete for the title of grand master.

• (1810)

The Canadian Grand Masters Fiddling Association emphasizes traditional fiddling, ensures a full representation of Canadian fiddling styles, and embraces the regional diversity of Canadian fiddling. Fiddlers compete for the title of Grand Master by showcasing their talents to judges and to audiences, making this an event that fiddle masters look forward to every single year.

One of my former constituents, Alexander George, has played in Nova Scotia, Ottawa, and my community of St. Catharines. At 13 years old, Alex is the youngest member of the Niagara Old Tyme Fiddle Club, and he attended the Grand Masters workshop this year. This is what he has to say about fiddling: "Fiddle music is fun and the musicians have a great time sharing their music. Fiddling in kitchens and around campfires is a very social activity where people can't help but have a good time".

I am glad we can support young artists like Alex by giving them an opportunity to develop their craft and to follow in the footsteps of St. Catharines' own Abbie Andrews, who along with his band, the Canadian Ranch Boys, helped to pioneer country music in our country.

The Canadian Grand Masters fiddling championship, its support for preserving traditions, and the opportunities it provides young musicians like Alexander speak to the essence of Bill S-218.

Private Members' Business

I need to mention that every single year, in May, the city of St. Catharines hosts the Folk Arts Festival, which is the longest running folk arts festival in our country. It is there that we hear from so many different communities and so many different fiddle players what it is like to understand the culture of not just our country but of the Niagara region. It demonstrates the diversity of fiddling in regions across our country.

Finally, I want to add that Canada has lost a fiddling legend. Renowned Cape Breton fiddler, Buddy MacMaster, died this past August. A member of the Order of Canada, Mr. MacMaster has often been credited with bringing Cape Breton fiddling to the world stage.

Early in his life, as a station agent for the Canadian National Railroad, Mr. MacMaster often worked the late shift at a depot outside of Truro. During the quiet times of the night, Buddy would often practise his fiddle. The train dispatcher and the other station agents throughout the Maritimes would call into the railroad line just to listen to him play.

Mr. MacMaster was generous with his talent, rarely turning down an opportunity to play and taking time to teach generations of fiddlers, who travelled from around the world to Cape Breton to learn from him. While we have lost a Canadian fiddling legend, we know that he lives on in the playing of fiddlers with whom he shared his gift.

To recognize the role of fiddling in our heritage as well as amazing Canadian fiddlers, like Abbie Andrews and Buddy MacMaster, who share their music traditions with Canadians throughout our country, we should proclaim the third Saturday in May National Fiddling Day across Canada.

• (1815)

Mr. Charlie Angus (Timmins—James Bay, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise to represent the people of Timmins—James Bay. Of course, I could not begin without talking about the incredible fiddling history of James Bay, where the Cree fiddlers, going back to the 1600s, have maintained an incredible culture of fiddle and dance.

I have to say at the outset that I keep a fiddle in my closet. It haunts me. I cannot play it. The G–D–A–E fingering is probably the easiest fingering on the planet, but the ability to use the bow with the right hand is the difference between beauty and art and criminal activity. I have tried the right hand, and I have not been able to master it. However, I would like to speak to this.

I have to also say at the outset that I have heard incredible fiddling across this country, and I have had the great honour to play in the Grievous Angels with that incredible fiddler Peter Jellard, who is a master at Acadian, Quebecois, and traditional Irish fiddling.

My personal love is Cape Breton fiddling. My family were Cape Breton miners who were exiled. They had to follow the work. Also living in Timmins was Buddy MacMaster, the famous Cape Breton fiddler. He was born in Timmins, because the Cape Bretoners had to go north to work. It was the Fort Mac of the 1920s and 1930s.

My grandfather was a traditional Cape Bretoner. He had a fiddle and a piano. If we wanted music, he played one or the other or both, so we would have Saturday night ceilidhs. My grandfather was a purest. He did not believe in records. My aunts and mom wanted to

listen to rock and roll and Elvis Presley. It hit them that a way to get my grandfather to allow a record player in the house was to bring Cape Breton fiddle records home, so we grew up on Winston “Scotty” Fitzgerald, John Allan Cameron, and the whole Celtic tradition in our neighbourhood, in this little miner’s house in the Moneta district in Timmins. The Italian and francophone neighbours would come over on Saturday nights, and we would have a traditional Cape Breton ceilidh, and the music would go into the early hours of the morning.

Not being able to fiddle, I realized early on that if I could sing, I could stay up. As long as I knew the songs, I could stay up. I could stay up all night. The second I ran out of songs, they noticed, and I was sent to bed, so I might not be a very competent singer, but I knew all the words.

I would like to speak about the uniqueness of the fiddle as an instrument. I have played across Canada. I have learned a number of lessons from playing shows from the far Arctic to biker bars in southwestern Ontario, from the east coast over to the mountains. There is a distinct difference between how people respond when they hear the fiddle and any other instrument.

I will tell members a couple of stories. I was in Great Whale River up in upper James Bay in Quebec in the early 1990s playing with our band. There was only one place to eat. It was a Quonset hut run by Hydro Quebec. It was the only place to eat for 600 kilometres. They took a look at four or five scruffy tête carrés and said, “We’re not feeding you”. We could have fought with them, but they were the law of the land. It was their restaurant, and they were not feeding us. Rather than fight, we sat down, and our fiddler took out the fiddle and began to play *La Bastringue*, and immediately they came out from behind, they called their friends over from the other Quonset huts, and they told us that we could eat there all day, as long as we wanted. In fact, they did not want us to go to the show that night. That is not an exception.

I played in many locations, when we were much younger, where we were literally playing in very hostile professional biker bars. We would always start with a fiddle tune. A fiddle tune immediately made us family. There is a sense with the fiddle that puts people in a place, and many Canadian people do not quite know where that place is. It is a place where their family is from. It is a village in their mind. They know that if they walk into that village, they will always be welcome. What is fascinating about this village is that it does not matter in the mind if this village is in Acadie, Jonquière, Poste-de-la-Baleine, the Ottawa Valley, Cape Breton, northern Ontario, or the Red River in western Canada. It is the place we all know that when we are there, we somehow belong.

I am not just making these claims. I know. I have tried it as a singer. It does not cut across all manner of cultural representations unless one is absolutely fantastic. If one is a saxophonist, some people like the sax, and some people do not. Everyone plays the guitar. Same with the piano, but there is something about a fiddle being played that brings that sense of identity, even if that person does not know the song. Whether it is Quebec fiddling or Acadian fiddling or western fiddling, one would immediately say that is from us.

Private Members' Business

•(1820)

What is it about the fiddle? It is the people's instrument, because it is simple. It is portable. The fingering is very easy to remember for the many complex jigs and reels with the G-D-A-E fingering. It is intuitive. Also, it does not need amplification. One could go to a village dance on a Saturday, and with nothing else, with no other band, the fiddle itself could be heard above the crowd.

There are incredible numbers of young fiddlers out there. This is not a dying art by any means. What we see is incredible talent right across this country. However, what has mostly disappeared, although not entirely, is the audience role, because the fiddle was not meant to be just listened to; it was meant to be danced to. The strathspeys, the reels, and the jigs followed set patterns. The audience did not need a caller to tell them how to dance, because they knew.

At a traditional country dance where the fiddle is still played, one notices a unique relationship between the instrument and the audience that does not exist if one is simply there to listen. The audience, with the movement of the feet, sets the rhythm. We see this in step dancing. The feet set the rhythm, and it is a natural rhythm that plays to the fiddle. There are many elements.

There is another interesting element, because it is not a fretted instrument, so there is a proximity to tonality. If the fiddlers are very good, it creates an incredible warmth. It is just like a big band with its horn section. If they are really good, a proximity of tonality creates a warmth. If they are not good, it is literally like scratching down a blackboard. We always see the images of a young child learning the violin, because it is brutal. It is the sense of warmth and the fragility of the instrument that actually allows it to cut through the sound, and it creates a different relationship with people.

When we talk about who we are as Canadians, we cannot really talk about ourselves unless we think of that village that still exists. Whether people have moved away, whether people have moved on, whether people have hip-hop pants, or whether people have not been back to that village in their minds, when they hear it, there is a cultural memory that puts them in a place, and that place is Canada.

The idea that we would celebrate this is really important, because we see that the fiddle culture has gone through waves of recognition and diminution as other forms of music have taken over.

When I was young, even though our family was very close to the Cape Breton culture there was a sense that it was a dying culture. Then we saw in the 1990s a whole growth of the new Celtic movement and many young people coming forward. In Quebec, we see that the continued strength of traditional music is still rooted in the traditional songs, with the call and response, but there is also the role of the fiddle. Take the fiddle out, and something fundamental is missing. We can go into a dance club now and see the fiddle.

This again is not to undermine the incredible role of the violin. The violin is the same instrument. For the layperson at home, the violin is a fiddle. However, the fiddle we are talking about is the traditional culture, the traditional music, the reels, the strathspeys, the jigs, and in the case of Cape Breton, the incredibly beautiful slow airs that are the people's music. It does not need amplification. It does not need a record label. It does not need anything except the ability of someone to play it and someone to dance.

