

The decision to send thousands of Canadian soldiers to Yugoslavia was not taken lightly. Our government and our armed forces are well aware of the risk of injury and loss of life. We are well aware of the serious responsibilities and the possible consequences of such a decision. That is why our soldiers take intensive training and why we examine every aspect of this kind of mission before agreeing to undertake it.

That is why I find regrettable recent statements made by the Liberal Party Spokesperson. They just do not reflect the reality of what is happening around the world. The questions are too complex, too serious and affect too many lives for Mr. Axworthy to try to exploit them for some kind of partisan gain.

All the decisions concerning participation in peacekeeping missions, whether in Yugoslavia or elsewhere, are based on very specific criteria, namely:

- whether a threat to peace and security exists;
- whether a process for a political settlement exists;
- whether the participants in the conflict have agreed to peacekeeping and to the presence of Canadians;
- whether a clear mandate has been established by the UN or another multilateral body; and
- whether reliable financing exists.

These criteria have always served us well, but it may be necessary to add some new ones in the future because of the more demanding nature and the growing number of peacekeeping missions. Before taking part in future UN missions, we may have to consider factors such as the costs, risks, and potential duration of individual missions, and our own historic, political, and economic interests in the region of conflict, as well as our bilateral and multilateral commitments.

We also need to take a fresh look at the traditional approach to peacekeeping, which originated during the Cold War era, in order to find an approach better suited to our times.

Let us consider the situation in Cyprus. Concerning the UN intervention there, a recent article in the British magazine *The Economist* ironically remarks that "Temporary measures often have the annoying habit of becoming permanent ones."

We have been keeping the peace in Cyprus, along the lines of the traditional model, since 1964 -- almost 30 years of standing between the two ethnic communities. Although we have succeeded in preventing violence between the two communities, can we really