

Government Orders

concerns of a war, about Canada entering into a war and I say that you have not been defeated in your views tonight. I am sure that everyone in this House will work to bring about as quick a peace as is possible. But you must continue to express your views as all Canadians must, to give politicians the directions that we too need to reflect the best interest of Canada.

I say to these groups and individuals: we are with you. The New Democratic Party will continue to speak out against the madness of war.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Ms. McLaughlin: Mr. Speaker, the choices have been made. They are not our choices. We will, each of us, live with the results of those choices. Each of us have taken, in our view, the most responsible position. We do not accuse those who disagree with us and we refuse to engage in debates about who has the greatest degree of morality.

• (2240)

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Ms. McLaughlin: Our disagreement is with the government's position. It is most assuredly not with the Canadian forces. We will be judged by history, but I want to assure Canadians and to assure this House that we will remain committed to a new world order, a genuinely new world order, and a new vision of a world in which war is no longer contemplated, a world of peace.

On the eve of war this may sound naive. This does not mean that Canada in any way abdicates its responsibility, but rather that Canada and the New Democratic Party will work for peace and international peace, to take our responsibilities seriously. We will not abandon the Canadian men and women in the Middle East. We will not engage in debates that are simply about who is right, but we will pursue that international vision based on a new world order, a new way to do things. We are committed to that.

In conclusion, I would simply like to say that I think everyone in Canada tonight is aware of the difficulty of this evening for everyone who must make decisions and those in particular who must bear the responsibility of our decisions. I say that our hearts are with them, our hearts are with their families. We, too, will work with the

government, with the Opposition, with any country, with any group to search for peace as soon as possible.

Mr. John Reimer (Kitchener): Mr. Speaker, I had begun my comments just before the House suspended and we are now, I assume, continuing debate. With your guidance, Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Ottawa Vanier on a point of order.

Mr. Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I apologize to the House but I do think that most of us feel this moment to be one of momentous importance for the world and for Canadians in general.

We do not want at this time to engage in partisan debate on the motion before the House. I think the situation is very serious and we would like to have time to gather our thoughts, to really get the facts, come back to the House in due course and debate this very important situation tomorrow.

This for us is a momentous moment and I would ask the government to please adjourn the House which would give us a chance to get our facts together.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Lapierre: Mr. Speaker, I understand the feelings of the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier, but I too would like to have an opportunity this evening to respond to the speeches of the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the New Democratic Party to say that, whether we like it or not, we are all at war regardless of our political affiliations. Our differences and nuances are theoretical and our alternatives are hypothetical.

In these times of great sadness I believe we all hope that the hostilities will end soon. We all hope that our sons and daughters, with the Iraqi civilians, will be able to avoid as many casualties as possible. We hope this war will not be for revenge but rather for the supremacy of international law. This evening we pray for all the men and women who are involved in this sad tragedy.

[*English*]

Mr. Speaker: Before I hear any further points of order—and I will certainly hear the hon. leader of the government—I remind hon. members that we are bound by the rules here.