

Government Orders

The sending of Canadian sailors and ships, of Canadian aircrew and aircraft to deter this aggression and to enforce the UN sanctions that I have referred to is also peacekeeping. It is as much peacekeeping as having Canadian soldiers wearing the blue beret of the United Nations in Cyprus or anywhere else around the globe. Our naval and air forces and the forces of a number of other countries are there under explicit UN auspices.

I listened to the member for Northumberland talking about when forces were deployed and when resolutions were passed and I understand the narrow points that are being made. She also asked whether Parliament was or was not recalled soon enough. I do not want to debate that, I am simply saying that when taking a broad view of Canada's role as a peacekeeping country and as a peacemaker, we must go beyond the small details and look at the broad outlines of what is happening. I think it is a very significant moment in world history as we pursue global peace to see this concerted action by so many countries, not only Canadians, but the people of Bangladesh putting their armed forces in harms way.

This drawing of a line is indicating to the Saddam Husseins of the world that international boundaries are to be respected and that the united nations of this world will not tolerate armed invasion and occupation of independent countries.

Our commitment to peacekeeping is and must remain unshakeable. In these difficult days, as we consider our future as Canadians and what the new constitutional arrangements will be for our country, the essential thing is to focus on the values that really make us all Canadians and that do unite us as Canadians. One of those, most assuredly, is the value of peace and the honourable and sometimes very costly tradition of maintaining peace even when that requires the deployment of Canadians who proudly wear the uniform of our country.

Our contribution to international order, not only through United Nations peacekeeping forces, but our overseas assistance, our diplomatic initiatives and so many other roles that are part of this proud tradition is now coming into a new phase, a new era. It is not one where anyone can state, with certainty, what will be, but certainly we can outline what the goals ought to be and work towards those.

It is certainly something that other countries recognize in us as Canadians. Whether it is this current situation in the gulf, whether it is Central American governments designing a peace plan and getting support and assistance from Canada, whether it is our involvement with Japan who is developing its own new interest in this area, whether it is our efforts with Namibia turning it into a new country and a member of the United Nations from having been the last colony in Africa and making it become fully a democratic country, or whether it is the parties to the Cambodian conflict finding where we have provided valuable suggestions for monitoring and upholding international peace there. This is the point. Canadians are committed to peacekeeping and peace making. International order, respect for sovereign countries and the rule of law depend on it.

I hope that we can find here in Canada, just as Lester Pearson found in the fifties in the Suez crisis, a new dimension, an additional forward step in defining and in defending the role of peacekeeping. We must work toward a United Nations standing peacekeeping force to continue through the long and difficult months that will lie ahead. The resolve must be there, not only in good times of peace but in times of bleak and difficult challenge like this, when Canadians have to be sent into areas to support the principles and the spirit of the United Nations to see that we truly have the rule of international law.

Mr. David Walker (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I would like to have a discussion with the parliamentary secretary, and I thank him for outlining the government's position. Perhaps he and I, unlike the NDP, can stay on topic. He probably notices that every time the NDP do not know what to say, they find another topic because there are some areas such as foreign policy to which they cannot contribute. I certainly hope in the next few years they will be able to understand the world a little bit better than they have shown in the past.

An hon. member: We are trying to get straight answers.

Mr. Walker: Straight answers? If you had a question about the subject, you would get a straight answer. I am sure the new critic from British Columbia will be spending a lot of time in the library in the next period getting caught up on world affairs.