

Government Orders

We have come to the point where those people who were in a position to know the difficulties of the sanctions that were passed and authorized by the United Nations in August, October and November, what impact they were, or, more important were not having. They took the decision to move ahead because they felt that the price we would have to bear would be too costly. It was my intention and it will be my intention to vote for this resolution that is before the House because I support the United Nations.

I support the United Nations in its role regardless of whether it is in the passage of resolutions to condemn the illegal occupation of Kuwait or whether, through resolutions of the United Nations, to condemn the illegal occupation by Israel in the occupied territories of the West Bank. I cannot be hypocritical about this matter. I will support Canada's decision, and rightfully so, to support the actions and activities of the United Nations. We are the fourth largest contributor to that body. We have no reason to believe that we should at this point abandon the principles of that organization.

When this is all over and said and done with, the fact of the matter is that we will have to look for new ways of ensuring that all the problems of the region are dealt with. Make no mistake about it, although Saddam Hussein had no legitimacy in linking his invasion of Kuwait with that particular issue, until the Palestinian issue is dealt with under the resolutions that have been passed which we as a country have supported, those being resolutions 242 and 338, there will be no lasting peace.

I leave this message with the people of this nation from my perspective and my constituency. I am supportive of the actions and the activities that have been undertaken by this government to support the United Nations resolutions. I want to give my assurances to the men and women serving in that theatre that we as Canadians have a grave concern for their future and must do everything we can to ensure their safety, and that they return home to a country and a world that have much better served because of their integrity and determination.

Mr. Jim Karygiannis (Scarborough—Agincourt): Mr. Speaker, I want to direct a comment and a question to the hon. member.

In my riding of Scarborough—Agincourt I had the opportunity to poll over 2,000 people. The vast majority of them were saying we should give sanctions more time to work. They were gravely concerned about our young men and women in the gulf. As we just witnessed, hostilities have erupted in the gulf. The theatre of operation and what will happen in the gulf bring a new perspective. This government will be asking our young men and women to put their lives on the line. My colleague is from Dartmouth which has roughly 600 families, of which 450 have men and women in the gulf. They are gravely concerned. The Canadian people are gravely concerned. The Canadian public wants to know what the is mandate of the Canadian forces, what is the engagement, and what are their orders.

• (1900)

Is the hon. member aware of any of those questions? Does he agree that the hostilities should cease and desist? Does he agree that the safety of our young men and women in the gulf is first and foremost in the mind of every Canadian?

Mr. Corbett: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comment. I can only say that I am too much aware of what the circumstances are in the Middle East, what circumstances are in Iraq, what circumstances are in the entire region.

I have been a watcher of the Middle East for a good number of years. I am extremely and deeply conscientious of the role that we as Canadians have played as peacekeepers in the area and the reputation that we have developed throughout the years as a peacekeeper.

When I became aware that Canada was supporting the United Nations resolutions to impose sanctions against Iraq for its illegal occupation, its illegal invasion of Kuwait, I was extremely hopeful that indeed that would work, that the activities undertaken by the world community would have the desired effect of averting a war.

It has been said in this House many times during this debate that nobody wants a war. As the Minister of National Defence stated earlier, he has not met a single Canadian, nor have I, who is in favour of war.

The fact of the matter is we have a hostility that has erupted. There are declarations of war. Canada has a proud and noble tradition of supporting what is right. We are not in favour of aggression. We are not in favour of actions against fellow members of the United Nations. We have pledged ourselves by being a member, a full