

*Government Orders*

As we all know in the pre-dawn hours of August 2, the Government of Iraq, without provocation and paying no heed to the civilized norms of international conduct, launched a massive invasion of Kuwait. With an overwhelming force of 150,000 soldiers, 1,200 tanks and some 1,000 armoured vehicles, a force which was vastly superior to any defence that Kuwait could muster, Iraqi forces quickly captured Kuwait City and occupied the seat of government.

Six days later Iraq's original pretext of invasion, which was a claim that it was assisting revolutionaries flee Kuwait from reactionary rulers, was replaced 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 and its utter disregard for the norms of international conduct is the essence of the issue which confronts us today; namely, how we in Canada with like minded nations, members of the international community, can best prevent further acts of aggression by Iraq and compel Saddam Hussein to withdraw from Kuwait.

I need not remind you, Mr. Speaker, nor hon. members of the House that the Canadian Armed Forces have been used over the years to uphold the pillars of Canadian foreign and defence policy, especially in support of United Nations measures designed to secure the peaceful resolution of disputes and confirm the sanctity of existing states and their borders. Indeed, Canada's support for the United Nations operations in this region stretches back as far as 1949.

It is in support of these long-standing Canadian objectives that our ships and our aircraft have been committed to the Persian Gulf region.

Canada's geography should not and indeed cannot isolate us from developments in international affairs, even when it is a country that is so far away such as Kuwait in the Persian Gulf to which not too many Canadians have travelled or perhaps know that much about. What we do know is that Canada is a trading nation which will be adversely affected by the economic consequences of Iraq's blatant disregard for international law and its resulting impacts on our trading partners.

We all know some of those consequences that we are feeling now.

More important than trade and those kinds of economic consequences, Canada is a concerned, a compassionate and an active partner in the international community of nations, something that has been a precedent for all governments of this country and something that all members of the House can feel very proud about. As Canadians we must recognize that in the 1990s the commitment of our military forces may be required to give concrete expression to our concern for international peace and security.

Much has been written and spoken about the so-called peace dividend. Now that the cold war is over and the superpowers are beginning to work in concert, some people believe that now is the time to reduce Canada's defence preparedness.

**Mr. Brewin:** Agreed.

**Mrs. Collins:** Well, I do not agree.

Mr. Speaker, you will know as I do that that simply is not the case. The real peace dividend is that we can now have a greater awareness of the larger world in which we live unfettered by the overriding concern of east-west relations which has been the concern for some decades.

How we respond will be a test of our maturity as a society and our willingness to pursue actively the principles which will promote the type of world community we seek for ourselves and future generations. It is a responsibility that corresponds with our aspirations and our vision of the world. The challenge is to achieve that dividend, a peaceful and stable international environment across the entire globe.

I take great comfort in knowing that the world community shares those aspirations.

The international community, as embodied in the United Nations, has sent a clear and unequivocal condemnation of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. It has refused to recognize Iraq's annexation of Kuwait and is taking such measures as are necessary to enforce economic sanctions against the aggressor. We now have over 25 countries that have committed forces to the region as part of a multinational effort to deter further aggression and persuade Iraq to give up its illicit gains.