

The attack on the Iranian embassy also highlights the need for closer co-operation between the municipal police, the RCMP, CSIS and the army. In my riding the first reaction of any citizen is to call his local police. I understand that the Ottawa Police Force was the first on the scene of the incident on Sunday. I think that is understandable.

It is astounding, as far as I am concerned, to try to reconcile that our Canadian intelligence security agency in London, CSIS, did not know. Normally there is a four-hour delay, but on the weekend we changed our clocks to daylight savings time thereby adding an hour. Therefore there was a five-hour delay between the incident in London and the one here in Ottawa.

I ask the parliamentary secretary, given those questions—and I know the minister is trying to respond here with some substance—can he or she tell me exactly what has happened to the special emergency response team? Can he or she explain why there was the delay in getting information we required in Canada?

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Monique Tardif (Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, in answer to the question raised today by the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier, I would first like to mention the question he asked during Question Period on April 6 about what had been done since 1985 to ensure the safety of diplomats here in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I want to point out that the RCMP has taken the following measures: a special emergency response team was created to rescue people taken hostage during terrorist incidents. It is probably the same group that was created and is in place. Embassies have been offered an advisory service to improve their own security. Training in the use of special weapons has been strengthened; cooperation between the RCMP and local police forces has been increased. Bodyguards and chauffeurs have been provided for the most vulnerable individuals when the threat warrants it. The training of protective personnel has been improved; technology has been used to update security and the response time of motorized patrols has been improved.

Adjournment Debate

With all these changes to the capabilities that already exist, I think that I can assure my colleagues that everything has been done to ensure the security of the diplomatic corps in Canada.

[*English*]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, in February of this year I raised in the House a question concerning the arrest of an internationally respected spokesperson for the Penan peoples of Sarawak, Mr. Anderson Mutang Urud. At that time he had just been arrested. He was detained without any charge. He was subsequently released in early March.

Mr. Urud has been working peacefully to secure protection for a sufficiently large area of Sarawak, Borneo's fast disappearing tropical rain forest both to save biological diversity and to sustain Sarawak's indigenous peoples, particularly the nomadic Penan.

Sarawak is on the northern side of the island of Borneo which lies on the Malaysian mainland in south-east Asia. It is the largest state of the federation of Malaysia and is very rich in natural resources.

In Sarawak there are about 1.7 million people, half of whom are indigenous tribal groups. Virtually all of these tribal groups are dependent to some degree or another upon the forest for their survival. Only the Penan tribe has been totally dependent. There are about 9,500 Penan in Sarawak, 9,000 have been relocated into government resettlement camps, and there are only 32 Penan families who still live a completely nomadic life. This is one of the last nomadic hunter-gatherer peoples in the world.

The trees which are being cut at an alarming rate, primarily by Japanese companies, are of the greatest ecological and cultural value. They are the major fruit bearers, supplying food for monkeys, hornbills and wild pigs, and in themselves are the major protein sources for the Penan and other Dyak peoples.

I had the opportunity to travel to Sarawak and to meet with Penan leaders. The situation there is truly desperate. It has been estimated that unless there is a significant reduction in the annual cut of the rain forest in this area, in perhaps eight or a maximum of 10 years the rain forest will be completely destroyed, and indeed the survival of the Penan and other indigenous peoples will be at risk.