

*Government Orders*

quently, any decision made by the Government of Canada will have an influence on those negotiations.

• (2105)

I want to ask the hon. member for Pierrefonds if he thinks that the Canadian government should take a stand in the next few days, or if it would be preferable to wait until shortly before April 1st, when our commitment will end, to announce, based on the status of the negotiations, if it is appropriate to maintain our presence in Bosnia, given the very significant impact of that role for Canada's reputation as a peacekeeper, a reputation which it has developed over the last few decades?

**Mr. Patry:** Mr. Speaker, to answer that question I would say that this is a very personal issue. The Government of Canada should immediately engage in negotiations with the concerned parties, especially with the UN, to somehow renegotiate the agreements ensuring its presence in the former Yugoslavia because, for all practical purposes, Canada must remain there to maintain peace in that area. We must not in any way avoid our obligations at the international level. And Canada's role on the international scene is a humanitarian role. Therefore, in my opinion, Canada's peacekeeping role must be maintained in the former Yugoslavia.

**Mr. Louis Plamondon (Richelieu):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to see that the hon. member is clearly in favour of maintaining peacekeepers in the former Yugoslavia, so as to avoid a slaughter of the population, especially the Bosnian people.

However, many Canadians and Quebecers are concerned about the cost of maintaining those peacekeepers. Earlier I referred to a reform of our military budget.

Would the hon. member tell us which solution he advocates to maintain our peacekeepers over there while keeping tax increases at a minimum?

**Mr. Patry:** Mr. Speaker, I learned something earlier from the member for Portneuf, who represents the same political party as the member for Richelieu, to the effect that it would cost each Canadian taxpayer 25 cents a day to maintain Canada's peacekeepers in the former Yugoslavia.

I think this is a very small price to pay to maintain our humanitarian aid over there, and I would be prepared to fight in the Liberal caucus for the monies and credits required to ensure that peace.

[English]

**Mr. Jim Abbott (Kootenay East):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to make note of the fact that the Minister of National Defence is in the House and the fact that he has spent an inordinate amount of time considering his responsibilities in being in the House and listening personally to this debate. I think that it says

something very positive about the direction in which the government is going in taking the views of the members of this House seriously when attempting to come to a broader consideration and determination of where it wants to be going. I thank him for being here.

I would like in my intervention to broaden the discussion just somewhat on the basis of the order of the government's business when it speaks of the possible future direction of Canadian peacekeeping policy and operations. In taking a look at a future approach, I would suggest that we have to be businesslike.

As I come from a business background that is an easy thing to say, but there are many things to be taken positively in the business environment. When we take a look at business and managing affairs we take a look at the fact for example that there must be measurements, yardsticks and goal posts that we can measure things by. We must have a plan. We must have objectives and goals.

• (2110)

We think often of the number of times when we have heard jokes made and sometimes we forget about the original purpose of when. Often we get drawn into these things as a nation when we forget what our original purpose is. Therefore, it is important that we take a look at the definition of what we are doing in terms of peacekeeping.

Yesterday I had the opportunity to attend a briefing by the national defence department. I apologize to the House that I did not make accurate notes and so I do not know the time frame. However, my understanding is that the peacekeeping forces world-wide—not Canadian, but all of the peacekeeping forces—in a very short period of time have expanded from 10,000 to 80,000. This is rather a boy scout, altruistic approach on the part of the of the world community where the world community sees a problem and jumps into it. We have in the world a situation of increasing complexity and danger not only for our soldiers but indeed for the soldiers of all the world.

As has been noted in many interventions, Canadians have a very proud peacekeeping history. We have spoken about ourselves and I believe our interventions have been accurate that we have that history of being the originators of the idea and the actions of peacekeeping.

In this same briefing it was noted that two very valid reasons were because of our emphasis on multinational diplomacy and also in support of the United Nations. I believe as members of this House representing Canadians that Canadians too want Canada to support the United Nations.

However, going further with the criterion as to how decisions are made concerning whether we should be involved in a peacekeeping effort, we take a look at the three.