

Mr. Speaker, one week ago today, only several hundred yards from this chamber, Rabbi Reuven Bulka, Honourary Chaplain of the Royal Canadian Legion, speaking at the Remembrance Day ceremonies, commented that "the opposite of war is not peace. Peace is only a state of not being at war. The opposite of war is harmony."

Yugoslavia was been in a state of uneasy peace for many years, but harmony has eluded it and has never developed in this region. In the past few months, the world has witnessed in horror the deterioration of this fragile situation into a state of all-out war.

Let me express first of all, that Canada's heart goes out to those who are personally suffering in this situation.

In addition, for the world community, the challenge is two-fold: first, to stop the terrible bloodshed and death and the malevolent destruction of the cities and villages; and second, following the cessation of hostilities, which must inevitably occur, to establish the conditions for mutual trust that are essential for a state of lasting harmony in this region.

These are not easy tasks.

The roots of this conflict reach deep into history, and the base human desire for revenge and retribution has increased rather than diminished over time.

It is tragic that when an unprecedented era of freedom and justice beckons all the people of Europe, Yugoslavia has descended into a cycle of intolerance, inflexibility, death and destruction.

The Honourable Member for Winnipeg South-Centre has called upon this Government to take immediate and decisive action to put an end to the bloodshed. We could not agree more with the sentiments and objectives expressed by the Honourable Member. On this point there is no reason or time for debate. The feelings are universal.

However, the Honourable Member opposite has also made the point that the measures taken by Canada and the European Community (EC) thus far are "too little, too late." On this point, I must, with respect, differ from the Honourable Member for Winnipeg South-Centre.

I am sure that the Member knows and remembers that one of the benefits of being in government is having the opportunity to change things for the better. But he also knows that one of the frustrations of being in government is recognizing a problem of being unable to solve it alone. Such is the case in this desperate crisis in Yugoslavia.