

Government Orders

a multinational effort, it was clearly initially a United States effort.

Let us not forget that the resolution passed by the United Nations endorses the use of military force to back up the economic embargo of Iraq. There is no mandate to use force to invade that country. There is no mandate to use force to invade that country.

I do not question the Prime Minister's statement of September 24, in this House, and I quote:

Our contribution to the defence of freedom and our resistance of aggression constitute chapters of sacrifice and glory in the history of this nation.

But I question Canada's initial involvement in this crisis as sanctioned by this government, in the absence of clear, United Nations is stewardship with Parliamentary debate in this House. I cannot trust this government with a blank cheque on this issue.

I will support the government's resolution provided we receive certain assurances from this government regarding the future or deployment of Canadian forces and the involvement of Canada in a Gulf war; specifically, a commitment that no changes in Canada's position will take place until Parliament or the opposition has been consulted and secondly, that Canada does not participate in offensive military action outside United Nations auspices without the approval of Parliament.

It should be made clear that our party took the initiative for an all-party agreement on the resolution, not this government and definitely not the New Democratic Party.

I should point out that the approach to Canadian foreign policy by this government during the last six years has sharply turned from a strong Canadian voice to either sitting on the sidelines, or to cheering the policy initiatives of the United States with little or no consultation with our Parliament.

At this juncture I ask this government: Where was the Prime Minister during the crisis? In Washington. Who advised the Prime Minister at this time? President Bush. What were the United Nations members doing when the Prime Minister was in Washington? They were recalling their parliaments to debate the crisis with their citizens. Did we do it in Canada? Sadly, Mr. Speaker, we did not.

Sending troops to the Gulf is a national emergency, and sending troops into a possible war zone is not a decision that the Prime Minister should make on his own. The issue should be brought before Parliament for all to debate. Debate is essential in a democracy or democracy withers and dies.

I now ask if this government is prepared to make a commitment that there will not be a further deployment of troops, or the use of force without a clear mandate from our Parliament and under the stewardship of the United Nations.

What initiatives is this government making with the United Nations to find a peaceful resolution to this crisis?

In closing, I would like to say that Canadians are encouraged by the role that the United Nations has played in this crisis and we must seize this opportunity to assert the supremacy of that great institution and not of the United States. Let this be the objective that guides Canadian foreign policy.

Canada must continue to search for peace, just as Canada shall continue to abhor war. Is Canada prepared to support military action against Iraq, outside of United Nations auspices? Is Canada prepared to support military action against Iraq without full Parliamentary debate and consultation? Canada shall insist on acting militarily only under the United Nations umbrella, guided by the wisdom of this House. Hence, I support the amendment proposed by my party.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Questions or comments. The hon. member for Burnaby—Kingsway.

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway): I know that the hon. member for Bonavista—Trinity—Conception is consulting with the hon. member in terms of a response to this question, but the member from Manitoba is his own member and hopefully will give his own answer.

• (1930)

The member knows that there have been discussions and dialogues in the House about some other form of a motion. The New Democratic Party has proposed a subamendment which I believe the hon. member has indicated he supports. His party has also proposed an amendment. Of course, the thrust of those amendments is to ensure that any action in the gulf must only be