I am very proud to get up tonight to speak about the role of the fiddle and its importance. For all those young bands out there, believe me, if they ever get themselves into trouble, if they have a good fiddler with them, it will get them through anything. If they need gas anyplace, if they need to get fed, they should have a good fiddler. If they have a bad fiddler, I cannot make any promises about how they are going to make out crossing this country.

Ms. Lois Brown (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I am thankful to have this moment to speak to the bill, which I am very pleased to support.

I am a fiddler—perhaps not a very good one, but I have a good time with my violin. I have a lovely violin, thanks to the generosity of my mom and dad, who gave me a beautiful instrument some years ago. My aspiration is to do that instrument justice at some point in my life.

Although I went on with my music and did my degree in piano, violin was always my first love. Whether it is a concerto of Tchaikovsky or Mendelssohn or whether it is the strathspeys, the jigs, or the laments that we have in our Celtic music today, I have a deep passion for the music of the fiddle, the violin, and how it can stir the emotions of the heart.

We have had wonderful cultural experiences here in Canada. Visiting Prince Edward Island, in the same village one can go from a c eilidh one night where one experiences the music of Ireland or Scotland over to a house party where the same instrument is participating in the music of the Acadian people with their step dancing and the wonderful emotion that evokes.

When I was in Newfoundland, I took my fiddle with me. I was on a concert tour in Newfoundland in the summer of 2008 and had the opportunity to go to George Street, where people just pull up a chair in a music circle. People come and go from that music circle all evening with a variety of instruments, but there are a lot of fiddles.

When I was in Cape Breton, I had the opportunity to attend the Celtic college and do some fiddle classes there. I experienced some of the other music that was being played in Cape Breton. We have so much wonderful music that can be played on that instrument.

I have a daughter who decided to take up the fiddle. She loves the music of eastern Europe and plays that music, as opposed to the Celtic music.

What I really want to do tonight is to pay tribute to the wonderful instructors that we have here in Canada, and we have some remarkable musicians. I think of people like Natalie MacMaster, who comes from the east coast and whose name has not been mentioned here tonight. She is one of the people who in the 1990s brought back the wonderful love for fiddle music.

When I was in Prince Edward Island, I visited the Summerside school of piping and spent some time with the gentleman there who was making the fiddles for the Rankin Family, another group that came out of Cape Breton and provided Canada with a remarkable position in the world of Celtic music. Fabulous fiddling came from that group.

Government Orders

However, I really want to pay tribute to those people who have undertaken to instruct young people in the art of fiddling, because so often they do not get the recognition they deserve.

There are teachers who start with very young students and apprise them of the fingering, as my colleague for Timmins—James Bay was saying. The DGAE fingering is seemingly so simple on the fiddle, but it needs accuracy in the position of the fingering. These instructors are the ones who painstakingly take the time to inform young students, first of all, of the mechanics of the instrument itself. Second, they introduce them to the wealth of music that they can speak through into a variety of cultures.

I would like to pay tribute tonight to several people in my life.

There is Phil Howes, an instructor from Markham with whom I had the opportunity to study. Phil is a remarkable musician himself. He is a regular adjudicator at fiddle competitions across Canada. He and his wife recorded a number of CDs, and I would recommend them to my colleagues if they are looking for some good music. Phil is a remarkable fiddler and a delight to listen to.

● (1825)

I would also like to pay tribute to Bob and Ginny Arbuckle, constituents of mine in Newmarket—Aurora. Bob is a remarkable fiddler as well, and a gentleman who has poured his life into instructing young people in the art of music. Sadly, Ginny has passed, but we had many nights at my house when Bob would bring his fiddle and I would get out my fiddle and Ginny would play the piano and we would do lots of wonderful Celtic music.

I would like to offer my thanks to those people who have become instructors, many of them remarkable musicians in their own right. They have poured their lives into the lives of others so that they too can learn the fiddle and learn to appreciate so much of the wonderful cultural experience that we have to offer in this great country of ours.

● (1830)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Development will have four minutes remaining for her comments when the House next returns to this item of business.

The time provided for the consideration of private members' business has now expired and the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the order paper.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

MILITARY CONTRIBUTION AGAINST ISIL

The House resumed consideration of the motion, and of the amendment.

Ms. Lois Brown (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Development, CPC): Mr. Speaker, it is like turning the channel to move from the conversation that we have just had about recognizing a fiddle day in Canada back to the weightiness of the debate in which we have found ourselves today.

Canada is deeply concerned by the recent increase in violence in Iraq and in the humanitarian consequences.

First, Canada condemns, in the strongest terms, the targeting of civilians and religious minorities. We are deeply concerned by reports of possible war crimes and crimes against humanity. That is why we continue to call on all parties to the conflict to respect international humanitarian law.

I would like to provide some context tonight that will help us all understand the dire situation being faced by the people of Iraq.

The humanitarian situation in Iraq continues to deteriorate as armed clashes between the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant—ISIL—and government forces drive displacement.

Since January, an estimated 1.7 million people have been displaced throughout the country, which represents one of the largest cases of internal displacement in the world. Basic services, including health care and water infrastructure, are disrupted, resulting in acute humanitarian needs.

The intensity of fighting in ISIL-held areas has resulted in a security situation that does not allow humanitarian organizations to operate. The persecution of minority groups, including Christians, Yazidis, Shabak, and Shia Turkmen, is an ongoing concern.

This is why the Canadian military contribution, as articulated by the Prime Minister, is so vitally important. The size and pace of displacement has overwhelmed local communities. There is a concern that the schools being used as shelter may not be able to reopen as scheduled, which means that 850,000 children will begin to fall behind with their education.

Canada is actively working with partners to address children's needs and to see what more can be done. We are currently working through experienced partners, such as Save the Children and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to help provide child-friendly environments for displaced children and to give them the psychosocial support they need.

We believe that when adults fight, children's education should not suffer, and the continued academic growth of children must be secured even in the face of conflict.

Keeping the family unit together, ensuring that assistance needs are met, and providing case management are the keys. The flows of internally displaced persons have also placed considerable strain on health structures, and many health facilities are overwhelmed with large caseloads.

In addition, food security is a growing concern in central and northern Iraq, because normal supply routes have been interrupted by conflict and insecurity. The next harvest is at risk in the areas affected by the conflict, and that accounts for nearly a third of Iraq's wheat production. Millions of Iraqis are likely to face food shortages later this year unless these challenges are resolved.

A key challenge for the humanitarian community continues to be the difficulty of being able to get into conflict areas to reach the people who need the help. Again, this is why targeted air strikes are so important to assisting the humanitarian effort. We need access to the most vulnerable, and ISIL is not about to offer that.

Government Orders

The sheer number of different locations people have fled to, as well as their mobility, adds a layer of complexity that makes matters even more difficult for humanitarian organizations.

Canada is working through experienced humanitarian partners, such as the United Nations humanitarian agencies, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and non-governmental organizations to get life-saving assistance to those who need it.

Since the beginning of 2014, Canada has allocated nearly \$29 million in humanitarian assistance to Iraq. Of this, \$19 million is in response to the recent civil unrest and almost \$10 million is to respond to the needs of Syrian refugees in Iraq.

• (1835)

Just recently, the Minister of Foreign Affairs announced an additional \$10 million contribution to support the innocent victims of ISIL's brutality, in particular, to respond to the heinous acts of sexual violence and other human rights abuses being committed against women and children.

To date this year, Canada is the seventh most important humanitarian assistance donor responding to civil unrest in Iraq, with a share of 4.4% of the emergency appeals. With these funds, lives have already been saved. Canada's funding is helping to meet the health, shelter, water, sanitation, protection and food needs of affected Iraqis, as well as relief supplies and camp construction through the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

We are also addressing the protection and education needs of displaced children and those whose schools are being used as emergency collective shelters. For example, our funding is helping to support mobile health clinics through Plan Canada, as well as providing medical supplies through the International Committee of the Red Cross. The Canadian Red Cross is currently looking to determine what more can be done. Our humanitarian partners provide very specific assistance, such as transportation to areas of safety or child-friendly spaces, and take steps to ensure that particularly vulnerable people, such as the disabled, the elderly and children, have access to life sustaining services.

On August 28, the first planeload of humanitarian relief supplies was deployed from our warehouse in the International Humanitarian City in Dubai to Erbil. It contained kitchen sets, jerry cans, tents, blankets, hygiene kits and mosquito nets. The relief supplies were distributed by Save the Children to those in need. We anticipate that the second planeload of \$365,000 in humanitarian relief supplies will be sent soon. It will include blankets, buckets, tarps, hygiene kits, jerry cans and kitchen sets.

We will continue to work closely with our partners to ensure that emergency humanitarian assistance is provided to Iraqi civilians in need. Canadian officials will continue to monitor the situation closely, and assess the security and humanitarian challenges facing the Iraqi people.

I would also like to add that Iraq became one of Canada's development partner countries in June. We already have development staff on the ground in northern Iraq and we will soon finance a series of development initiatives to help communities maintain better services, such as education, water supply and waste management, in

response to the recent flow of internally displaced people coming into the country.

Canada will continue to work closely with its allies to determine how it can best continue to support the needs of Iraqi civilians, particularly the religious minorities. Canada will do that because it needs to be done to secure the safety of these people, who are vulnerable and so desperately in need.

Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I can hear the commitment in my colleague's voice to delivering aid to those in need.

Canada has been able to commit itself and deliver aid in other regions of the world, absence of its own military intervention and under the protection of others. That is part of the argument that we are making. Aid can also be delivered. The proposal I would make is that it is not contingent entirely upon the six CF-18s that we are sending.

The member mentioned the military intervention specifically, so this is what I would like to focus on. Increasingly, there seems to be a consensus that security cannot be achieved in Iraq solely through bombing missions and the flights that Canada has committed to, and that so-called boots on the ground are required. There is little confidence that the Iraqi army has the capacity to do that.

I am asking for the member's opinion, not the government at large. Is it her belief that we may eventually step to that place in order to deliver the aid she talks about? Unable to do it from the air because of these bombing missions, would we have to resort to and involve ourselves in so-called ground forces to enable that aid to be delivered to the Iraqi people?

• (1840)

Ms. Lois Brown: Mr. Speaker, we know ISIL is a brutal group of people that is out to kill, maim and injure Iraqi people and dispose of very vulnerable small religious groups that get in its way because they do not believe in the same thing.

This mission that Canada is looking to undertake, in conjunction with our allies, does not preclude any of the humanitarian assistance that we need to get there, but it has to be done in tandem. In order to get any humanitarian aid there, we need to clear the routes. We know ISIL will not allow it, but we need to continue to work with our humanitarian partners.

There are people with deep roots in Iraq. The Canadian Red Cross and Red Crescent movement, Plan Canada, MercyCorps, Save the Children have been there for a long time. We are going to—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Questions and comments, the hon. member for Wellington—Halton Hills.

Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have a comment and then a question.

Government Orders

It is really important that the Government of Canada and its allies ensure that allied military action does not give new life to a separatist Kurdish movement in that region of the world. People should know that there are some 10 to 15 million Kurds in eastern Turkey, some two million Kurds in northern Syria and some six million Kurds in northern Iraq. It was only just last year, March of 2013, that the Republic of Turkey negotiated a ceasefire with the paramilitary Kurdish group, the PKK, in eastern Turkey.

The conflict is at Turkey's borders today and we will be assisting the Peshmerga in northern Iraq. Therefore, it is really important that the assistance be provided in a way so as not to give rise to another separatist movement, because potentially, a civil war in Turkey would be a far bigger danger to western interests than the current situation presents.

Would the member comment on that?

Ms. Lois Brown: Mr. Speaker, that is precisely the reason why we have to work with our allies. We are working in conjunction with countries like the United States, Australia, Denmark, the United Kingdom. All of these partners are working together because our goal right now is to downgrade the ability of ISIS to create more tension in that part of the world. We have to work with our partners on this.

We will continue to assess the situation on a day-by-day basis. We have committed to a six-month term working with our allies. We will be continually reassessing, and we will reassess when that times comes.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Marc-André Morin (Laurentides—Labelle, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I have become extremely wary of hearing the word “allies” every time it comes up, because some of those allies are the very reason these terrorists have become this important and this powerful.

We know that Turkey has served as a major hub for many fighters from western countries who have gone to fight from the other side of the border. We also know that rich gulf countries have funded the purchase of weapons. That is where we are at today.

If our solution does not take those factors into account, we may as well put our heads in the sand. Nothing will be accomplished.

Would my colleague like to comment on that?

• (1845)

[*English*]

Ms. Lois Brown: Mr. Speaker, it is the very reason that we need to work with other countries. Canada will not be alone. Countries from the Middle East are working with us. We heard the minister today talk about Bahrain coming in. There are countries in that part of the world that also see this ISIS group as a huge threat to peace and security in the Middle East.

We need to work co-operatively on this. We will continue to assess the situation on a day-to-day basis, but we have to work with other countries.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Djaouida Sellah (Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, NDP): Mr. Speaker, before I begin, I would like to say that I will sharing my time with the hon. member for Trois-Rivières.

I am very pleased to rise today to participate in the debate on the motion concerning a military contribution to the fight against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant. After weeks of silence, the Conservative government finally decided to reveal its plan. Yes, it agreed to a debate in the House of Commons, but it has already made up its mind, unfortunately. The government wants Canada to engage in war against the terrorist group known as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, and it has decided to do just that.

We know that the Islamic State is responsible for violent atrocities against the peoples of Iraq and Syria. It represents a genuine humanitarian and security threat for civilians. Their day-to-day lives are controlled by fear and threats because of the horrors they have witnessed and experienced. The Islamic State has taken advantage of how powerless the people feel and is spreading its oppression over an ever-expanding area, plunging the region into a genuine humanitarian crisis.

I of course believe that we should be providing assistance to local populations. However, the Conservative government plans to join the military mission against ISIL in Iraq, using air strikes. Military measures are likely to have very little impact, because the terrorists, having been warned that this will be a short mission, could simply go into hiding and wait it out, coming out again after most of the aerial bombings are over. Sources on the ground have already said that the jihadists have left the official bases and are temporarily hiding amongst the civilian population. Air strikes will therefore not have the desired effect.

As a doctor myself, I worked for the Red Crescent during the first Persian Gulf war. I witnessed first-hand the ravages of the war led by George Bush Sr., a war that was supposed to be like a surgical procedure. It was an operation based primarily on air strikes targeting the Saddam Hussein government. I was on the ground and I can assure this House that that mission was not a success. The reality was quite different. The air strikes affected seniors, women and children. In military jargon, this is known as collateral damage. The losses were primarily civilian. There is one image I will never forget: a daycare centre that was bombed by the allies. There was nothing left but the charred remains of infants, babies and children.

From the beginning, the government has been saying that we have to be good citizens and support this motion. It forgot to mention that there will be dozens if not hundreds of civilian lives lost in collateral damage, as is always the case with air strikes. Has the government planned for that obvious reality? I do not think so. It seems to care more about pleasing the United States by sending fighter jets than it does about the requests of local authorities and local populations. I would remind the House that Kurdish and Iraqi authorities have not asked for these fighter jets to be sent in.

The Prime Minister wants to take part in the conflict not under the UN, but rather as part of a coalition put together by the United States for the sole purpose of legitimizing its attacks.

Government Orders

•(1850)

More western intervention in the region will not stop the tragedy in Iraq and Syria. The tragedy will stop when we help the people of Iraq and Syria build the political institutions and security forces they need to counter these threats themselves.

The Conservative government seems to have forgotten that terrorism is not just a military undertaking. It is also a fearsome propaganda tool that Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant fighters have learned to use in a depraved but savvy way by filming hostage executions and issuing diatribes against western mobilization.

Canada must provide immediate aid to local populations. They are in desperate need of any humanitarian aid we can offer, be it building refugee camps, fighting sexual abuse, protecting minorities or hunting down alleged war criminals.

Yesterday, the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness said that we had to support this mission because that is the Canadian way. The Canadian way is not to rush headlong into a quagmire in Iraq; it is to help local people, establish peace and keep people safe.

We played a leadership role in creating the UN peacekeepers. We should continue to adhere to those principles and remain leaders in conflict resolution, specifically in the conflict we are talking about today.

Personally, I believe that before the government makes a decision, it should consult Parliament and hold a vote. It should also provide the necessary information and answer questions about the Canadian Armed Forces' participation in this conflict. However, the government has already sent members of the forces without consulting anyone or holding a vote beforehand.

This evening we must vote on a six-month deployment of 600 troops. The debate is once again being cut short by the Conservative government, which keeps us in the dark and continues to muzzle us. Its objective is to prevent debate that would force the government to reveal all the parameters of this mission, including the financial terms. The government cuts public services, but manages to find money for a war. How much will this war cost Canadians? If the government was truly concerned about Canadians, it would have invested this money where the people need it most. It would invest in health, where there have been many cuts this year once again. It would invest in programs for veterans and for members of the Canadian Armed Forces, who saw nine offices being closed. Finally, it would invest in job creation.

For all these reasons, I oppose the government's motion and I invite my colleagues to vote for the amendment proposed by our leader, the Hon. Thomas Mulcair.

[*English*]

Hon. Lynne Yelich (Minister of State (Foreign Affairs and Consular), CPC): Mr. Speaker, Canada's ambassador Bruno Saccomani was one of the first to visit Dohuk and witnessed the incredible humanitarian disaster that was unfolding and the atrocities. He heard accounts of the horrors, especially things that were being done to women, Christian minorities and Yazidis.

In Iraq, emergency humanitarian aid is necessary but there is no room for negotiation with such a group as ISIL. It is incumbent upon the international community to engage so that we can protect the work that is being done. We need to have that protection to bring on the humanitarian work.

The member's nightmarish recount of the last war in Iraq is the reason why we have to be involved. There are nightmares of women and children being beheaded with barbaric acts of violence. For her to—

•(1855)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Royal Galipeau: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The hon. member opposite, who has been here for three and a half years already, is very familiar with the Standing Orders. She is ignoring them by naming members of the House during her presentation.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The member for Ottawa—Orléans has reminded us that the Standing Orders do not permit members to name members or ministers. I believe that the hon. member for Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert knows this rule and that it is a mistake on her part.

