

Government Orders

League of Nations was so ruthlessly, as being simply incapable of standing up to aggression, even to a brutal bully like Hussein.

Canada has had a proud role in the United Nations right from the beginning. This country has stood by the United Nations even when other countries, including the United States, lost faith in that organization.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): It is no accident that we have relied as Canadians upon the fiat of international institutions, the International Monetary Fund as the Minister of Finance knows, the General Agreement on Tariff and Trade, and I will leave that argument alone. But with the United Nations we have believed in internationalizing our institutions. We have never treated the United Nations as irrelevant. We have never treated it as merely a talking shop. As Canadians we may have lost some idealism but we never lost faith in the United Nations.

This issue is one on which I had to break silence. Since June I have remained quiet except for the odd lecture at a university. I felt the question before the House was paramount for us as elected representatives of the people of Canada for our country. I felt that each member must speak out as a Canadian, and more than that, as a citizen of the world, because the future of the world order is at stake, and stability and future peace.

I believe that this Parliament has a duty to support the United Nations resolutions as those texts are written, and therefore, the resolution before this House.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Marcel Prud'homme (Saint-Denis): Madam Speaker, this is not an easy situation but in life—this is a comment I am making—there are difficult situations. But when one is firmly convinced about what one is going to do and should do, well one does like the right hon. member for Vancouver Quadra just did, one speaks out.

But there are others who are just as convinced about what we are going to do and what we must do, and this is why I will make only a brief comment.

Hon. members are aware of my great respect for the right hon. member for Vancouver Quadra who has been my friend for 35 years.

[*English*]

I also have belonged to the Liberal Party for close to 40 years. The Liberal Party I stand for is a party that is about to vote against this motion. I can give many explanations which are contrary to those of my right hon. friend. This is not a United Nations declaration of war. If that were the case we would have different kinds of speeches.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Prud'homme: The reading of the situation by my right hon. friend is a reading that I do not share. Therefore I will sit down. I regret it, but I had to say it. Accordingly, with great regret, because friendships sometimes can be broken—I will not break my friendship with my right hon. friend—I will say that I honestly, profoundly, and totally disagree with his reading of the situation.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Jim Peterson (Willowdale): Madam Speaker, I feel that the process of democracy has been enhanced by the fact that people can speak so freely in this the highest institution in our country.

The fact that I may disagree with the previous member does not detract from the seriousness and importance of each one of us taking a decision, not only to reflect the wishes of our constituents, but to reflect what is utmost in terms of conscience, and to bear the heavy burden of what is involved in war, the possibility of war and death.

Might I ask the hon. member for Vancouver Quadra, for whom all of us in this House have tremendous respect, whether he feels, because in his words the ultimate question is support for the United Nations, not a question of war, not a question of whether sanctions should go longer, that the United Nations itself is being denigrated by the fact that all the provisions of chapter 7 have not been followed in the pursuit of this effort by the multinational force, that there is not a flag of the UN, that the military committee has not been appointed in accordance with articles 46 and 47. Does that not denigrate the role of the United Nations itself?