

Government Orders

that when there is no choice, such as in the Second World War, we are ready to do our part, but clearly when there is no choice. In Korea, we did our part.

But our essential experience from the end of the Second World War is that military action is in fact counterproductive in producing useful solutions to difficult crises and difficult problems. Our experience is that it is important to work through the problem. It is important to contain militarily a country such as Iraq, and that is being done. It is critically important to apply economic sanctions and we have supported that against South Africa, for example, and in Rhodesia. But it is equally important that war not be acted on precipitously.

When I was home last weekend, it was interesting for me to talk to some of the people from Victoria. A Second World War veteran said he had two ships shot out from under him. He said the push towards war in the Middle East was madness.

A widow who lost a husband and a son said she could not believe that the international community is contemplating war in the Persian Gulf. Young students at Monterey Elementary in Victoria, got together to write letters to the Prime Minister, urging him to speak at the United Nations on behalf of Canadians, saying there must be peace and not war in the Middle East.

It is time that the government listened to Canadians. It is time the government acted independently of the United Nations. It is time the government was a voice for peace and not war.

This is a difficult issue, but it is one that calls for patience and that calls for sense. I would urge the government to speak for Canadians tomorrow at the United Nations, to commit itself that Canadians will not go to war in the Middle East without the full approval of this Parliament and until it is absolutely clear that there is no option.

We call on the government to act with sensitivity, to act with patience, and to act on behalf of Canadians. If the amendment of the Liberal Party is not adopted, we will vote against the resolution and continue to urge this government to act on behalf of Canadians.

Hon. Mary Collins (Associate Minister of National Defence and Minister responsible for Status of Women): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to participate in this debate, a debate in which we are discussing a motion put forward by the government to support the resolution expected to come forward tomorrow at the United Nations which would provide further opportunities for the UN to find ways to resolve the situation in Iraq.

I would like to talk a little bit today about the role of our Canadian Armed Forces in the current situation and bring both the House and those members of the Canadian public who are watching up to date on our activities.

First, Mr. Speaker, it is important again to come back to the groundwork of the issue that we are dealing with. On August 2, the Government of Iraq launched a massive invasion of Kuwait. This unprovoked aggression was quickly followed by Baghdad's declaration of a comprehensive and eternal merger between Iraq and Kuwait, an ill-disguised phrase for Iraq's outright annexation of Kuwait.

The speed and brutality of this invasion aside, it is the maintenance of civilized norms of international behaviour that is at stake in the Persian Gulf, namely, how Canada and like-minded members of the world community can best forestall similar behaviour in the future by compelling Saddam Hussein to withdraw from Kuwait. We all know the lessons of history and that we cannot allow appeasement, we cannot allow incrementalism. It has been quite a unique experience how the world community has come together on this issue to say: "We will not allow one country to take over another country".

As my colleagues on all sides of the House are aware, a vital component of Canada's international defence policy is to work toward maintaining a stable international environment. It is in support of these long-standing objectives of both Canadian foreign and defence policy that our ships and aircraft have been committed to the Persian Gulf region.

By agreeing to participate in the multinational effort in support of the United Nations, we have indicated that this invasion will not stand. Saddam Hussein must recognize that it is unacceptable for larger, more powerful states to attack or to intimidate their weaker neigh-