

*Special Debate**[Translation]*

Our commanders and personnel are competent professionals who have the government's full confidence. They will determine whether or not to use force in the context of the rules of engagement applicable to this mission. The government believes that our military will perform their task impeccably so that humanitarian aid is distributed to the starving Somalian people.

[English]

There will undoubtedly be those who cite our involvement in this operation as evidence of Canadian complicity in an American-run show. I should point out that this line of argument ignores several key points. First, there are over 30 other countries involved. In addition to the United States, France, Belgium and Italy will be providing forces. What is even more interesting is that countries like Ethiopia, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, Yemen and Zimbabwe, to name a few, will be contributing in one way or another to this operation.

Second, and perhaps more important, this is a UN operation, complete with UN oversight and an *ad hoc* commission composed of UN Security Council members, the membership of which is drawn from no less than a dozen different countries. The Secretary-General, through a liaison staff, will submit regular reports to the Security Council on the progress of the operation, much as a United Nations military command was originally intended to function. In addition, the Secretary-General has been given a mandate to establish a fund to pay for the operation.

Indeed, the willingness of the United States to exercise its power through the United Nations in an operation of this type is something that should be welcomed. For years middle powers like Canada have sought to engage the United States in multilateral endeavours of just this sort.

We have come to learn, the hard way, that the end of the cold war does not automatically guarantee a more stable and peaceful world. As we embark on trying to address the new generation of security problems we should be pleased to be able to call upon the capabilities and resources of a country like the United States.

• (1950)

The situation facing the people of Somalia is neither simple nor unchanging. The international community has for some time now sought a solution to the war and famine that are wracking the country. The measures initially proposed by the United Nations this summer are clearly not enough. The situation has deteriorated further and only stands to get worse. Therefore, a more forceful response is essential.

The United Nations is having to face the challenges presented by the emergence of a new and more complex world. In response, nine UN members have again devised an innovative approach to address conflict and alleviate human suffering.

In summary, why is Canada in Somalia? Because our heritage as a multicultural country and a compassionate society has meant that Canadians cannot ignore human tragedy wherever it may occur. Beyond this, as one of the founding members of the United Nations, Canada has a unique responsibility to support the UN at this critical point in its history.

This is why Canada supports this enforcement action and will back its words with concrete action. Our objectives are clear and simple. We will go into Somalia with other UN members to ensure a secure environment for the delivery of humanitarian assistance and we will pave the way for a subsequent peacekeeping mission.

Our personnel and equipment are ready to go. We are consulting with other UN member states and joint planning is under way as I speak. I think that all Canadians will share my conviction that this is a just cause and my confidence in the ability of our Canadian forces. As a result, I sincerely hope that all members of this House will vote in favour of the main motion and support Canada's efforts to restore hope to Somalia.

Hon. William Rompkey (Labrador): Mr. Speaker, I shall be taking 10 minutes of our party's time. My colleague for Northumberland will be sharing the 20 minutes with me. I would appreciate, Mr. Speaker, if you would indicate when my time is up.

I want to say, as my colleague from Winnipeg South Centre said, that we support the motion with the amendment that this should be a long-term plan and not just a short term quick fix. He has said very ably why this