

*Routine Proceedings*

Occasionally, they were complemented with reports from Namibia's leading newspaper *The Namibian*.

• (1120)

I want to express personally and on behalf of my party our sincere thanks to John Graham and to Hein Marais and others for their remarkable jobs and certainly for keeping us on our toes in making this process a successful one.

[*Translation*]

I would also like to mention very briefly the important contribution made by the Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security, which organized a round table discussion on Namibia at a time when the outlook seemed very bleak indeed. I am sure this international round table was also instrumental in persuading the United Nations to clamp down on certain irregularities that were on the verge of spreading just prior to the election in Namibia. I believe that the round table, which brought together a very high-powered group of individuals interested in this issue, was able to submit recommendations that proved very useful to the United Nations.

[*English*]

The success of the UN role in helping to facilitate the transition to Namibian independence, coupled with the fervent desire of the Namibian people to control their own fate through the democratic process, culminated in an election which saw individuals sometimes walking for days through the harsh climate of the Namibian desert proudly to register their votes. In all, 97 per cent of Namibians eligible to vote did just that. It is certainly an expression of democracy and freedom that should serve as a clear signal that despite the hardship of continued repression, freedom will eventually triumph.

I do hope that this example will give faith to many other people in the world who are suffering under various types of dictatorships. Indeed, as the United Nations, helped by countries like Canada and others, tries to emulate a greater effort of freedom and democracy throughout the world, many other individuals like Namibians, will eventually go through this process of free elections and will also be able to have their own democratic government.

Currently we see a tremendous example of this taking place in eastern Europe. I do hope that we shall see the same fervour for independence and democracy take place in some Asian and African countries. It is not something that we should only dream about, but see every nation in the world being free and able to elect their own government democratically.

As the Minister for External Affairs has pointed out, Namibia's peaceful transition to independence should serve as an example to all South Africans that reason in the pursuit of freedom for all members of a society can result in the peaceful transition from oppression to liberty. In this vein, I congratulate the South African government for its role in Namibia's transition to independence and ask that it show the same reason and courage in the upcoming negotiations over the development of a new constitution for South Africa. Perhaps South Africa can look to the spirit of freedom and respect for fundamental human rights contained in the exemplary constitution that the Namibians have adopted as a starting point for these negotiations.

We are pleased that the minister has decided to remove the economic sanctions that have been in place against Namibia. Perhaps this too will serve as an example to the South Africans.

[*Translation*]

In concluding, I may mention very briefly that two of my colleagues, the hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce and the hon. member for Haldimand-Norfolk have been interested for quite some time in the Namibia question. In fact, the hon. member for Haldimand-Norfolk is down there at this very moment, as a representative of the Liberal Party of Canada.

I would like to conclude with two short quotes from a report the hon. member made after visiting that country recently with several other Canadian parliamentarians, in which he said:

[*English*]

We affirm our support and friendship to Namibia and urge the Canadian government to respond generously to requests for development assistance particularly to expand training and education programs for black Namibians. We believe that the Canadian churches