

*Special Debate*

also an important subject for debate in this House. We must come to grips with the fundamental question of criteria. If we are going to establish a new role for peacemaking on what is it going to be based? What are the standards and judgments that will be applied? Will we do it on *ad hoc* basis, situation by situation? Will there be a new policy framework? That is something I think Canadians have a right to know.

When I read the minister's recent speech I must confess it gave me cause for concern. The minister addressed the question of criteria and went through the traditional peacekeeping responsibilities of meeting a threat to peace and security or whether a UN multilateral body had decided. She began to say that there should be new criteria such as costs, risks and potential duration of individual missions, Canada's historic, political and economic interest in the region, a bilateral and multilateral commitment.

It reads to me as a pulling in of criteria, as an attempt to begin to restrict the role, of limiting what our commitments will be. Now that may be a fair proposition. That one I agree with. It may be a fair one but it requires serious examination by the people of Canada, this Parliament and a vehicle of this Parliament.

In addition to the criteria put out by the minister on costs, historic interest, bilateral and multilateral commitments, what we should be asking is whether in the new criteria Canadians have a basic interest in alleviating extreme suffering, stopping extreme human rights violations, crimes against humanity or crimes of genocide anywhere. That should perhaps begin to be the fundamental criteria that we use and then worry about the other particulars, whether in fact there is extreme inhumanity of people against people. That should be the basis upon which we make that decision.

I am prepared to say that I do not think my criteria, the criteria of the minister or those of other critics in the House should be the final say or should be the limit of the debate. It is too serious and too broad ranging for Canadians. It is one of the most important decisions this generation of Canadians will make because it comes to grips with what our international role and responsibilities will be for years to come.

• (1910)

That is why I think it is necessary that we broaden this debate. I do not see the minister in the House at the moment but perhaps she is listening somewhere. The way of coming to grips with this matter would be to send a joint committee of the House and Senate across the country, beginning in the new year, to look at the new role of peacemaking for Canada: what criteria should determine it, what kind of resources should be applied to it, what kind of policies should be utilized for it. There could then be a full, open opportunity for all Canadians to be heard from coast to coast to coast, not just in the confines of the Ottawa region, to come to grips with this most serious of questions. In fact there are the three coasts and one continental boundary. We will cover the entire domain of Canada.

The Senate has already started to hold some hearings. The Standing Committee on External Affairs has begun to look a little at the agenda for peace. It should now become a major commitment and mission of this Parliament to authorize such an undertaking, to show Canadians that they have a right to participate and that this Parliament is coming to grips with these tough, difficult, complex issues.

I again raise a question about the role the minister describes as taking place after the warlords have been disarmed and the corridors have been opened up. In the statement the minister made on Friday she said: "We will participate in the enforcement action only. We do not plan to participate in any subsequent peacekeeping operations".

We may have heard something slightly different this evening in the debate, but frankly I am not sure the minister fully recognizes and accepts that this kind of action is a short-term quick fix and that the tough part, the difficult part, the serious part, will be coming afterward. There will continue to be a responsibility for peacekeeping in a country in which the entire civil authority has broken down. What is the point of moving in, taking the arms away and then moving out again and letting the same forces gather strength and go after each other again? What do we attain by that?

It is important now as a signal of hope to the people in Somalia and other places that the international community including Canada is prepared to stick in. If we are called upon for other commitments and other resources, we will do our best to answer that call. We will make sure that while the troops are in there taking the arms away