

• (1750)

Opposition parties have been given notice of those debates and statements so they could respond. There has been time after time given and statements made on policy in the House.

I am just curious with such a contrast in practice prior to 1984 to post 1984, when prior to 1984 there was almost no debate in this House on foreign policy matters. After 1984, there has been every opportunity for it. What is it that converted the member of Parliament who just spoke so dramatically that, while he was in government, he was not taking part in this. He was not calling for a full parliamentary discussion. Now he wanted Parliament to be recalled for this important debate.

Mr. Flis: Mr. Speaker, it is clear that, sitting nine years in opposition and now so long on the government side without any ministerial positions, et cetera, the hon. member's mind is getting weaker.

He is failing to remember events that have happened. I cannot speak about what happened under Don Jamieson, but I can speak to the period 1980 to 1984 when I was sitting in this House. I sat a year and nine months prior to that when the Conservatives were in power under the present Secretary of State for External Affairs, the right hon. minister.

Unfortunately, I learned in those nine months that that government did not know how to even count when it lost the vote in 1989. I travelled around the world on NATO delegations and others. I can say that between 1980 and 1984 Canada was held in the highest respect because of the clear positions the Prime Minister, Pierre Elliott Trudeau, took on behalf of our country. We were respected.

Members of Parliament from other countries would say: "You people are fortunate to have a leader with such foresight." That is what we have lost. Canada had an identity that the world respected. What have we got now? "Yes, Mr. President, how high?" That is what we have now.

With the short two years that I have been here, I hate to think what this country will come to if it sits in power for another two years. Somehow, I hope there will be an election tomorrow. Let Canadians speak. Let Canadians assess their foreign policy and how far it has deteriorated. If the government sold Canada, we would get

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some return for it. It is not selling Canada. It is giving it away for nothing. It is giving it away.

Mr. Bill Attewell (Markham—Whitchurch—Stouffville): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the hon. member a question, and I want to link it to the comments from the hon. member for Dartmouth.

There seems to be a preoccupation with second guessing how our forces were going to be mobilized, when should they go and so on. I mentioned that I happened to visit with Janet van Nostrand about her son, John, the lieutenant who is on the *Athabaskan*. It is just 200 miles from Kuwait.

I did not find that Janet had any bitterness toward the government, that she was frustrated that there had not been a national debate. None of this. She was just so proud of John. She went into another room and brought back newspaper clippings, clippings from magazines and so on of the *Athabaskan*. She had not a word in terms of being frustrated at this.

I am sure that men and women who join the services never really wish to go into a war or wish to be in any risky peacekeeping role, but at the same time when they sign up, that is exactly what they may be called upon to do.

I sure have a different perspective on the situation than hon. members are putting. Is the hon. member trying to tell us that he has had thousands of letters criticizing the government's action on this? I suggest that if we keep it a little less political, that even had we debated it in late August or something, what would the member be talking about then in a political way: that the ships are not ready, they will not make the gulf, this sort of thing. That problem has been solved. They are there and certainly, as Lieutenant John said, they are performing very well. Have you created your own tidal wave of response on this and are you misleading—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The hon. member for Parkdale—High Park.

Mr. Flis: Mr. Speaker, I suggest that the hon. member for Markham—Whitchurch—Stouffville stop giving fictitious names to his wife and listen to everything his wife says. If he had walked down Main Street in his riding, as I did in Parkdale—High Park, along Bloor Street, along Roncesvalles Street, streets that you know very well, Mr. Speaker, within an hour or two Canadians were expressing their disgust—