Mrs. Djaouida Sellah: Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform my colleague that I should have said “the member for Outremont” when referring to our leader. I am so passionate about this topic that I made a mistake. I am sorry.

I do not know whether my colleague was asking a question or making a comment. I said in my speech that this radical Islamist group was committing atrocities. I condemn everything it is doing. The NDP does not want to fight violence with violence. There are other ways of doing things. If my colleague is concerned about minorities, women, children and seniors, that is what I spoke about. In military jargon, these people are referred to as collateral damage. Unfortunately, they are civilians. We do not believe that air strikes are the right way to resolve this conflict.

Mr. Jamie Nicholls (Vaudreuil—Soulanges, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I want to tell my colleague that I lived in Turkey during the terrorist campaign by the PKK, a Kurdish group.

Most members of the House have never experienced real terrorism in Canada. They have not seen bombs going off in shopping centres or other things I have witnessed.

Does my colleague believe that we have seriously considered the support that we are going to give the rebels in this region if we vote in favour of the motions to go to war in Iraq?

Mrs. Djaouida Sellah: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his very relevant question.

I have experienced the same thing as him. For me, it was a privilege. For him, it must have been difficult to live in a war zone. However, I repeat that air strikes are not going to solve the problem. There will always be civilians who are affected by such actions, since these terrorist groups have already left their bases and blended into the population.

Government Orders

We are saying no to the atrocities and the attacks against minorities, women and others. We want to use other means to help these people. The local authorities never asked for fighter jets.

• (1900)

Mr. Robert Aubin (Trois-Rivières, NDP): Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I take part in this debate on the Canadian Forces combat mission in Iraq, and with a sense of urgency to offer a different take on this from that of my Conservative colleagues, whose approach I do not share.

The debate is vigorous because once again the Conservative government is trying to present things in a far too simplistic or binary way, coupled with a flagrant lack of relevant information. This insults the intelligence of partners and citizens who would like to understand the issues and the context, instead of getting broad strokes of Conservative rhetoric.

In the government's eyes, there are good guys and bad guys, allies with whom we must join in solidarity, meaning only one thing: contribute to the air strikes.

The question is: of the 60 countries that make up this international alliance, are those who have chosen to intervene other than militarily, such as Italy or Norway, lesser allies?

The government's position rests mainly on argument (iii) of the motion moved by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, which says:

That this House accept that, unless confronted with strong and direct force, the threat ISIL poses to international peace and security, including to Canadian communities, will continue to grow;

Are we to understand that deploying a strong and direct force means sending six CF-18s?

One does not need to be a five-star general to understand that air strikes are not a guarantee of success and that a strong and direct force requires a strong army backed by an air force.

Thank heavens the government has not taken us down that path yet, but I am afraid that is in the cards for the future because it is not very likely that the situation will be resolved six months from now. A number of analysts even go so far as to say that the air strikes may be completely counterproductive.

Just look at the recent air strikes in Kobani, which, in addition to being inaccurate, have prompted the exodus of hundreds of new refugees and momentarily dispersed Islamic State militants into the city, transforming the conflict into urban guerrilla warfare that is hard to combat from the air. Once the bombing stops, the forces regroup and move on to their next objective.

It is difficult to argue that there is a simple solution to a complex problem. It is an illusion to try and make people believe that aerial bombings are the solution to a conflict that pits the world against this Islamic terrorist group. Things get even trickier when it comes to clearly defining the objectives of the Canadian mission, where our troops will be based, who will lead them, what criteria will be used to measure our progress and how we will measure our success or the obligation to extend our mission beyond the planned timeframe. All of those questions remain unanswered by the very people who are trying to convince us that Canada needs to be engaged in a military mission.

The conflict we are facing today is the result of just such an approach, where, under false pretenses, the United States invaded Iraq and dismantled it. The country the Americans left behind needed to be reorganized. In addition to numerous tensions, there was no balance of power, and the governance structure was in disarray.

It should also be said that this combat mission is in no way justified by a UN or NATO mandate. Here again, the government is flirting with disinformation by insinuating that our involvement is connected to UN resolution 2178. However, that resolution addresses the need to prevent nationals of member states from leaving their country to join the jihadist ranks. It has nothing to do with any international strike force.

Does that mean that we should do nothing and that Canada should remain unmoved by these atrocities? Of course not.

In fact, the hon. member for Ottawa Centre went to Iraq just weeks ago and, upon his return, briefed us on what he witnessed and the requests that were made. There were two requests, and they are perfectly in line with the amendment proposed by the leader of the NDP and the hon. member for Outremont in his speech yesterday.

The NDP is not saying that Canada should sit idly by and do nothing. On the contrary, we are saying that our humanitarian aid should be increased dramatically.

• (1905)

For instance, we are asking the government to increase humanitarian aid activities in areas where they could have an immediate impact and save lives every day, starting today.

We also want to offer Canada's assistance in investigating and prosecuting war crimes. We also want Canada to provide support to the many victims of sexual abuse.

All of these measures do not preclude our support for military involvement, which, we believe, should focus on transporting weapons for a period of up to three months, as this will allow local stakeholders to act effectively on the ground. After all, they know the area so much better than we do, including its geographic, ethnic and demographic makeup. When it comes to saving lives, that is how our efforts could be most effective most quickly.

Of course, we were all horrified by those terrible images showing the beheading of journalists and humanitarian workers. However, since there is not scale or gradation I could apply to such horrors, our reflection should transcend the disgust generated by these atrocities and our action must respond to all of the horrible situations caused by this conflict.

Although I commend the \$28 million Canada has promised, we must recognize that that is not very much. The UN has asked for over \$300 million for the short term, so is \$28 million enough of a contribution from Canada? To answer that question, unfortunately, I have only a number of other questions that also remain unanswered.

Government Orders

For instance, we could ask ourselves why it is that our government cannot give us a figure regarding the cost of our military involvement, so that we can assess our humanitarian aid as compared to our military support in terms of services on the ground to local populations dealing with all kinds of atrocities.

Are we responding to a request from our American allies, or did Canada offer to take part in these air strikes? Has Canada turned into a nation of war, or does the spirit of the peacekeepers remain somewhere within our walls? Why are we taking part in such a large mission against the Islamic State terrorist group when so little effort was put into fighting Boko Haram or preventing the crisis in the Congo or minimizing its consequences?

For now, let us concentrate on the motion currently before the House. Needless to say, unless the government recognizes the appropriateness of the amendment proposed by the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Outremont, I will be forced to vote against the government motion.

In doing so, I will be consistent with my beliefs and those that many of my constituents shared with me when I met them in my riding or in comments on social media. If the government were to reconsider its position following this debate, I could reconsider mine too, but there would be many more questions in need of answers.

In closing, I cannot help but note the strange coincidence that, on Friday, just as the Prime Minister was moving his motion, the 30th International Poetry Festival was getting under way back home in Trois-Rivières. All day, the words of our national poet, Gilles Vigneault, kept coming back to me.

Our poet said: “Violence is a lack of vocabulary.”

Unfortunately, what I see in this motion is a preference for weapons at the expense of dialogue, diplomacy and assistance even though these are the only ways to establish long-term security and good governance in a region that is experiencing tremendous turbulence.

• (1910)

[*English*]

Hon. Gary Goodyear (Minister of State (Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario), CPC): Mr. Speaker, talk is cheap and we have heard a lot of talk from the NDP. In fact the member opposite is even suggesting a larger-scale ground operation. The NDP is working really hard to find some legitimate excuse for not being in this conversation. I know the member opposite is being demanded to vote a certain way, and that is a shame.

I understand as well that humanitarian aid is a big issue. I also know the NDP is worried about our refugee support, but we are doing exactly that. The refugee support that is actually necessary is to return these displaced human beings to where they live. The only way to do that is to participate in a sophisticated and controlled military operation that includes air strikes.

I know the NDP members want to eat their lunch in peace, as long as they do not have to pay for that peace or pay for that lunch. However, I would ask the member this. What are we doing about those civilians who cannot escape to become refugees?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Robert Aubin: Mr. Speaker, simply put, if New Democrat MPs sleep well at night, that is because they are consistent with their beliefs and in tune with what their constituents tell them. New Democrat MPs are not saying we should not participate—far from it.

It is strange that my colleague opposite mentioned conversation because we are talking about the bombs they want to drop on people's heads, which will probably produce a lot more casualties than anything the Islamic State is doing. I do not want to downplay the actions of this terrorist group, but it is totally obvious that air strikes are not the solution to this conflict.

Mr. François Lapointe (Montmagny—L'Islet—Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, NDP): Mr. Speaker, my NDP colleague talked about the issue of inequity in his presentation.

I am very troubled by the thought of abandoning six million direct victims in Congo, where rape has been a weapon of war for 10 years. My colleague, who is in international relations, told me that Congo asked Canada for aid and military support three times.

How can we refuse the request for assistance three times, then charge right into another conflict and drop bombs from 10,000 feet?

Mr. Robert Aubin: Mr. Speaker, it is a little difficult for me to answer that question by trying to get inside the head of a Conservative, which is almost genetically impossible.

