

Oral Questions

What was the government's concern here? Was it to satisfy some political debts in Nova Scotia, or was it to ensure that not only was work put in place but that safe work was put in place and that lives were protected?

Does the minister see that as one of his priorities in his present position?

Hon. Tom Hockin (Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism)): Mr. Speaker, of course safety considerations are paramount. It just was not mentioned very much in the Devco report of 1987. That is the point.

The province has a regime in place that must be followed by this particular mine.

What the hon. member is trying to do is to drag in all sorts of other extraneous political concerns, and I would remind him what the Reverend Angus MacLeod said two days ago. He said: "Let us put aside unnecessary controversy. It is not a time to try to score points for any side. Let us allow the judicial process to proceed".

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EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Mrs. Christine Stewart (Northumberland): Mr. Speaker, my question is for whoever is responding for the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

Today our Prime Minister in speaking at Johns Hopkins University says: "Rarely in history has there been such a victory for an idea, the idea of democracy".

Despite the fact that he acknowledges that history will judge us by our response to the challenge, we see in the former state of Yugoslavia where new states are struggling to achieve democracy that the process is falling apart.

Only a token cell of 100 UN peacekeepers are able to remain in Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia, because of unjustified violence. Yet Canada maintains diplomatic relations with Belgrade and refuses by action to convey its condemnation of the current violence in Bosnia.

For the sake of over one million refugees and our peacekeepers, will the government address this issue today to take the necessary action to signal that we cannot allow any further deterioration in Yugoslavia?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency): Mr. Speaker, this question has been

answered by the Secretary of State for External Affairs just a few days ago.

It is entirely inaccurate to say that Canada has not taken any action. We have taken measures against Serbia. We have supported the temporary suspension of Yugoslavia from the CSCE. We have not accepted the Serbian claim to the continuing state of the old Yugoslavia. We have restricted trade measures on Serbia.

We have not recalled our ambassador for the reasons the Secretary of State for External Affairs said several days ago, and they have not changed. We need someone on the scene who can report to us and who can carry out our instructions and our concerns.

We are greatly concerned at the events in Yugoslavia. We are doing everything that could be expected of a liberal democracy to assist in that situation, including sending peace troops over to a situation where there is not even peace to enforce.

Mrs. Christine Stewart (Northumberland): Mr. Speaker, a year ago our Prime Minister signed a convention on the rights of the child promising "to take all feasible measures to ensure protection and care of children affected by armed conflict".

A hundred thousand of the innocent victims in Bosnia today are children under three years of age.

What is Canada doing to ensure that the required humanitarian assistance is reaching these innocent victims?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Minister for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency): Mr. Speaker, we together with every other civilized country of the world are doing all we can to exert pressure on Serbia in connection with the women and children held hostage by Serb gunmen the last two days in Sarajevo.

• (1500)

On May 20 the Canadian chief of staff of our UN peacekeeping force said: "To impose peace in Bosnia would require a military force equal to that used in the war against Iraq".

What is the hon. member opposite suggesting, that these kinds of measures be taken? What is her solution? What more does she want us to do than to exercise our support, with every other civilized country, to try to