

*Government Orders*

these people who came from far and near deserve to be congratulated by the whole world.

• (2050)

We also owe a vote of thanks to all the parties who signed the agreement. They showed they were at least willing to try to restore peace to a part of the world where it had disappeared and this only a few years ago.

[*English*]

Some friends were telling me that they had met people who came from the former Yugoslavia who had lived there prior to and during the war period. They had lived in a country that was as normal as one could find, perhaps not quite as wealthy as ours, but for a country that operated under the kind of regime it did, it was relatively prosperous. They had done rather well. They were living as we do, perhaps not as wealthily, as I said.

Virtually overnight the peace they had known was no longer there. The neighbours they had known as friends became their enemies. Families were broken up in the strife. All of a sudden people could no longer trust virtually anyone. People had reverted to that Hobbesian state of nature where it is every person for himself.

I suppose if it teaches us anything, it is the fragility of peace everywhere and that we should cherish peace if we happen to enjoy it at the present time, as we do. It has at least taught me that.

[*Translation*]

I also want to say that I am proud to be a Canadian and an heir to the legacy of Lester B. Pearson. As you know, I presented a motion in this House to have a statue erected in his honour. It is just next door to this building. It was erected a number of years ago, and I am pleased to have been the one to suggest this. I must say that every time, and especially recently, when I pass this statue of Mr. Pearson, I remember his particular contribution to peacekeeping throughout the world.

[*English*]

Some colleagues are perhaps a little more isolationist than others in this Chamber. I am not one of them. I happen to believe that we have an important role to play in the world. We do not live on a planet of our own. We share this planet with everyone else. It is time we remembered it. Some members across the way see it differently. They are indicating so by their heckling at the present time, which is their privilege.

I do not believe we are doing our job properly as MPs if we do not know members of Parliament from other countries, if we do not speak with them, if we do not find out what goes on in the world. Whether we realize it or not, whether we are by nature isolationists or not, the planet is shrinking all the time because

of communications, because of increased trade, because of all these reasons.

The problems of one country are the problems of the world, not just of that country. Even if they were problems of only that country, I still believe it would be our duty morally and otherwise to help where we could. However, they are not only the problems of those other countries, they are everyone's problems, particularly in the world in which we live.

I was here when we dealt with and voted on this issue when it involved the gulf war. Madam Speaker, you will remember that night. That night we all realized very suddenly how small the planet had become once those scud missiles left Iraq and were aimed at another country. In the space of a few minutes many members of the House became all too familiar with every spot on the globe where we were expecting a scud missile to land next. It did not take us long to learn the planet was smaller and that all of us in this world were closer to each other than we had previously thought. It is time we all remembered this.

[*Translation*]

This evening some members are saying: "We cannot vote for this kind of initiative; we cannot speak out in favour of this kind of initiative because we do not have enough information".

• (2055)

All of the parties were provided with documentation. The parliamentary secretary tells me that documentation was offered to all parties in this House. I trust that members of all parties have a little idea of what is going on in the world, what has happened in the past, what has happened in this war, and so on.

The members were indeed properly informed and I would add that those who do not have the information perhaps chose not to find out any more.

[*English*]

I would like to speak about our role as Canadians. Some people have said we should not go there because we have been there already. That is a rather unusual view. To me that means we have expertise. We have experience. We have been there and we know what we are doing.

Our military people are well trained. They are the best. Our military people, we know from previous roles we have had in that part of the world and elsewhere, are very qualified. They have done tremendous work. We have the expertise and the experience and we are highly respected. Yes, we should be there.

I have constituents who have been to the former Yugoslavia, either in Croatia or in Bosnia. Recently there was a meeting of young people in my riding and a young man came to address the meeting. He is a soldier who has just returned from Bosnia. His job was to deactivate land mines. He brought some material with him, along with his blue cap and blue beret which he wears for more formal occasions. He spoke about the job he did in Bosnia.