

Government Orders

Moreover, the invasion of Kuwait has profoundly disturbed the economic stability as well as the physical and social well-being of several countries in the world. That region of the Middle East contains more than 40 per cent of the world's oil reserves and the disastrous repercussions of rising oil prices are felt throughout the nation—inflation, unemployment, slower economic growth, not to mention a number of other problems related to international trade. This economic instability directly affects Third World countries as well as Eastern Europeans for whom oil prices amount to a major obstacle to economic recovery.

Canada is a pacifist nation, but it is also a responsible people in the world community. We have thoroughly explored all diplomatic and pacifist options, all the while stressing that any initiative whatever would be taken under the banner of the United Nations. But the Iraqi government is not prepared to release its grip on the territory and the people of Kuwait. There is no indication of a compromise.

The moment of truth has arrived. But this moment of truth has arrived not only for the Iraqi government, but also for the United Nations, for international order, and for the promotion of collective security. Our duty is to protect the weak from the strong. We simply cannot allow Saddam Hussein and his government to benefit from his aggression against Kuwait. Sooner or later he will have to realize that the international community cannot condone such acts of violence and territorial aggression.

The survival of Kuwait is at stake, the future of the Middle East is at stake, and the future of international order as well as the credibility of the United Nations are at stake. The international community must be able to rely on Canada. In short, Madam Speaker, Canada has to be there.

[*English*]

Mr. Jesse Flis (Parkdale—High Park): Madam Speaker, I congratulate the vice-chair of the Standing Committee on External Affairs and International Trade on her presentation. I know she is very knowledgeable on this subject. She concluded her debate by asking an open question of us all.

We are looking at the future international order and we are looking at the future of the United Nations.

I would like to ask her whether the credibility of the United Nations and its ability to solve similar problems in the future would not be enhanced if this dispute were resolved without military intervention. If this crisis has to be resolved through military intervention, would this not undermine the future world order and undermine the future effectiveness of the United Nations?

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Gibeau: Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my hon. colleague, who sits on the Standing Committee on External Affairs, for his question.

Obviously, the goal of the United Nations is to ensure the over-all protection of nations, that is the protection of their territory as well as their people. The United Nations promoted and proposed measures that would have allowed the invading country to withdraw of its own free will from the country it had attacked without any provocation.

These resolutions have not changed, and are still in force until midnight today. That gives us four hours. We can still hope for a miracle the one which allowed Saddam Hussein to release the hostages. He could have a vision telling him to start moving his troops out of Kuwait.

In 45 years of existence, the United Nations has made several attempts at getting to what we now have, that is an unprecedented coalition with forces coming from a great many countries and taking a united stand against an aggressor.

I agree with you that a peaceful solution would be the best. Everyone would be a winner. However, in this instance, we do not get to choose between peace and war. Unfortunately, what we have to deal with here is an invading country guilty of pillage, rape and plundering against a sovereign nation which had a legitimate government and is a member of the United Nations. Given the circumstances, the United Nations, of which Canada is also a member, cannot afford to break apart at this point in time.

[*English*]

Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor): Madam Speaker, my question is for the member whose speech was an attempt to speak to the practical and day-to-day concerns of her constituents in Bourassa.