

*Government Orders*

We are debating a United Nations action unanimously endorsed. We finally have the nations working together. We have in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics a leader who is showing that maybe he is prepared to turn around some of those things that were wrong 20, 30, or 40 years ago.

Clearly, what we have today is a United Nations resolution that we, and every other country in the world, have been asked to support. I guess that is the difference in the scenario that he describes. He has not got that kind of resolution, and how can we as a country today jump on the internal affairs of another country?

We may not like how that country was created. It may have been created 50 years ago, but under the logic that he would propose, if we go back far enough, Iraq was part of the Persian Empire and Mr. Hussein believes that the Persian Empire should be recreated from the Mediterranean to India, down through the Red Sea and Saudi Arabia. Are we going to say, then, that Iraq is right, that it should be allowed to expand its borders to the maximum because it existed 50, 100 or 300 years ago? Obviously not.

We are dealing today with the United Nations resolution between two sovereign countries. One invaded the other clearly in contravention of everything the United Nations stands for. We are members of the United Nations. To deal with those things we have to support within the United Nations.

**Mr. Francis G. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso):** Mr. Speaker, there are few occasions when members of this House are asked to rise on matters of such colossal importance as the matter which is before us today. It is impossible not to be moved by events as they are unfolding and to be deeply troubled by the prospect of what awaits the world in the days and weeks ahead.

My first thoughts are with the brave men and women who are currently in the Persian Gulf region. They face the agonizing uncertainty and doubt which only the reality of war can present. My thoughts are with the families of those Canadians who must now live with the unceasing fear that they may never see their loved ones again. Some of these individuals are my constituents. I cannot forget this. In fact none of us can forget for a single moment that the fate of the Canadians who are now in the Middle East may very well be decided in the next few hours and days. There is no room for outlandish

partisanship at this time as too many lives hang in the balance.

Canada and this House have faced moments like this in the past. Throughout our history as a sovereign nation, Parliament has held the ultimate responsibility for the well-being of Canadians when we and other nations have found ourselves facing the prospect of armed conflict. It is vital then that we as parliamentarians have the opportunity to debate fully the life and death situation in which Canadians in the Middle East currently find themselves.

The government must present the choices squarely and honestly. It must be straight with Canadians here in the House of Commons and across Canada. It must not hide its intentions or camouflage its decisions behind nebulous words. Unfortunately, I fear that with the resolution before us the government has done precisely this. The resolution asks that this government reaffirm its support of the United Nations in ending the aggression by Iraq against Kuwait.

All members of this House support the United Nations. We have reaffirmed our support time and time again over the last six months. We supported UN Security Council resolution 660 and 662 condemning the Iraqi invasion and the annexation of Kuwait by Iraq. We supported resolution 661 and 670 imposing mandatory economic sanctions against Iraq. We supported the use of military force under the authority of the UN to ensure sanctions are upheld and the use of Canadian Armed Forces to contribute to the enforcement of these sanctions. We condemned Iraq's detention of foreign nationals as hostages and the other brutal violations of human rights.

With the exception of resolution 678 endorsing the use of military force if sanctions had not achieved their objective by the arbitrary deadline of January 15, Liberals on this side supported all of the resolutions against Iraq.

But that is not the issue before us. The request before us, which has been rendered academic by the multinational attack on Iraq and Kuwait as of last night and by Canada's immediate agreement to participate militarily, is for the House to support the participation of Canadian military forces in a military operation led by the United States, an operation carried out under the vague parameters of a UN resolution but which has not been a UN operation. That was as clear as crystal last night as we watched events unfold on television and as we listened to