

*Government Orders*

the President of the United States tell the world that Operation Desert Storm had begun.

When the Prime Minister announced the government's intention to engage our forces in this operation, the whole point became moot. The deed was done. Canada was at war. My leader and other members of my caucus have already made clear our answer to the question: Should Canada participate in the military conflict in the gulf? The answer was no. We felt that sanctions had not been given enough time to work. Alternatives short of war to persuade or pressure Saddam Hussein to give up Kuwait had not been fully exhausted.

That was the message this government should have carried to the President of the United States. We felt and still do, that Canada should not abandon so quickly its margin of independent action by following the United States directly into this war, that there was a more constructive role, a role more consistent with our traditions for Canada to play.

That is how my party and I would reaffirm our support for the United Nations. That is how we would choose to contribute to the unprecedented, collective security effort mounted by the United Nations in the face of this act of aggression.

• (2030 )

I share the outrage of millions of Canadians at Saddam Hussein's blatant and brutal assault of Kuwait. I agree that this action cannot be tolerated by the world community. For a petty dictator like Saddam to be allowed to gobble up a less powerful neighbour would send the gravest signal to would be aggressors elsewhere, particularly in the Third World where any number of reasons can be dreamed up to question the boundaries and modify the existence of a neighbouring state. To allow people like Saddam Hussein to redraw the world map by brute force would send much of the world into anarchy. Opposing Saddam's actions is vital to peace and security.

But why did it have to be war? Did we really exhaust all possible options short of war, or have we acted prematurely? Must we now purchase with blood what perhaps another few weeks or months of economic

sanctions might have accomplished, namely the withdrawal of Saddam Hussein from Kuwait?

What happens if, God forbid, this war drags on, if the conflagration spreads to other countries in the Middle East, to citizens around the world through wanton terrorism, if it leads to the use of chemical, biological, environmental warfare? If we are obliged in the heat of battle to resort to ever more sophisticated weaponry, what happens to our resolve once the casualties begin to mount, once the international media begin to relay back to our livingrooms and to the front pages of our newspapers the images of the war, the carnage and inevitable atrocities? Will we be able to sustain our commitment? Can we be sure that our reasons for entering this conflict are absolutely above reproach, that as we look back, alternatives have actually been exhausted?

There is no question that there are compelling strategic reasons for expelling Saddam Hussein from Kuwait. He is clearly the aggressor. Without by any means wishing for Canada to play the same role, I concede the important and generally favourable role that the United States has played as the defender of freedom and democracy. But the role as the most powerful nation carries with it powerful responsibilities, and it is not always clear that the conduct of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East has always been above reproach.

I recently had occasion to read an article by Janis Gross Stein, a professor at the University of Toronto and one of Canada's leading international relations experts. In her article entitled "The Challenge of the Persian Gulf Crisis" she analyses the events which have led us to this war and tries to discern how and why events unfolded as they did.

In a very straightforward and honest manner, she poses the question: could the use of force have been avoided through more effective strategies of crisis prevention? Her answers are quite surprising, especially since she documents the events leading up to August 2 when Iraqi forces rolled into Kuwait.

She argues that for the last 10 years the United States and other nations have actively pursued a course of trying to establish Iraq as a major force in the Middle East, ostensibly to offset the perceived dangers of Iranian expansionism. She points out quite correctly that