Clearly, it must be because of their views and interests. I even think that, to some extent, it is part of the election strategy to get what they believe to be the majority of Canadians behind these air strikes. However, in the weeks to come, as we find that this undertaking has not been effective, I believe that public opinion will change dramatically.

It will not be a coincidence that we will re-evaluate this mission in six months when we all know that nothing will have been resolved. The government is doing this so that it can gauge public opinion about its decisions as it goes along.

[*English*]

Mr. Royal Galipeau (Ottawa—Orléans, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate this opportunity to speak to a critical international issue, the ongoing crisis in Iraq. Before I go any further, with your permission, I would like to share my time with the distinguished and learned member for Kitchener Centre.

• (1915)

[*Translation*]

While the military dimension of this crisis is important—and I will speak to this point later in my speech—Canada's involvement in Iraq is much broader than our military contribution. Indeed, Canada's contributions also aim to address the security, humanitarian, human rights and political dimensions of the crisis.

*Government Orders**[English]*

First, let me provide some context on the nature of the ISIL threat. In recent months, Canadians have observed events taking place in Iraq and Syria with growing alarm. The consequences of ISIL's advance have been dire. Thousands of people have been uprooted as they flee ISIL's advance, while thousands more remain in their homes have been given the terrible choice of either converting to ISIL's twisted theology or facing torture and death.

[Translation]

Religious minorities and ancient communities such as the Yazidis have been persecuted and forced to flee their ancestral homelands. Young women and girls have been subjected to rape and forced marriages. Men have been executed in public after sham trials for supporting the government in Baghdad or for having ties to westerners.

[English]

ISIL poses a grave threat to Canada's friends and allies in the region, including Jordan and Israel. If left unchecked, ISIL could pose a threat to Canadians as well. ISIL has made repeated and direct threats against western countries, including Canada. If left unchecked, there is little doubt that ISIL will use its territory, resources and fighters to operate terrorist training camps and to plot terrorist attacks against targets in the west.

[Translation]

For all these reasons, inaction is not an option. The international community is acting, and Canada will play its part.

[English]

I would like to point out that since the House last debated the crisis in Iraq, the international coalition against ISIL has grown considerably.

[Translation]

ISIL's heinous and repulsive actions have shocked the world. As reports have emerged of whole communities being terrorized and murdered, of women and girls being forced in to sexual slavery, and of mass executions based on religious identity, the international community has grown increasingly horrified and has quickly responded to Iraq's request for military assistance.

[English]

The Obama administration has sent approximately 1,600 military personnel to advise Iraqi forces in the fight against the terrorist organization. U.S. leadership and coordination have also helped to galvanize support around the global coalition. This coalition has already brought on board almost 50 countries that have indicated support for military action against ISIL. A core group of these countries has already decided to go beyond contributing military advisers and military equipment.

Many of Canada's closest, like-minded countries, including the United Kingdom, France, Denmark, Australia, Belgium, the Netherlands and the U.S., have committed to engage in a combat role by contributing to air strikes against ISIL in Iraq.

[Translation]

The international coalition against ISIL includes 10 Middle Eastern countries as well. Several of these countries, including Bahrain, Jordan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, have participated in, or supported, air strikes against ISIL targets.

In addition to ongoing military efforts, a broad coalition of states, from Europe to North America to the Middle East, has responded to the crisis by supplying humanitarian assistance

[English]

On September 7, the Arab League foreign ministers committed to take all necessary measures to join Iraq and the international community in confronting ISIL and other militant groups, including by stemming the flow of foreign fighters. As a six-year co-chair of the Canada Arab World Parliamentary Association, I paid attention. Canada is pleased that partners in the Middle East are doing their part to address the threat posed by ISIL.

Canada takes the ISIL threat very seriously, and that is why we are joining our international partners to confront this threat head on. As the Prime Minister recently stated:

We do our part....

That's always how this country has handled its international responsibilities, and as long as I'm prime minister that's what we will continue to do.

● (1920)

[Translation]

On the humanitarian side, Canada is one of the largest donors to Iraq and was one of the first to recognize and address the significant needs of the Iraqi people. We have allocated over \$28 million to respond to humanitarian needs in Iraq. The government is working quickly to establish an overall framework for Canadian development programming in Iraq over the next five years, to build the economic and social foundations that are vital for a prosperous and stable future.

[English]

On the military side, Canada has assisted in the delivery of critical military supplies from contributing allies to Kurdish Peshmerga forces. The aptly named Royal Canadian Air Force provided airlift support to deliver military supplies donated by Albania and the Czech Republic, using CC-130 and CC-17 cargo planes. As well, special operations Canadian Armed Forces personnel are deploying to northern Iraq for an advise and assist mission.

[Translation]

As mentioned, many of Canada's closest allies are sending air force jets to participate in the air war against ISIL. As announced by the government on October 3, Canada is planning to participate further in coalition operations against ISIL by contributing air strike capability for a period of up to six months. Canada's air combat mission will include up to six CF-18 fighter jets, one air-to-air refuelling aircraft, two Aurora surveillance aircraft, and the necessary air crews and support personnel.

Government Orders

Beyond these measures designed to address the most immediate security and humanitarian challenges, Canada is actively rolling out forward-looking initiatives that will help Iraqis make the eventual transition towards longer-term recovery and sustainable peace.

[English]

Thus far, Canada has identified more than \$64 million in assistance for Iraq. The Minister of Foreign Affairs has announced \$15 million in new security programming alone. This sizeable contribution is being used to strengthen the capacity of security forces in Iraq by providing them with non-lethal assistance, including vehicles, computers, radios, and personal protective equipment, such as helmets and body armour.

[Translation]

Canada is also using these funds to advance regional efforts aimed at limiting the movement of foreign fighters into Iraq and Syria. Additional support is being explored, for instance to enhance Iraq's capabilities to prevent, detect and respond to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear threats or incidents.

[English]

In short, our engagement in Iraq incorporates a range of measures to tackle the various security, humanitarian, human rights, and political aspects of this conflict.

[Translation]

The challenges that Iraq faces are enormous. The good news is that the international community is united in responding to the threat of ISIL.

[English]

The threat posed by ISIL is broad based, and Canada is taking a holistic approach in response to this crisis. We are doing our part. Canadians can be proud of this contribution, and we do support our troops.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (Sherbrooke, NDP): Mr. Speaker, every time the Conservatives rise in the House to speak to this debate, they think the magical solution is to bomb the area. After six months of air strikes, the problem will be fixed and our forces will be able to come back home. That is what I hear every time I listen to a Conservative.

Things are not that simple. The Conservatives also need to be aware of the collateral damage to civilians that these air strikes could cause. One of my colleagues mentioned this earlier. A number of experts have also shared their concerns about how air strikes can be counterproductive. This may not be the best solution to fix the problem.

What does the member think about these concerns that air strikes are not the best solution in these circumstances, when terrorists can hide among civilians and—

• (1925)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): The hon. member for Ottawa—Orleans.

Mr. Royal Galipeau: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the tone of my colleague's question, but I have no illusions. I know he is an adversary.

The party he represents has always opposed Canada's involvement in defending this country. It was even opposed to defending Canada during the Second World War against the worst dictator in the history of humankind.

They are trying to make it sound as though we are attacking a country. We are not attacking a country. We are not attacking Iraq. What we are doing is responding, with the international coalition, to Iraq's invitation to protect the country and its people.

[English]

Ms. Yvonne Jones (Labrador, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for his contribution to the debate today. He talked about the role that different countries are playing with regard to the mission in Iraq.

One of the things that causes me such grave concern when we send our military away is what happens when they come back.

I ask the member this. Is he concerned by the fact that there are so many soldiers in this country, today, who have come home from Afghanistan who feel they are not getting the services they should be getting as Canadian soldiers on home soil?

Mr. Royal Galipeau: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for the tone of her question.

I want to advise her that I participated in the veterans affairs committee with members of all parties, including a representative from her party, on a unanimous report to the government in order to improve services to veterans.

I participated in that. The official opposition participated in that. So did the third party. We came to a unanimous recommendation, and the government has accepted it.

Quite frankly, a lot of these problems that our veterans have were caused in Afghanistan because the party she represents, when it was in government, sent them there poorly tooled, actually sending them to the desert with green uniforms.

Mr. Dan Albas (Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I have to cite my admiration for this member. He is a very eloquent speaker. He spoke on the whole spectrum of the efforts of the Canadian government, which have been presented to this House, so we can fully debate them.

He covered everything from humanitarian aid, of which I know many members opposite are very supportive, all the way to an advisory role so that the Iraqi regional and national forces are able to try to fight back on the ground, and also air strikes, which would be done in concert with many different partners.

Does the member feel that, by presenting a whole-spectrum approach, we will be more likely to support the efforts?

Let us keep in mind that this is a democratically elected government that is trying to fight off a terrorist organization that is taking up huge swaths of land. We need to all work together on many different levels.

Government Orders

Does the member feel it is important for us to have an integrated approach with our allies?

Mr. Royal Galipeau: Mr. Speaker, of course, a holistic approach is what the government is proposing. This is what I was promoting in the remarks I have just made.

Actually, Canadians from across the country seem to be approving of it, including many members who used to support the third party.

