

Routine Proceedings

assistance to Namibia is expected to exceed \$4 million this year. It will be delivered mainly through Canadian and Namibian non-governmental organizations and multilateral channels.

Finally, Namibia has a continuing need for security assistance. There is a requirement to strengthen and reorient the police force so that the stability essential to economic development can be maintained in a climate favourable to human rights. With the concurrence of my colleague, the Solicitor General, the RCMP will soon be providing police training services funded through the Commonwealth, and the RCMP director of training will shortly lead a needs-assessment mission to Windhoek. Namibia is also being invited to join the Military Training Assistance Program already offered by the Canadian Forces to southern African and Caribbean countries.

To mark the actual moment of independence—midnight in Namibia and 5 p.m. here today—a motion of congratulations will be proposed then for unanimous consent in this House.

Namibian independence is a success story for the UN, for South Africa, for Canada and, most of all, for its own people themselves. It is a world class achievement which this House, and all Canadians, proudly applaud.

[*Translation*]

Hon. André Ouellet (Papineau—Saint-Michel): Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity, speaking on behalf of the Liberal Party of Canada, to add my comments to the statement made this morning by the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

We are of course delighted with Namibia's independence, and we shall be very pleased to support the motion which, Mr. Speaker, I believe you will propose to the House for unanimous consent at five o'clock this afternoon.

Besides the Namibians themselves, I think the happiest person alive today is probably Canada's former ambassador to the United Nations, Mr. Bill Barton, who is at last seeing the results of his efforts. In 1977, acting on behalf of Canada and together with the ambassadors of a number of other countries, he initiated a resolution, universally adopted in the form of a United Nations resolution and referred to as Security Council Resolution 435, which signalled the start of the independence process in Namibia.

The minister has every reason to be proud, since over the years, his department, through various officials, has led a sometimes discreet, sometimes vigorous campaign at the United Nations. Above all, he can take pride in the efforts of over 700 Canadians who contributed, either directly or indirectly, to the event we are celebrating today.

I would like to join the minister in extending our warm thanks to 500 members of our Canadian Forces personnel who certainly played a vital role in the exemplary democratic process that took place in Namibia; 150 members of the RCMP, who also played an important role; 50 elections supervisors who went there to see to it that the election took place according to the best democratic traditions, and another 50 Canadians, including ambassadors, public servants and technicians, who were down there and also played an important role in bringing about the event we so proudly celebrate today.

Of course, I believe most of the credit should go to the Namibians themselves and to the United Nations which, with tremendous skill, was able to break the deadlock at a time when it seemed there was very little hope of having a free democratic election in Namibia.

I think it is also appropriate to mention the role played by various non-governmental organizations. I was particularly impressed by the level of Canadian interest as expressed by a substantial number of these organizations. In this respect, I would like to single out OXFAM Canada which helped to keep the Canadian government up to scratch, as it were, and ensure that the government and its representatives remained dedicated to this cause. I must say that OXFAM kept us very well informed throughout.

[*English*]

In fact, Oxfam Canada regularly distributed news reports and analyses filed by the Namibia communications centre, a Namibian church-sponsored news service. Oxfam Canada launched this program as part of a larger information, education and election observation project founded by partnership Africa Canada, and under the leadership of the United Church of Canada and World University Service of Canada as well as Développement et paix, and, of course, Oxfam Canada.

These reports were distributed weekly across Canada to journalists, members of Parliament, development organizations, solidarity networks and the public at large.