

*Government Orders*

I will mention just a few. We dispatch experienced and highly competent troops to the theatres of combat. In these theatres we care for the sick, wounded and hungry. We also provide here in our Canadian communities a safe haven to many of these peoples displaced by the fighting.

In answer to the question of intervention, I do not believe that anything we do as humanitarians will make the difference.

This is the last question. Are we prepared as a country to watch Canadian soldiers die in this war without apparent end?

Our troops have been called peacekeepers and peacemakers. What an irony when there is no peace to keep or make. I recognize that our soldiers are providing necessary aid to hundreds of thousands of civilians, but they are also giving that same aid to the warring factions. In doing so, they are indirectly feeding the war. Our humanitarian role has been reduced to a bottomless intravenous bag sustaining a killing machine. Are we doing more harm than if we were not there at all?

It is absolutely unacceptable to me to see the loss of one Canadian soldier in this war. It is not that we are scared or uncommitted or that we do not care, but losing Canadian lives in a situation where no one can win is a position I cannot sanction.

I believe that the actions our government now takes can provide Canada with a masterful role as a moral leader and a defender of world peace.

[Translation]

In conclusion, I sincerely believe that our initiative will enable the Government of Canada to play a leading role and also to be a leader in the protection of world peace.

[English]

This requires a plan for peace that demands an international political will to end the war. We expect a diplomatic intervention and nothing less than an ultimatum to all of the aggressors to negotiate peace.

The events as they have unfolded in Bosnia focused our hearts and minds on one inescapable conclusion. I am of the opinion that we cannot stay there as conditions now exist. We have an opportunity to show leadership as we state our expectation for peace to be made. If it is not met then we must leave.

• (1325)

[Translation]

**Mr. Paul Mercier (Blainville—Deux-Montagnes):** Mr. Speaker, it is with interest and emotion that I listened to what the hon. member had to say. I say emotion because I myself participated in a UN operation during four years, in the Congo,

from 1961 to 1965, and I was lucky enough to get out of there in one piece.

I appreciate the concern shown by the hon. member who is wondering if our soldiers should risk their lives or not. From this issue arises another rather technical question for which I have no answer and on which I was hoping this debate might shed some light. Should we or should we not ask the UN to give our soldiers broader powers to defend themselves when they are attacked, should we or should we not give them the right to retaliate and even patrol certain areas, at the risk of alienating the people and leading them to misinterpret our role, since retaliation would of course be seen as an act of aggression?

If we decide to give our soldiers broader powers to defend themselves, we are putting their lives in danger since retaliation does involve some risks. But then, if we decide not to give them more leeway, we are also putting them at risk, since they will be left defenceless during an attack.

[English]

**Mrs. Brown (Calgary Southeast):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question that was asked. I would like to say just a couple of things. I am like him. I am not a technocrat. The question he asked was one he stated would be very difficult to answer.

I have to say how difficult it was given my background to write this speech. I came to this issue with my heart and my mind. The questions as I framed them were the ones that I felt comfortable I could provide a response to. I do believe that it is up to our diplomatic community to make a decision regarding the nature of the questions as you asked them.

**Mr. John Cannis (Scarborough Centre):** Mr. Speaker, I have a comment more than a question to make to the hon. member.

She indicated we cannot stay there and that we must make peace and get out. In order for us to accomplish peace we have to invest more time in understanding the region and its peoples.

I attended the briefing yesterday and heard from our military people that they too are sometimes very confused as to who is doing what. There are conflicting stories continuously coming from the media. I am not sure what station it was but I followed a program on TV last night emphasizing how these people are being persecuted and that cleansing is taking place. I am very confused about who to believe, what to believe, what paper to read and so on.

There is no question that we all want peace, however, the member for Kamloops made a statement earlier that it is country against country and nation against nation and region against region and the Greeks against the Macedonians. I would like to make the point that when we get information it is a matter of presenting the facts as they are.