

Yesterday in Washington, after his meeting with the President, the Prime Minister was suggesting that the United States might be sending troops under a new UN resolution. There is a new UN resolution presently being looked at by the Security Council today and to be voted on tomorrow which proposes:

That the UN would take necessary measures including the use of force to stop attacks against all civilians.

Is this the kind of UN resolution that the Prime Minister was referring to? Does Canada support this resolution? Are we prepared to see the mandate of our own troops in Bosnia be changed in order to be able to protect civilians as this resolution suggests?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, yes, we support the resolution which is presently being debated before the Security Council because, along with my hon. friend, I think most Canadians are dissatisfied and dispirited with the lack of progress in bringing to a halt this murderous civil war in the Balkans.

That being said, I just point out to my hon. friend that I did not indicate yesterday that this resolution would be required for the United States to dispatch troops. They are quite capable of dispatching troops themselves without a United Nations resolution. They might choose to do so for example in Macedonia. That signal itself might be deemed to be positive.

Clearly the ultimate resolution of this must come through a new resolution from the Security Council of the United Nations particularly in regard to countries such as Canada which has already deployed thousands of peacekeepers on the terrain in the former Yugoslavia.

We are supportive of what is going on at the United Nations. The Secretary of State for External Affairs and I continue to work very closely with our ambassador, Madame Frechette, at the United Nations to see if we can be helpful in this process.

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): Madam Speaker, with Canada's support of this resolution and looking at its potential or the fact that it will be voted upon tomorrow, considering that there is only a week left in this Parliament before we close for the Conservative convention, can we get an undertaking from the Prime Minister that the government will bring into the House a clear resolution that will mandate a change in the

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responsibilities and rules of engagement of any Canadian forces to fit this new resolution?

Does the Prime Minister agree that it would be very important that before we authorized Canadian UN peacekeeping troops to use force that it be approved by the Canadian people through their Parliament?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, many of the important points contained in the Security Council resolution today my hon. friend will find in a speech that I made in London a number of weeks ago in regard not only to the Security Council action, but the role of the Government of Canada and the Parliament of Canada might play in this.

We have some 2,500 peacekeepers on the ground now. Their protection and their safety is the prime concern of the Government of Canada. If there is going to be a change in their assignment or if the United Nations or any member thereof is going to undertake unilateral action that could compromise the well-being of those Canadians and other peacekeepers, we obviously want this to go to the Security Council for a new resolution.

The only manner in which there can be a change in our position is if it is blessed by the Security Council of the United Nations.

My hon. friend's position is not unreasonable. If we have the opportunity and if it moves along, I would be happy to consult both him and all members of the House in regard to any changes because the well-being of our troops there plus the effectiveness of Canada's contribution is always enhanced with the benefit of parliamentary consultation and debate.

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FINANCE

Mrs. Diane Marleau (Sudbury): Madam Speaker, in this country, the Minister of Finance, under the leadership of the Prime Minister, is ultimately responsible for monetary policy.

• (1445)

In the form of a deathbed repentance the top bureaucrat of the Department of Finance has admitted that the Bank of Canada's high interest rate policy started too late and lasted too long, in effect exacerbating our debt and deficit positions.