

S. O. 29

that he issued a statement which offered a qualified endorsement of the American position, even if it stopped short of support for the military response. The Prime Minister has also told Canadians to "look to their own safety". Under the circumstances, that is hardly adequate. As we have already noted, they lack significant information to make a rational decision in this matter.

A few things are certain. The attack did take place. The Canadian Government's action was restrained. Therefore, it seems reasonable to assume that Canada at least acquiesced in the American military action. What were the results of these developments? Are Canadians more or less safe as a consequence of the U.S. attack? That should be the focal point of our debate. We should not be quick to condemn the United States, at this point at least, for we lack the information which President Reagan says justifies his ordering the attack. Can we say that the safety and interests of Canadians have been enhanced by the developments of the last two days? I think not.

There are Canadians in Libya, and Libya is under attack. As we have seen from television reports, civilians are not immune to military action. The notion of a surgical military strike is a myth. There is no way, no matter how sophisticated the weapons employed, that any armed force can guarantee that only military targets and personnel will be affected.

● (2150)

Last night there existed the real possibility that Canadians might have been injured or killed in the violence in Libya, because innocent people have already died in that attack. Civilian areas of the city of Tripoli were hit, one in particular in downtown Tripoli. Some may say that Canadians were not near the targets hit by U.S. forces. That is not true this time. The danger of escalation exists. Libyan radio has called for reprisals against both the United States and its allies. Canadians are not immune to mob violence either.

Are Canadians elsewhere safe from terrorism as a result of this strike? I, personally, do not think so. If Libya chooses to make reprisals, it will not confine itself to Libyan or American territory. Remember that an innocent Turkish woman died in the same Berlin bomb blast which President Reagan says he is avenging. Remember, too, that the Berlin bombing was said to be retaliation for Libya's embarrassment in the Gulf of Sidra. We saw that same sort of attack today on an American installation in the Mediterranean resulting from last night's pre-emptive strike.

In other words, we already see violence begetting violence. We see a pattern of escalating violence, not a pre-emptive strike which will eliminate terrorism. I fear that we can expect further reprisals from both sides. Sadly, it will not only be their own armies or citizens which will be affected. Already violence is begetting violence, the very thing this attack was supposed to diminish.

Their allies will be expected to take sides. Already we have seen Egypt line up behind more radical Arab states and condemn the U.S. raid. Does this further the cause of peace in which we all have a stake? Clearly, the answer is "no". We are all the poorer as a result of the degenerating situation in the Mediterranean and the Middle East in general.

We should be asking ourselves if other options would be better to serve our interests. There is diplomacy, as others have mentioned this evening. Some scoff at the notion of diplomatic pressure reducing terrorism. It may be that diplomacy cannot solve this problem by itself, but diplomacy has a place, and certainly has its uses.

It may strengthen the position of the United States to seek a United Nations condemnation of Libyan terrorism. It is unfortunate that the Reagan administration has spent so much time attacking the UN. It has effectively closed off that course of action by alienating the UN and its supporters. The UN's critics say that it is a useless institution anyway. They fail to realize that their own criticism undermines the political will to give international bodies the muscle to be more effective. If the UN enjoyed wider support, its members might, for example, consider economic sanctions against Libya. There is an oil glut now. Surely Libya would be vulnerable to concerted economic pressure.

I recall a speech presented to the political committee of the North Atlantic Assembly in mid-February in Brussels by Professor Wilkinson of Aberdeen University, an acknowledged international authority on terrorism. I remember his remarks of that Saturday morning very clearly. He said that military strikes and military action will not solve the problem of terrorism in the Middle East, in Europe, or anywhere else. He argued most strongly that the only effective weapon which will diminish terrorism in that part of the world is effective economic sanctions. If you begin to tear down the economies of the host countries which permit terrorist training and activity to take place, the pressure will build up and become so intense that even Colonel Moammar Khadafy would have to relent and stop allowing terrorists to be trained in his country. That is important.

We have other examples as well. A very pertinent example is Ireland where, for 300 years, the United Kingdom attempted to "solve the Irish problem" by force upon force upon force. Yet, as we all know, today there is more violence and terrorism in Northern Ireland than ever before in those 300 years of violence. Military intervention, pre-emptive strikes, and the use of missiles in the missile age will not bring to an end terrorism in the Middle East or in Europe.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Blackburn (Brant): I want to suggest now, as has been mentioned by my Leader and the cabinet Minister who spoke just before me that, for perhaps the first time in 40 years, we must look at the disease. Let us stop looking at the symptoms. Let us, for the first time in a debate in this House, try to think