Our former colleague, Michelle Simson, who represented the Liberals in the House until the last election, just wrote that she is ashamed of the Liberal Party.

The hon. member for Westmount—Ville-Marie, who is likely going to vote against this tonight, said that after the vote is over, the Liberals will support it.

Members will remember Bob Rae. He said that there are some—
● (1930)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Order. We are over time.

Resuming debate, the hon. member for Kitchener Centre.

Mr. Stephen Woodworth (Kitchener Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, my thanks go to the erudite and wise member for Ottawa—Orléans for sharing his time with me.

It is considerable sadness that I rise in the House to do something that I never dreamed I would need to do, which is to convince the members of the Liberal Party to return to the internationalist and multilateralist roots of Liberal foreign policy and to reject the isolationism that its current leader wishes to impose upon it. To be clear, the Liberal leader wants his caucus to turn its back as he has turned his back on the atrocities being committed against innocent women and children in Iraq.

I would like to speak today about the multilateral and internationalist policies, like the responsibility to protect doctrine, which used to be the foundation of the Liberal Party's foreign policy, but which the current Liberal leader recently brushed aside with two short sentences amid a lengthy speech about what Canada's response should be to the atrocities being committed against women and children in Iraq, even as we speak.

Every state has the responsibility to protect its population from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. The international community has an obligation to assist states to fulfill that function. The international community has recognized that its members may have to act quickly to protect innocent citizens against ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. For geopolitical reasons of its own, which I urge members of the Liberal Party to reject, China has expressed reluctance to allow the UN to invoke the R2P doctrine, vetoing R2P in response to the deaths of innocent civilians in Syria to date.

In the case we are debating today, however, where unlike the government of Syria, which resisted any effective international intervention, Iraq has actually invited Canada and others to provide military assistance to protect its citizens against the ethnic cleansing and other atrocities being perpetrated by ISIL. There is no reason to prevent the international community from acting.

I would like to quote from the Liberal Party policy document, "Canada in the World: a Global Network Strategy", which represented the tradition of the Liberal Party before the current Liberal leader reshaped it to conform to his own unthoughtful and dictatorial whims. The document says:

Another Canadian-inspired idea, Responsibility to Protect, will ensure that military intervention is truly a last resort, but that when sovereign states fail to protect their people and the international community mobilizes to stop large-scale harm to innocent life (for example in genocide and ethnic cleansing), Canada will be there.

The same Liberal Party policy document also endorsed "A muscular approach to renewing Canadian multilateralism".

This is not simply a Liberal Party sentiment. This is actually the policy of governments of Canada, past and present. This is the tradition that is being pursued by our Prime Minister today in the resolution that we are debating. Unfortunately, it is a tradition which the recent remarks of the Liberal leader show has been abandoned under his leadership in favour of spurning our multilateral ties with close allies and adopting instead an unpredictable and inept isolationist approach.

It is also helpful to quote from last week's report by the United Nations office for human rights, which said:

ISIL and associated armed groups intentionally and systematically targeted these (Turkmen, Shabak, Christians, Yazidi and other) communities for gross human rights abuses, at times aimed at destroying, suppressing or cleansing them from areas under their control...OHCHR notes that many of the violations and abuses perpetrated by ISIL and associated armed groups may amount to war crimes or crimes against humanity.

● (1935)

That report recommended that:

Iraqi political leaders should use every opportunity and urgently achieve a substantial and effective resolution of the crisis by restoring control over the areas that have been taken over by ISIL....

It is for that purpose that Iraqi leaders have reached out and requested international and Canadian military assistance.

In the face of this authoritative report of unspeakable atrocities, what did the leader of the Liberal Party propose should be the world's response? He suggested that R2P required the international community to provide no more than development assistance to Iraq and refugee assistance to Turkey, as if somehow that would protect innocent women and children from the slavery, murder, and other atrocities being perpetrated by ISIL. Shame. Tell that to the women and girls in ISIL's slave markets. Tell that to the children who will have to watch their parents butchered before their eyes by ISIL.

The Liberal leader called on the parties in Iraq to come up with:

...an inclusive government that speaks for and represents all Iraqi men and women...a government that is fair-minded and which respects the many ethnic minorities within its borders.

As if somehow a series of Canadian-sponsored seminars would convince ISIL to stop committing atrocities and to become fair-minded and respectful of minorities.

Government Orders

Perhaps that would have been an admirable prescription for the Iraq of 2004, but it has absolutely no air of reality today in 2014. Had I not read the Liberal leader's words myself, I would hardly believe that such an uninformed view could come from any member of the House, much less the leader of the Liberal Party.

I do not pretend that the international responsibility to protect, which has arisen in Iraq, is susceptible to any easy or predictable course. The government of Iraq, which has requested international help to protect innocent civilians within its borders, is not itself an ideal ally. The strength of ISIL has been misjudged up to this point. Military commanders, as in any armed conflict, will need to proceed step by step to contain our adversaries, and the course of that battle plan cannot be predictable.

Nonetheless, the responsibility of the international community, including Canada, to protect those innocent women and children in Iraq from ISIL could not be clearer. The resolution before us today offers a modest, even minimalist, Canadian contribution to the international responsibility to protect. We could not do any less.

I expect I am not alone in this House in wishing that pacifism was a sufficient answer to atrocity and to mortal threats. We would all prefer to avoid causing anyone's death, and no Canadian takes any glory in military action. However, no government can proceed without a firm commitment to protect its citizens. It has been one of the great advances in our international practice to recognize the global implications and application of that principle.

I have no great expectation that the NDP will turn aside from the isolationist approach with which it so often shrouds itself. However, I expect better of our colleagues in the Liberal Party.

● (1940)

I urge them to turn away from isolationism and to embrace Canada's role in multilateral efforts to assist the international community in fulfilling its responsibility to protect innocent women and children from the ongoing genocide and other atrocities in Iraq. I urge them not to surrender the time-tested principles of respected Liberal foreign policy to the dictates of the current leader.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alain Giguère (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin, NDP): Mr. Speaker, this will make my old Conservative colleagues who are history buffs very happy. I have dusted off my old Carl von Clausewitz book, *On War*.

He said:

War therefore is an act of violence to compel our opponent to fulfill our will.

Is anyone here able to express our will with respect to this war? No.

Even better, in chapter four he says:

If our opponent is to be made to comply with our will, we must place him in a situation which is more oppressive to him than the sacrifice which we demand; but the disadvantages of this position must naturally not be of a transitory nature, at least in appearance, otherwise the enemy, instead of yielding, will hold out, in the prospect of a change for the better.

The Vietnam War was lost because the people there said they would hold out. The war in Afghanistan was lost because the Taliban said they would hold out.

Does the government know what is going to happen? I would like to hear my distinguished colleague's opinion. What will the people there do? They will hunker down, lay low and come back in two or three years.

Is that what the government is proposing? That we go back every six months?

[*English*]

Mr. Stephen Woodworth: Mr. Speaker, I am glad the member asked about our will, because it is actually the simplest and easiest question to answer. I am going to answer it by reading some extracts from the UN report that I mentioned in my remarks.

It is recounted therein how "...women and children who refused to convert were being allotted to ISIL fighters or were being trafficked as slaves...in markets in Mosul".

In another extract, "...150 unmarried girls and women...were reportedly transported to Syria, either to be given to ISIL fighters as a reward or to be sold as sex slaves".

It is my will, it is the will of the Government of Canada, and I hope it is the will of my colleague across the way that we put a stop to these barbaric practices.

Ms. Yvonne Jones (Labrador, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I listened attentively to the member for Kitchener Centre and I certainly listened to his tone in the House. When he talked about the leaders' dictatorial whims and isolationism, I think he was referring to his own leader, the Prime Minister, who refuses to meet with the leaders of provinces in our own country.

I would like to say to the member opposite that one of the largest problems that we have with this mission is trusting his government. The Conservatives have given Canadians no reason to trust them when it comes to managing our military or when it comes to our place in combat missions around the world, or even in this House.

I ask the member why his Prime Minister did not brief the leaders of the opposition parties in our country, in Canada. Why did he not sit at the table with them and talk about why Canada needed to go into this combat mission and justify our position in a combat role in Iraq?

Mr. Stephen Woodworth: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my friend's question, because it clearly discloses what is at the root of her discomfort about this mission.

The member's discomfort is not about women and children being sold into slavery. It is not about women and children being given as rewards to soldiers. It is not about children being required to watch their parents being butchered. The member's discomfort about this mission is that her leader did not get a briefing from the Prime Minister, and I find that, quite frankly, beneath this House.

Let me tell the House also about provincial leaders—

● (1945)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): I thought I heard someone up on a point of order. It seems that is not the case.

Government Orders

I will let the hon. member for Kitchener Centre conclude his remarks. We are out of time, so I would ask the hon. member to wrap up quickly. Then we will get on to the next intervention.

Mr. Stephen Woodworth: Mr. Speaker, I want to respond to my Liberal colleague's comment about provincial leaders by mentioning that Quebec Liberal Premier Philippe Couillard, whose son is in the military, gave his support to this mission before even knowing the specific details, saying that Canada "cannot escape its obligations" and "This is a significant threat to our society and Canada and Quebec are part of that landscape".

