

had happened. In January, NATO met again and issued another order to allow air strikes in order to achieve specific goals: One, to stop the bombardment of Sarajevo by Serbian forces, and two, to allow the replacement of Canadian peace-keepers at Srebrenica and the airport at Tuzla. Then, on February 5, after a Serb mortar exploded killing 68 people in Sarajevo, an ultimatum was issued regarding Sarajevo only.

My question to the Leader of the Government in the Senate is this: Does NATO have a coherent policy with respect to the situation in Bosnia, and is the government aware of that coherent policy? If the answer is "yes" on both counts, would the Honourable Leader of the Government in the Senate explain the main thrust of that policy, including how, if at all, that policy affects the situation at Srebrenica and the airport at Tuzla?

**Hon. Joyce Fairbairn (Leader of the Government):** I thank the honourable senator for his question. By way of response, I wish to say that Canada and its allies take great encouragement from what has transpired in the past days in the former Yugoslavia with respect to Sarajevo.

This is a situation that has held; it is holding now. Indeed, talks are continuing between United Nations' authorities, the Croats and the Muslims on the possibility of extending the type of ceasefire operation undertaken around Sarajevo to other parts of the area, including Mostar and Tuzla.

●(1420)

Further to the honourable senator's question, a conference was held recently in Bonn, called by the German government, which brought together the countries of the European Union, the United States, Russia and Canada. The purpose of that conference was to review the ongoing policy in that area, and to take stock of exactly where we stand and the direction in which the effort is going. The purpose of that meeting was exactly what the honourable senator seems to have in mind, that is, to maintain an international coherence in the activity in that area.

As far as Srebrenica is concerned, as you know there is an expectation that Canadians will be relieved of their duties in that area within the next few months by the Dutch armed forces. They are now moving into place, and we would hope to see a withdrawal of Canadian forces from that area in fairly short order.

**Senator Ottenheimer:** I thank the Honourable Leader of the Government in the Senate for her reply. I have one supplementary question.

I understand that, as a multilateral organization, NATO must balance national interests to a certain extent, I suppose, in an attempt to find a consensus. However, perhaps the honourable minister would be in a position to identify the policy of Canada as a member of NATO, as distinct from the policy of NATO itself.

**Senator Fairbairn:** Honourable senators, the policy of Canada in this particular situation has been quite clear from the beginning. Our policy has been to undertake our responsibilities as a member of NATO, as a member of the United Nations, and as a leader in the field of peace-keeping, and to maintain a very sizeable contribution in terms of almost every activity that has

taken place in this distressing situation for some considerable period of time. In concert with the United Nations, Canada will be assessing its position on the Canadian contingent in that area as the United Nations prepares a comprehensive status report on where we are now and where the operations will go. Canada will be very much a part of that review, and will be looking to its conclusions for direction in making our own decisions.

**Senator Ottenheimer:** I have a very brief, final, supplementary question. I realize, of course, that Canada, as a participant in a multilateral organization, plays a role in discussing, assessing, weighing and, presumably, attempting to find a consensus on what NATO's official position should be. However, does the Government of Canada have a specific, identifiable policy to put forward to NATO, or are we in a position of having to wait and see what everyone else has to say, and then going along with the best solution under the circumstances?

**Senator Fairbairn:** I will be very pleased to speak to my colleague Mr. Ouellet for a more specific response to your direct question. However, I would underline that Canada is not on the sidelines waiting for any one country or any particular discussion on this matter. Canada has been at the heart of discussions that have taken place on the progress and on the very difficult decisions of recent days. Our country has played an extremely active, positive and strengthening role in what has turned out to be, so far, a success, but still a very fragile undertaking in that area. In other words, we are engaged; we are not standing on the sidelines.

●(1430)

## NOVA SCOTIA

### STATUS OF PEACE-KEEPING TRAINING CENTRE AT CFB CORNWALLIS—GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Hon. Gerald J. Comeau:** Honourable senators, my question is also to the Honourable Leader of the Government in the Senate. A few minutes ago she mentioned the magic words on the question of peace-keeping, and Canada's leadership role in that area.

During the recent election, the Prime Minister promised, in writing, that he would establish a peace-keeping training centre at CFB Cornwallis in Nova Scotia, in return for the people of that region voting for his party in the election. Needless to say, his offer was taken up, and thousands of people who received this letter did, in fact, vote for his party. That support was given. Now we hear rumours that there may be cut-backs. I will not touch that subject.

However, I will touch upon the subject of peace-keeping. Since they have been in Ottawa, members of Parliament from that region seem to have neglected the whole idea. Perhaps they have forgotten it.

Nevertheless, I would ask the Leader of the Government in the Senate if she would undertake to remind the Prime Minister of the promise he made to the people of southwestern Nova Scotia, and see to it that a peace-keeping training centre is established at Cornwallis.

[ Senator Ottenheimer ]