

intervention in Panama. It is extremely important, however, to remind ourselves of the compelling reasons that forced President Bush to authorize intervention of the American troops.

The world has been witness to one of the most systematic betrayals on records -- the betrayal in Panama of those democratic values which we hold dear in this House -- and, indeed, which are respected in most of our neighbours in Latin America and in the Caribbean. Even before that, the governments of Presidents Barletta and Del Valle were very much subject to the whims of General Noriega as Commander-in-Chief of the Panamanian Defence Force.

Canada has not traditionally maintained the most cordial relations with those successive regimes, which we regarded as being democratic in name only. But we were able to carry on correct, business-like relations with them, based on mutual interest.

When, in 1987, General Noriega was indicted by an American court on narcotics trafficking charges, the United States imposed an economic embargo. We did not follow suit.

When the May 1989 elections were called, we held out some hope that the Panamanian people would be permitted to express their democratic will at the polls. When, however, it became obvious that those elections were going decisively against Noriega's chosen candidate, the regime abruptly had the process declared void. Canada condemned that denial of free elections.

All of us were shocked by the images of the violent public beatings of the leaders whom the people of Panama had chosen to govern them. There was a temptation then to respond with violence. That temptation was strong and outspoken among some in the United States. It was resisted; it was resisted everywhere, including principally and most importantly, by the United States Administration.

Various efforts were launched to achieve a peaceful solution to this very difficult problem. Some of them were bilateral, some of them were individual efforts by leaders of other countries. One of the most important was through the Organization of American States.

On July 20th of this year, the Organization of American States passed a formal resolution which called for a