

I would like to have a formula that would convince the parties to drop their weapons and negotiate a fair and lasting settlement. But the politics and the emotions of this region defy any such straightforward solution.

Consider, for a moment, the complex ethnic interrelationships in the region:

- o Sixty-six per cent of the people of Serbia are Serbian, but in one part of its territory -- the province of Kosovo -- 90 per cent are Albanian.
- o In Croatia, 75 per cent of the people are Croatian, but fully 12 per cent are Serbian.
- o The ethnic mix is even more complex in Bosnia-Hercegovina, where 44 per cent of the people are Slavic Moslems, 31 per cent are Serbs and 17 per cent Croats.

Establishing peace and stability in a region of such entrenched ethnic tension is not easy. But I want to assure the House and the people of Canada that we have not backed away.

From the outset, Canada has been outspoken and clear. We seek for all the peoples of Yugoslavia a peaceful, comprehensive and negotiated settlement that protects minority rights; ensures no unilateral or forceable changes of borders; and provides for appropriate financial and legal arrangements among the constituent parts.

We have worked through established international mechanisms to make our views known to the Yugoslav government and to the peoples of Yugoslavia.

Right from the beginning of the crisis, Canada has played an active role in efforts by the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) to contribute to a peaceful resolution of the crisis.

We fully support the CSCE's declaration that differences within Yugoslavia must be resolved by peaceful negotiations consistent with the Helsinki principles of the CSCE and that territorial gains or changes within Yugoslavia brought about by violence are unacceptable.

However, the CSCE was unable to act effectively in the spring because a number of countries (among them -- at that time -- the U.S.S.R.) were loath to see it move on a conflict within the borders of a member state. The member state of Yugoslavia was also uncertain. So the torch was passed to the EC to try to settle this conflict.