

That was the content of the letter which the Liberal Party is seeking to generate a debate over. I had hoped this sensitive issue would not be exploited for partisan purposes but the Liberal Party has chosen to put a motion forward in this House and therefore we will reply.

Sir, no one in this House should need reminding that modern societies are complex, and they are becoming more complex. Unhappily, one element of that complexity, one phase of modern international and national life, is that there is an increasing recourse to violence, not simply in the world apart from Canada but also in Canada. All civilized societies wish to work to overcome those tendencies toward violence, to deal with the root causes, to not participate innocently in the encouraging of activities which might have a violent consequence. Certainly that is a deep commitment of this country and this Government.

Sir, we must not forget that Canadians have been victims of terrorism both at home and abroad. The pervasive fear that affected all Canadians as a result of the terrorism of the October crisis in Canada in 1970 can never be far from our minds. Even more recently, Canadians have experienced the tragic consequences of terrorism. Canadians narrowly escaped death in the hijacking at Karachi in 1986. Canadians were aboard the Italian cruise ship, the Achille Lauro, which was hijacked in September, 1985, which was the scene of the murder of one of the passengers by terrorists. Three hundred and twenty-nine people, most of them Canadians, died in the Air India tragedy in 1985. A Canadian was killed in the attack on the Turkish Embassy in 1985 and in the same year Toronto's subway system was held hostage by terrorists. In November of that year a Canadian mother and her infant son lost their lives in terrorist attack on an Egyptian airliner in Malta. In 1986 there was an assassination attempt against a visiting Indian state Cabinet Minister on Vancouver Island.

In the course of my responsibilities I have stood at the graveside in Beiseker, Alberta, when the Canadian woman and her infant son, victims of terrorism abroad, were laid to rest in Canada. In carrying out of my functions I have been representing Canada and this Parliament on the peninsula near Cork in Ireland where a memorial is established to the Canadian victims of the Air India crash. Sir, I have been to too many funerals to take this question lightly. Yet I am acutely aware that other of my colleagues in other countries less orderly and less free than ours have been to more funerals.

We have an obligation in this House to the nature, the freedom and the multicultural reality of Canada, to ensure that we do everything that we can to allow Canadians to pursue their goals and live their lives in peace and freedom.