Mr. Robert Chisholm (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, NDP): Mr. Speaker, if I have any time left, I would like to share it with the member for Abitibi—Témiscamingue.

I am grateful for the opportunity to stand in the House tonight as a member of the official opposition and a representative of the good people of Dartmouth—Cole Harbour. This is a serious issue, whether or not to send Canada's military women and men into harm's way, and it is a difficult issue. It is also a complicated issue and I hope I can add something to this discussion, a discussion being held not just in the House but in the pages of our newspapers and around kitchen tables all across the country.

Canadians are very concerned about the decision the government is making, because they know this is not just a question of whether we should send six jets to fight for six months. They understand that this is a decision about whether we commit our military to a prolonged, expensive and deadly war.

This may be a global issue, but as a member of Parliament, my first responsibility is to my constituents. Dartmouth—Cole Harbour is home to a large number of women and men in the armed forces, as well as countless veterans and reservists. For them, their families and friends, this is not a theoretical debate. These are decisions that change their lives and the lives of their families forever.

They know this because many of them are still struggling with the aftermath of other decisions the government has made on their behalf. Therefore, it is difficult for them, on the one hand, because they are the embodiment of loyalty, honour and commitment. If we ask them to go, they will go without a second thought because that is what they do. That is what they are trained to do, and they are trained very well. They are the best in the world. On the other hand, these same Canadians are on the front lines of another battle, a battle with their government for the help they need after they come home.

In my community, there are members like Major Marcus Brauer, who teeters on bankruptcy because the government has not honoured its commitments to him and his family. There are veterans with PTSD, like Medric Cousineau, who walked all the way to Ottawa to raise money for service dogs. There are great Canadians like Dennis Manuge, who led a year-long battle for pension benefits clawed back from disabled veterans.

When these are the experiences of so many people in my riding, people who have dedicated their lives to their country, it is a stark reminder that although the Prime Minister can talk in terms of months, for many the decision to enter this war will last a lifetime.

I am deeply troubled with how the government is framing this issue. It suggests either people are for air strikes because they care

and want to do something or else people do not support air strikes because they do not care and would rather do nothing. It is outrageous.

If that were the case, the government would be accusing Germany of doing nothing. Does it call Norway a coward or say that Italy and Italians simply do not care? They are all allies that are deeply involved in providing aid and have all rejected air strikes. Of course we do not say those things because it is insulting. It is clearly untrue and such gross oversimplification diminishes us all.

Regardless of members' positions on the motion before us, I believe that we are duty bound to acknowledge how complicated, dangerous and fraught with risks this situation truly is. I would suggest that no clearer example can be found in terms of how complex it is than to consider the role of Syria.

Witness the moral knots the Prime Minister is tying himself into in trying to explain how he would deploy our military assets against Assad's enemies, but only at the request of that brutal dictator. We can also look to the campaign in Libya, where many analysts agree that our overreach in bombing that region has added more fuel to the fire.

I do not believe Canada should participate in these air strikes, but that does not mean I do not understand or respect the people who would make a different decision.

• (1950)

They are compelled to support entering this war out of compassion for the victims of ISIL, or out of rage at its atrocities, or out of fear in response to the threats made against our country. Intelligent, compassionate people disagree about what we should do.

I can appreciate the impulse to join air strikes aimed at people who have done terrible things, not just with impunity but seemingly with delight. It offends every fibre of our being. It provokes anger and outrage and disgust. I understand that. I feel it too, but these strong emotions are not the frame of mind with which we should make such decisions. We all agree that something must be done, but what?

The Minister of Foreign Affairs said himself yesterday, and I quote, "The scale of the humanitarian crisis is truly hard to comprehend". He also said, "When we look at a humanitarian crisis of this size, there is always more that can be done".

I completely agree, because the millions of internally displaced men, women, and children matter. The victims of the horrible atrocities ISIL is committing matter, and how we respond matters.

Some are caught up in the notion that the only way to deliver peace is with bombs, when really it is not that simple. ISIL is an enemy that does not think like we do. It invites the attacks. It craves the violence. In fact, it is counting on it.

As I said earlier, we cannot underestimate how complicated this situation is, and no one can say what the future will bring, but it is becoming increasingly clear that in this case, more violence will not suppress the violence. Attacks will not dissuade attacks. Killing will almost certainly lead to more killing. This is complicated.

Government Orders

As I have said, we do know some things. We know that deploying six CF-18s would lead to a greater level of engagement, and engagement is sometimes known as mission creep. We have good reason to believe that the value of such air strikes is dubious. We certainly know from experience that the cost of waging war is enormous, not just to our treasury but to the physical and mental health of the Canadians we deploy, not to mention their families.

There are five million and counting internally displaced people who need immediate assistance. That is an area where Canada can and should do more. It is a task where heavy lifting is truly required.

Yesterday the Minister of Foreign Affairs asked if we should “stand with our close allies...or stand aside as they put themselves on the line”. That is a false dichotomy, and the minister should be ashamed for diminishing the risk that will be taken by each and every person who is sent there to help in whatever capacity.

Make no mistake, humanitarian efforts in that region are not for the faint of heart. It is a job that will put Canadians in harm's way. It is also a job that better reflects who we are as a nation. We all agree that this is a problem that is not going away any time soon, certainly not in six months. It will take a long time, but that is what pulling our own weight is really about. It is about committing time, money, and the resources that are needed for the long run.

It is for those reasons that I implore the House to vote in favour of the amendment proposed by the hon. leader of the official opposition. His amendment recognizes that strong and direct force is absolutely necessary to confront ISIL but that it must come from capable and enabled local forces. It calls for military support for the transportation of weapons where needed and for assistance to investigate and prosecute war crimes. The amendment calls for monthly updates on the cost of our mission and wholeheartedly supports the brave men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces who stand on guard for all of us. Perhaps most importantly, the amendment calls for a significant boost in humanitarian aid in areas where there will be an immediate lifesaving impact, including contributing to winterized camps for refugees and investing in water, sanitation, hygiene, health, and education for people displaced by the fighting.

My time has drawn to an end. I thank the House for the opportunity to come here tonight on behalf of my constituents and to share some of my views and the opinions of some of my constituents.

● (1955)

Hon. Laurie Hawt (Edmonton Centre, CPC): Mr. Speaker, I want to suggest to my hon. colleague that he may have misrepresented the Syria factor. The readiness to attack ISIS in Syria is not because ISIS is Bashar al-Assad's enemy but because ISIS is the enemy of humanity and decency in Canada. Like him or not—and we do not—Bashar al-Assad is the internationally recognized leader of that country, at least for the moment. Therefore, this has nothing to do with supporting Assad but everything to do with attacking ISIS where we can and, if necessary, where we must.

I would rather ask this of a Liberal member, but the member may want to comment. This goes to the credibility of leadership. When the Liberal leader was asked today what if Turkey invokes NATO

article 5 when attacked by ISIL, his response was to ask what article 5 is.

Mr. Robert Chisholm: Mr. Speaker, I do not have a comment on that question, except to say that this is a complicated issue and the decision will affect many members in the constituency I represent.

I wish all members of this House would take it a lot more seriously because of the impact it will have, not only in the immediate term but in the long term, on them, their families, and all of the people who will be subjected to this bombing campaign.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Winnipeg North, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, given the seriousness of this particular debate, it is somewhat unfortunate that I have now heard Conservative members take cheap shots at the leader of the Liberal Party on a couple of occasions. At the end of the day, I would suggest that they need only look at their own leader, the Prime Minister of Canada, who has not been able to demonstrate to Canadians that an air strike is warranted.

We in the Liberal Party, and the leader of the Liberal Party, have been very clear that Canada does have a role to play. We are prepared to support that role. What the Prime Minister has failed to do is convey to Canadians, through the House of Commons, any sort of justification for an actual air strike role for Canada. He did not share with Canadians the other alternatives that could have been there, nor did he give any indication that he was exploring other options.

My question to the member is this. Could he provide his thoughts to the House on whether or not he believes the Prime Minister looked at any other options in a very real—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Order, please. The hon. member for Dartmouth—Cole Harbour.

Mr. Robert Chisholm: Mr. Speaker, I just spoke for 10 minutes and gave this House my thoughts on what we are involved with here. These questions going back and forth between the Liberals and the Conservatives are just noise. They do not relate to the speech I just gave, in which I talked about how complicated an issue this was and how important it was that all of us spend some time to reflect on what the short-term and the long-term impacts are of this particular decision.

● (2000)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): It being 8 p.m., pursuant to an order made earlier today, it is my duty to interrupt the proceedings and put forthwith every question necessary to dispose of Government Business No. 13 now before the House.

[*Translation*]

The question is on the amendment. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the amendment?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): All those in favour of the amendment will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): All those opposed will please say nay.

Government Orders

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): In my opinion the nays have it.

And five or more members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Bruce Stanton): Call in the members.

• (2045)

The Speaker: Would the hon. member for Montcalm please indicate how she is voting?

Ms. Manon Perreault: Mr. Speaker, I am voting in favour of the amendment.

