

Government Orders

I flew into Tashkent in July. I went to a dinner that evening, hosted by the President of the Supreme Soviet. The very first thing he said after he welcomed us was: "I want you people to know that our first goal is independence and our second goal is to seek membership in the European Community". Talk about leaping over years, in fact one might even say a decade, all in a matter of a few words. That was his intention. Those were his opening remarks. Having heard that firsthand, one can understand and appreciate that there are going to be very serious problems, unless somehow they all stumble through day by day and eventually end up where they want to go, without any explosiveness and without any kind of civil war.

However, history teaches us that that part of the world is extremely volatile and has resorted more often, in fact one might say exclusively, in moments of crises, to arms and armed rebellion rather than through a democratic process that has been non-existent in the past. It is pretty difficult at this point to assume for a moment that the democratic process is going to prevail. We all hope it will.

In that context, then, it is extremely important that the CSCE begin to assume functions that will enable it to contribute to the maintenance of peace and security not only in central Europe, which is where traditionally, certainly for the last 40 years, we have directed our thought, our energy and our military deployments, but in eastern European and in the Soviet Union. That is a very deep and thick shadow that is casting itself across European security and stability today. If the balloon goes up in the Soviet Union, if the military should feel that it has to seize power in order to establish security and stability, or if the arch-conservatives within the Communist Party decide to seize power and get rid of Gorbachev, then they have only one course of action. They cannot go forward with Liberal reform. They have to go into a period of political retrenchment. They have to re-establish the old order. They have to establish authoritarianism once again. That of course will present very serious problems with respect to stability in eastern and western Europe.

I know my brief time is up. I congratulate the government for bringing forward this motion today. I look forward to Canada's continued participation in the growth of the CSCE in Europe.

Mr. Bob Hicks (Scarborough East): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to discuss the over-all CSCE process, a process in which I know we all are very interested, a process to which we all are very dedicated and a process of which we all are very supportive.

When we pause to reflect on security and co-operation in Europe, there are naturally a number of various approaches that one could discuss.

What I would like to emphasize, however, is the importance of the political approach and the entrenchment of strong pan-European and trans-Atlantic political ties.

Those who know of my involvement with the North Atlantic Assembly will already have guessed I will recommend that organization for greatly increased participation in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, known as the CSCE.

The North Atlantic Assembly is the political wing of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. It has as its members parliamentarians from 16 NATO countries. NATO, unlike the Warsaw Pact, was formed not only as a defensive military pact but also as a political organization. Canada, I might add, is very active and our Canadian delegates are very highly respected by our NATO colleagues when we attend these various meetings.

What we have traditionally referred to as the Old World in the past has been transformed now into a new world. The Europeans are building an integrated economic and political structure that was unimaginable just a decade ago. The concepts of Europe 1992, a common currency under a European central bank, the opening of borders, and more closely aligned foreign policy constitute hard evidence that the days of chauvinistic and often bloody rivalry in western Europe have passed.

Europe is already wealthy, and closer economic co-operation will increase that wealth. As a nation dependent on trade for one-third of its Gross National Product, Canada cannot ignore the huge and prosperous European market, a market of 320 million people in the European Community alone.

At the same time, the communities of western Europe are faced with a spectre of economic chaos in the east, the prospect of massive movements of economic refugees and migrants, and the possibility that ethnic rivalries or economic collapse could lead to conflict.