

parties in this House, that is, either an amendment, a motion or a text. I am willing to meet right away with the House leaders in order to find a way to give expression, unanimously, if possible, to our feelings about a subject on which there seems to be quite substantial unanimity.

[English]

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, the intervention of the Government House Leader begs the question. The unanimous consent that we reserve the right to speak is to get the motion on the floor of the House. That is the amendment that the Chair is being asked to rule upon subsequently. The right of a Member to seek that unanimous consent is undoubted.

I think it is begging the question at this moment. We will engage in those discussions suggested by the Government House Leader in good faith and immediately, to see if we can arrive at suitable phraseology.

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, as has been stated in this debate, I think we all recognize that every so often there is a moment in world events when everybody stops: something happens that provides a common thread of response and emotion. Certainly that was the case a short while ago when, truly, there was a shot that was heard around the world and everyone within listening or watching distance stood back with a sense of horror and revulsion at the events that transpired in an area of South East Asia involving a Korean airliner.

In the debate tonight I think it is the responsibility of the representatives of the Canadian people to try, as much as they can, not only to reflect that sense of immediate reaction but also to ask some very important questions about where we go from here. It would be wrong for us simply to express horror, revulsion and indignation without also asking questions about whether incidents like this would be allowed to happen again. Of course, it is easy to condemn, and to say that this is something about which we all have a sense of strained sadness and tragedy; but the key question which was not addressed by that resolution is what we can do to provide protection and security against future incidents.

The issue really is how we say to the hundreds and thousands of travellers who every day, with a sense of security and with confidence, board an airliner to engage in international travel, that all of a sudden, in the darkness of the night, they will not be snuffed out without any reason or rationality. That is part of the issue that this House of Commons must face this evening. It is not simply a matter of reacting to the event; it also means building some further protection and security so that we will have a better sense that those kinds of events will not take place in future.

Any initiative taken by this Government, by this country, must therefore always be considered in the context of the delicate balance of the international system. How do you give full vent to your emotion while recognizing that the world goes on and therefore you must take account of the realities of the world? We must ask how we can nudge and push and persuade

the international community to provide a better sense of security than existed before.

We must recognize that there is almost a convergence of events that the tragedy of the Sakhalin Islands brings home in a very vivid and dramatic way. That is, that this tremendous magic carpet that has been made available to us through civil aviation, through international flights taking people around the world by the hundreds of thousands, the tremendous opening of the world so that we can taste and experience the wide variety of life on the globe, is also touched with an element of insecurity and danger. Within each of those areas that we pass through are a lot of concepts, traditions of sovereignty, protection of territory, of military defences that ensure that "What is mine is ringed around with a wall or some kind of curtain of iron or electronic surveillance".

It is interesting to note that we have debated both sides of that issue in the House. There are Members who have said that we must increase our defence, provide for better protection and further reference to our sovereignty, while at the same time we preach the gospel of international interdependence, international communication, commerce and community. This event brings home to us that in many cases those principles have to be brought into harmony; you cannot ignore one at the expense of the other.

This was a civilian airliner carrying passengers on vacation or on business, who had confidence that the system would protect them. Unknown to them, however, they were on a flight of total jeopardy. When they boarded the plane in New York they were confident that the rules established over the years would give them the security they desired or needed. That is the case with all of us when we board an airplane or whatever; we have an implicit sense that all is right with the world. We do not worry until we recognize that there is also a jungle out there where the rules do not apply. There are individuals, and sometimes countries, who say: "I do not believe in those rules of interdependency; I do not believe in those rules of recognition of mutual self-interest and will defend my sovereignty, my territory and my military security to the utmost."

It seems to me that one of the important and necessary lessons of this event is how we can try to provide for an improvement, or progress, so that the tragedy of those lives that were lost may not be repeated. This was the approach taken by the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. MacEachen). In his original statement he expressed the great feelings of sorrow for the families affected and the indignation of Canadians at the wilful, arbitrary and hostile act that was perpetrated. We also recognized that, while feeling revulsion and even indignation, we could not ignore the critical necessity of maintaining the sense of international responsibility and obligation that is inherent in international aviation. Perhaps we can build upon this to provide some further protection for travellers of the future.

My regret about this particular resolution is that it does not encompass that particular spirit. It does not incorporate that sense of trying to forge new international alliances and organi-