men and women could be interpreted as aggression by the belligerents. It would be a pity if Canada's peacekeeping reputation were tarnished because of a situation where the violence and horror of war cancel out our efforts for peace. Can we prevent the recurrence of such dramatic events? Can we afford to continue our peace mission in the world?

All these questions remain unanswered, but we cannot overlook the fact that peace missions cost Canadians dearly. Nevertheless, we think they are essential. When we aim for the essential, we eliminate the superfluous and we avoid waste. If we want to maintain these missions, I am afraid that we will have no choice but to exercise tight control over the expenses incurred and future spending. That is the price we will have to pay if we want to continue to ensure peace.

Peace missions are essential for their humanitarian work, for the relief they provide to the most disadvantaged countries, but also to the men and women who could not have survived the misery created by the famine, drought, floods and devastation of war.

• (2100)

They are also essential for Canada. We have built an excellent reputation, we are present on the international scene, we are the number one peacekeepers in the world. This is an essential role for Canada. Is our presence in Bosnia too costly, will it force us to forgo other missions which could bring peace? Should we withdraw from Bosnia?

[*English*]

British troops are now threatening to withdraw from the United Nations contingent in Bosnia. Let us recall that the United Nations has chosen to name the peacekeeping troops the blue helmets so that the Canadians will be differentiated from the British because of their almost identical uniforms. It is my opinion that threats will not do anything and that we would rather concentrate our efforts to assure that the peacekeeping forces in Bosnia will fulfil the mandate which justifies their very existence and that serious proposals be put forward to end this conflict.

So far, all efforts by the west to end this conflict have failed. The whole situation is very disturbing. What should be the role of Canada in order for it to be the instigator of solutions for this conflict and to prevent the resurgence of similar conflicts elsewhere? Shall we have the means to maintain peace in Yugoslavia after this war has ended or will our position be so weak that for all practical purposes it will be the end of our peace missions?

These are all questions that deserve serious thinking and proper answers if we want to assure the success of our future interventions.

[*Translation*]

Canadian experts are already present in several developing countries as well as in Russia and Ukraine to initiate these countries to peacekeeping operations. Following the appeal made by Boutros Boutros–Ghali to preserve peace in a more energetic way, it has been suggested that an international training centre for peacekeeping be set up in Lahr, Germany. We all know that Canada will close its base there in 1994. Would this training centre enable us to maintain our role as peacekeepers as well as to make good use of existing facilities? Canada could thus continue to be a leader at the international level. This suggestion certainly has some merit and deserves careful consideration to determine the likely benefits of such a centre, whose objective could be the prevention of other conflicts.

The war in Bosnia is serious and tragic. Not only because of the hardships and the violence which prevail in that country, but also for the families of our soldiers who live in fear while waiting for the return of their loved ones. Those families hope that Canada will continue to fulfil its peacekeeping role in a climate of peace.

[*English*]

One cannot maintain peace if there is no peace. Canada is a peaceful country. This was implied and demonstrated and our reputation is solid on that matter. We have an important role to play on the international scene as a peacekeeping country. The members of our peace missions know that their involvement is crucial and very often is the last hope of populations that are continuously living in a state of disturbance and dissension.

[*Translation*]

Canada can fulfil its peacekeeping obligations. Peacekeeping means that we can act before a situation degenerates into a conflict and that we can maintain peace after a conflict has ended. We have a role to play both before and after a war. If we intervene before a conflict occurs, we may be able to avoid wars and preserve peace.

Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for Pierrefonds for illustrating how complex the situation is and how difficult it is to make a decision. In one hour, we will come to the end of a debate during which members of Parliament will have provided the government with useful information. We will have the choice between a withdrawal of our troops, the status quo, or a solution which seems more appropriate to me, namely to restore the conditions for success. It is very encouraging to know that according to the Stoltenberg–Owen plan, thus named since Mr. Stoltenberg took over from Mr. Cyrus Vance, we could be very close to a solution. Indeed, we could be extremely close to an agreement and negotiations will resume on February 10. Conse-