

and non-governmental agencies are uniquely positioned to be partners with the government in providing assistance.

Obviously, the amount of money that the Secretary of State for External Affairs has announced this morning is a significant contribution. I do believe that Namibia will need much more. I do hope that it will be possible for Canada, through non-governmental organizations or directly with bilateral aid to Namibia, to make a much bigger contribution.

Let me quote again:

We would welcome Namibia's joining the Commonwealth as one of the most promising new nations. It is important and significant that a peaceful transition to independence in Namibia will have a positive effect on the struggle for human rights in South Africa especially in the battle against apartheid.

As Lester B. Pearson once said: "it is part of the Canadian psyche to accept international commitments". In accordance with our Charter of Rights and Freedoms we readily accept our responsibility to support Namibia's successful transition to independence, and will continue to show our concern for the well-being of Namibia and South Africa in general. After independence, Namibia will continue to be vulnerable to pressure from South Africa. Canada, and the other nations of the world, must ensure that this fragile new democracy is given every opportunity to develop in peace.

[*Translation*]

Finally, I hope that the minister will not only monitor very closely future relations between Namibia and South Africa but will also continue his past and present efforts to end apartheid in South Africa, which will be very soon, I hope.

[*English*]

Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to respond to the Secretary of State for External Affairs on behalf of the New Democratic Party. We join with the rest of the House in celebration of freedom and independence in Namibia.

• (1130)

The excitement in Windhoek five and a half hours from now will be exceptional. At the airport planes must leave and park somewhere else as more and more people come to join in that celebration.

As the minister has stated today, this most recent United Nations success story is first and foremost the story of the will and determination of the Namibian people. Members of Parliament, development workers, church groups and other Canadians from all walks of life have taken a keen interest in events in southern Africa

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for a number of years. Today marks the culmination of these efforts by Canadians on behalf of the people of Namibia.

As Namibia attains independence, it is important to recognize the sacrifices made by those along this road to independence. Over 20,000 people lost their lives in the bloody struggle against South African rule and many paid for their opposition with long years of imprisonment and exile. I met many of those at an anti-apartheid conference that was concurrent with the last Commonwealth conference in Vancouver a number of years ago. We must remind ourselves that this was not a peaceful struggle for independence.

While it is important to recognize the goodwill and the compromises made by all sides to obtain this independence, we will be mistaken if we forget that this settlement was achieved through great pressure, and I think the Canadian anti-apartheid movement should take some credit for that. I know that the role played by Canadians was very important in keeping that pressure on and encouraging our government to act and to speak out forcefully in the struggle against apartheid.

The international community played an important role in bringing the South African government to the bargaining table through policies of economic and diplomatic isolation. These same policies will be essential in any upcoming settlement in South Africa, and it is interesting to note that one of the prime movers of the anti-apartheid struggle, the main symbol of that anti-apartheid struggle, Nelson Mandela, will be in Windhoek this evening for the celebrations.

As well, we would be advised to recognize that Namibia is not entirely free so long as they do not control the essential port of Walvis Bay and as long as they remain economic vassals of South Africa. Canada must remain committed to the full independence of Namibia. Our aid commitments must be even more generous if we are to help Namibia to overcome the poverty and imbalance of years of apartheid rule.

I was pleased to hear the Secretary of State for External Affairs announce further aid to Namibia. Development assistance must be increased if Namibia is to prosper and shine as an example of self-determination. I was gratified to hear the member for Papineau—Saint-Michel extol the virtues of the non-governmental sector and particularly of Oxfam Canada. Prior to my election I