

UNITED NATIONS

PROPOSED WAR CRIMES TRIBUNAL—ALLOCATION OF FUNDS

Hon. Jerahmiel S. Grafstein: This week in Vancouver the Government of Canada is hosting an international conference of world experts to draft proposals for the establishment of a United Nations War Crimes Tribunal.

We were dismayed to learn today that one of Canada's and the world's experts, Commander William Fenrick, stated at the conference that the shortage of funds is hindering the gathering of evidence the United Nations intends to use to establish proof of crimes against humanity.

Apparently less than \$1 million has been allocated from the UN budget for this purpose. When the subcommittee of our Senate's Foreign Affairs Committee attended in New York, we were told that the United Nations had an annual administrative budget of over \$1 billion.

The question I have for the Government of Canada is the following: Is the government now making representations to the United Nations so that moneys presently allocated to administration of the United Nations, which has swollen, could be reallocated to the much more vital and important work of promoting the rule of law and gathering evidence of alleged crimes against humanity?

Hon. Lowell Murray (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, my cabinet colleague the Honourable Barbara McDougall took part in that conference earlier this week. I will ask her for a statement on the matter raised by Senator Grafstein.

YUGOSLAVIA

CANADIAN PEACEKEEPING TROOPS—STATUS OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT

Hon. Peter Bosa: Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Is there any truth in the media reports that Canadian troops in the former Yugoslavia are using equipment that is outdated and dangerous to their security?

Hon. Lowell Murray (Leader of the Government): No, honourable senators.

BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

TIMETABLE FOR DEALING WITH APPROPRIATION BILL

Hon. John B. Stewart: Can the Leader of the Government in the Senate tell us if the government intends to proceed to Royal Assent with the appropriation bill based on the Main Estimates before the adjournment at the time of the Progressive Conservative leadership convention or, alternatively, is it the intention that the two houses would come back after the convention to deal with that bill?

Hon. Lowell Murray (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I really do not have any comment to make on that particular bill. I do not know why we would unduly delay its passage or delay Royal Assent if the Senate is in a position to deal with it.

As for the plans of the government after the convention in mid-June, the calendar of the House of Commons still provides that that House would sit until about June 23, if I am not mistaken. There has been no change in that schedule. A new Prime Minister would have various options, including prorogation and dissolution.

Having said that, I should note that my friend the leader in the other place told me today that he has some 30 days between now and mid-June for government legislation, but 40 bills. Some of these bills may fall by the wayside, but if some of them are urgent, we would expect to be back here after the convention.

Senator Stewart: It was not a matter of delaying the passage of the bill. As the Leader of the Government in the Senate suggests, the timetable for supply business in the House of Commons assumes that that bill will not be dealt with until late in June; in other words, after the Progressive Conservative convention.

What I asked was whether it is the intention of the government to propose that the bill be dealt with before the convention. I gather from the leader's response that that is not the government's plan and that we can assume that the Senate and the House of Commons will be sitting after the convention.

Senator Murray: No, honourable senators, I do not think my friend should assume quite so much. There are discussions going forward all the time among the House leaders in the other place. It may well be that opposition House leaders are being asked to cooperate in the passage of that bill before mid-June. I do not know. I will ask my cabinet colleague, Mr. Andre, whether he has anything to report on that matter.