[*English*]

(The House divided on the amendment, which was negated on the following division:)

(*Division No. 251*)

YEAS

Members

Allen (Welland)	Andrews
Angus	Ashton
Atamanenko	Aubin
Ayala	Bellavance
Bennett	Benskin
Bevington	Blanchette
Blanchette-Lamothe	Boivin
Borg	Boulerice
Boutin-Sweet	Brahmi
Brisson	Brosseau
Byrne	Caron
Casey	Cash
Chan	Chicoine
Chisholm	Choquette
Christopherson	Cleary
Comartin	Côté
Crowder	Cullen
Cuzner	Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)
Davies (Vancouver East)	Day
Dewar	Dionne Labelle
Donnelly	Doré Lefebvre
Dubé	Dubourg
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Dusseauil	Easter
Eyking	Foote
Fortin	Freeland
Freeman	Fry
Garneau	Garrison
Genest	Genest-Jourdain
Giguère	Godin
Goodale	Gravelle
Grogouh�	Harris (Scarborough Southwest)
Harris (St. John's East)	Hsu
Hughes	Jacob
Jones	Julian
Kellway	Lamoureux
Lapointe	Larose
Latendresse	Laverdi�re
LeBlanc (Beaus�jour)	LeBlanc (LaSalle—�mard)
Leslie	Liu
Mai	Marston
Martin	Masse
Mathysen	May
McCallum	McGuinty
MacKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)	Michaud
Moore (Abitibi—T�miscamingue)	Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)
Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Gr�ce—Lachine)	Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)
Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)	Mourani
Mulcair	Murray
Nantel	Nash
Nicholls	Nunez-Melo
Pacetti	Papillon
Patry	P�clet
Perreault	Pilon

Plamondon	Quach
Rankin	Ravignat
Raynault	Regan
Rousseau	Saganash
Sandhu	Scarpaleggia
Scott	Sellah
Sgro	Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Wind- sor)
Sims (Newton—North Delta)	Sitsabaiesan
St-Denis	Stewart
Sullivan	Thibeault
Toone	Tremblay
Trudeau	Turmel
Valeriotte	Vaughan— 134

NAYS

Members

Ablonczy	Adams
Adler	Aglukkaq
Albas	Albrecht
Alexander	Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Allison	Ambler
Ambrose	Anders
Anderson	Armstrong
Aspin	Baird
Barlow	Bateman
Benoit	Bergen
Bernier	Bezan
Blaney	Block
Boughen	Braid
Breitkreuz	Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)	Brown (Barrie)
Bruinooge	Butt
Calandra	Calkins
Cannan	Carmichael
Carrie	Chisu
Chong	Clement
Crockatt	Daniel
Davidson	Dechert
Del Mastro	Devolin
Dreeshen	Duncan (Vancouver Island North)
Dykstra	Falk
Fantino	Fast
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)	Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Fletcher	Galipeau
Gallant	Gill
Glover	Goguen
Goldring	Goodyear
Gosal	Gourde
Grewal	Harper
Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)	Hawn
Hayes	Hillyer
Hoback	Holder
Hyer	James
Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)	Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)
Kenney (Calgary Southeast)	Kent
Kerr	Komarnicki
Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)	Lake
Lauzon	Lebel
Leaf	Leitch
Lemieux	Leung
Lizon	Lobb
Lukiwski	Lunney
MacKay (Central Nova)	MacKenzie
Maguire	Mayes
McColeman	McLeod
Menegakis	Miller
Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)	
Moore (Fundy Royal)	
Nicholson	Norlock
Obhrai	O'Neill Gordon
Opitz	O'Toole
Paradis	Payne
Poillievre	Raitt
Rajotte	Rathgeber
Reid	Rempel
Richards	Rickford
Ritz	Saxton
Schellenberger	Seeback
Shea	Shipleigh
Shory	Smith
Sopuck	Sorenson

Government Orders

Stanton
 Strahl
 Tilson
 Trost
 Truppe
 Valcourt
 Van Loan
 Wallace
 Warkentin
 Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)
 Weston (Saint John)
 Wilks
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 Young (Vancouver South)
 Zimmer — 157

Storseth
 Sweet
 Toet
 Trottier
 Uppal
 Van Kesteren
 Vellacott
 Warawa
 Watson
 Williamson
 Woodworth
 Young (Oakville)
 Yurdiga

Gallant
 Glover
 Goldring
 Gosal
 Grewal
 Harris (Cariboo—Prince George)
 Hayes
 Hoback
 Hyer
 Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission)
 Kenney (Calgary Southeast)
 Kerr
 Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings)
 Lauzon
 Leaf
 Lemieux
 Lizon
 Lukiwski
 MacKay (Central Nova)
 Maguire
 McColeman
 Menegakis
 Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam)
 Moore (Fundy Royal)
 Nicholson
 Obhrai
 Opitz
 Paradis
 Poilievre
 Rajotte
 Reid
 Richards
 Ritz
 Schellenberger
 Shea
 Shory
 Sopuck
 Stanton
 Strahl
 Tilson
 Trost
 Truppe
 Valcourt
 Van Loan
 Wallace
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 Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country)
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Gill
 Goguen
 Goodyear
 Gourde
 Harper
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 Holder
 James
 Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's)
 Kent
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 Lake
 Lebel
 Leitch
 Leung
 Lobb
 Lunney
 MacKenzie
 Mayes
 McLod
 Miller
 Norlock
 O'Neill Gordon
 O'Toole
 Payne
 Raitt
 Rathgeber
 Rempel
 Rickford
 Saxton
 Seeback
 Shipley
 Smith
 Sorenson
 Storseth
 Sweet
 Toet
 Trottier
 Uppal
 Van Kesteren
 Vellacott
 Warawa
 Watson
 Williamson
 Woodworth
 Young (Oakville)
 Yurdiga

PAIRED

Nil

The Speaker: I declare the amendment defeated.

The next question is on the main motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. members: Yea.

The Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. members: Nay.

The Speaker: In my opinion the yeas have it.

And five or more members having risen:

● (2055)

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

(Division No. 252)

YEAS

Members

Ablonczy	Adams
Adler	Aglukkaq
Albas	Albrecht
Alexander	Allen (Tobique—Mactaquac)
Allison	Ambler
Ambrose	Anders
Anderson	Armstrong
Aspin	Baird
Barlow	Bateman
Benoit	Bergen
Bernier	Bezan
Blaney	Block
Boughen	Braid
Breitkreuz	Brown (Leeds—Grenville)
Brown (Newmarket—Aurora)	Brown (Barrie)
Bruinooge	Butt
Calandra	Calkins
Cannan	Carmichael
Carrie	Chisu
Chong	Clement
Crockatt	Daniel
Davidson	Dechert
Del Mastro	Devolin
Dreeshen	Duncan (Vancouver Island North)
Dykstra	Falk
Fantino	Fast
Findlay (Delta—Richmond East)	Finley (Haldimand—Norfolk)
Fletcher	Galipeau

NAYS

Members

Allen (Welland)	Andrews
Angus	Ashton
Atamanenko	Aubin
Ayala	Bellavance
Bennett	Benskin
Bevington	Blanchette
Blanchette-Lamothe	Boivin
Borg	Boulerice
Boutin-Sweet	Brahmi
Brisson	Brosseau
Byrne	Caron
Casey	Cash
Chan	Chicoine
Chisholm	Choquette
Christopherson	Cleary
Comartin	Côté
Crowder	Cullen
Cuzner	Davies (Vancouver Kingsway)
Davies (Vancouver East)	Day
Dewar	Dionne Labelle
Donnelly	Doré Lefebvre
Dubé	Dubourg
Duncan (Etobicoke North)	Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona)
Dusseau	Easter
Eyking	Foote
Fortin	Freeland

Government Orders

Freeman	Fry	Perreault	Pilon
Garneau	Garrison	Plamondon	Quach
Genest	Genest-Jourdain	Rankin	Ravignat
Giguère	Godin	Raynault	Regan
Goodale	Gravelle	Rousseau	Saganash
Groguhé	Harris (Scarborough Southwest)	Sandhu	Scarpaleggia
Harris (St. John's East)	Hsu	Scott	Sellah
Hughes	Jacob	Sgro	Simms (Bonavista—Gander—Grand Falls—Wind-
Jones	Julian	sor)	
Kellway	Lamoureux	Sims (Newton—North Delta)	Sitsabaiesan
Lapointe	Larose	St-Denis	Stewart
Latendresse	Laverdière	Sullivan	Thibeault
LeBlanc (Beauséjour)	LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard)	Toone	Tremblay
Leslie	Liu	Trudeau	Turnel
Mai	Marston	Valeriotte	Vaughan— 134
Martin	Masse		
Mathysen	May		PAIRED
McCallum	McGuinty		
McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood)	Michaud	Nil	
Moore (Abitibi—Témiscamingue)	Morin (Chicoutimi—Le Fjord)	The Speaker: I declare the motion carried.	
Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine)	Morin (Laurentides—Labelle)	It being 8:58 p.m., the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at	
Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot)	Mourani	2 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).	
Mulcair	Murray	(The House adjourned at 8:58 p.m.)	
Nantel	Nash		
Nicholls	Nunez-Melo		
Pacetti	Papillon		
Patry	Péclet		

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