

*Special Debate*

in this country to do that, and the place to get that broad consensus is in this House of Commons.

I agree with him that there should be more discussion in committee. We are not against press conferences, but we believe that when Canadian troops, young men and women, are sent abroad on high principle, I admit, but with their lives at risk, that matter should be discussed and approved in this House of Commons. There may be occasions when the government will not be able to do that. We understand that, but in those cases it should come back to the House as soon as possible.

We must recognize immediately—and I referred to it a few minutes ago—that this initiative is an important breakthrough, another important breakthrough on the road to establishing more effective UN peacekeeping and in this case we could call it peacemaking.

Somalia is now a wasteland of warring clans. There is a total collapse of public order with random killing by tribal warlords and mass starvation. It is a situation of chaos. A few years ago there were seven million people living in Somalia—that is an estimate—and today we have already had one million of those seven million people fleeing the country as refugees, refugees from war or famine. We have within the country 1.5 million people on the verge of starvation and 3 million more in desperate need.

We all know that the United Nations has tried to come to the relief and the help of these people. It has approved humanitarian aid and food aid, but because of the warring factions in that country these relief efforts have been faced by extremely dangerous and difficult situations. It has been almost impossible in many cases to deliver that aid.

As hon. members know, UN peacekeeping started in the 1950s as an initiative of Lester B. Pearson, a former Prime Minister of this country who won the Nobel Prize for his proposals in setting up the first United Nations peace forces. Over the years, Canadians have played a prominent role in almost every peacekeeping operation.

Even during the cold war, new peacekeeping operations were approved but innovation or improvement was impossible in the system. However, with the end of the cold war during the last two years peacekeeping has been given a new life. We can see what has been done in Namibia, Afghanistan, Cambodia—that operation is in some doubt now but it is one of the largest peacekeeping forces ever mustered by the United Nations—and western Sahara and so on. There has been a new life, a new impetus for UN peacekeeping operations.

There have also been new innovations with respect to peacemaking and enforcement. While I did not fully agree with the multinational force that was approved for the Iraq-Kuwait war, the gulf war, because I felt it was not the last resort in gaining a peaceful settlement in that conflict, and while I believe that it was not fully responsible to the United Nations, it was still an attempt at establishing a new means of settling international conflicts.

After the war, the United Nations set up the safe zone for the Kurds within the territory of Iraq. That was another new development. Recently there was the dispatch of UN forces to the former Yugoslavia, which is a disintegrating nation.

In these new innovations there has been some difficulty with article 2, section 7 of the UN charter which says: "That nothing contained in the charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state". But it goes on to say: "This principle should not prejudice the application of enforcement measures under chapter 7".

A major issue for the countries of the world is how to balance the principle of non-intervention in section 7, which I just referred to, and the need to protect groups within nations who are the victims of genocide or mass violations of human rights, as has been spoken to by the United Nations in its convention against genocide and its convention for human rights. There is an obligation, as we have seen in countries like Somalia and Yugoslavia, for the UN to intervene and protect these people who are being destroyed, not only as individuals but as nations of people.

So far these new innovations have been *ad hoc*. But they are providing the groundwork for new approaches in preventive peacekeeping and in enforcement of UN