

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Blaikie: Mr. Speaker, the government has said a lot about the United Nations. Ever since the response to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, people have been pointing out the selectivity of the international outrage with respect to it. Everyone has their favourite previous event with which they want to contrast the outrage of the international community this time with the acquiescence of the international community in previous events, whether it be the Chinese invasion of Tibet, the Indonesian invasion of East Timor, or whatever the case may be.

All these things are helpful in so far as they point out the layer upon layer of hypocrisy that attends international affairs. But I agree with the government that we cannot achieve anything by simply telling old stories and pointing fingers at old culprits. We are in a new situation.

The United Nations post-1989, post cold war, post Berlin Wall coming down, is indeed a new United Nations. It is not fair to compare what the United Nations did not do in the past with what the United Nations may be doing now because we are in an entirely new situation. The question becomes not: "Why didn't the UN do this before?" That just goes to show how hypocritical and selective they are here now. The question becomes: "What is the appropriate action to take now in this new context?"

• (2120)

I will tell you what my greatest fear is for this new United Nations. It relates to the comment made by the Minister of Justice when she spoke about the western industrialized world. My greatest fear for this new United Nations is that it may go from a United Nations which was paralysed by the cold war and which could not do anything to a United Nations which, now that the north-north conflict is over—the north-north conflict that we called the east-west conflict—that is an opportunity for that new, united, or growing more united, north to turn its attention to its own collective self-interest in a way that will set the industrialized north increasingly against the south, increasingly against the Third World.

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If we put aside the character of Saddam Hussein and all the evil things that he has done in Iraq and Kuwait, it is not impossible to see him as symbolic of a Third World reality that is saying to the western industrialized world: "We don't want to have the world run by the club that Canada belongs to any more. We want the club to be widened. We want more decisions to be made, for example, at international peace conferences to deal with the Middle East and in other international fora. We do not accept that the western industrialized world has any more the right to presume that its interests are what can compel the world to go to war."

That is the nagging doubt that I have about this new world order about which I had a great many hopes not just so long ago.

What we are seeing here, for all its warts on both sides, is a foreshadowing of a world increasingly divided between the haves and the have-nots. Saddam Hussein is a have-not with a significant army. This country is not part of the ruling club, if you like, and has set out on a path which I reject.

But I think there has to be a form of negotiation. There has to be a form of taking into account these realities that I am pointing to and war will not be the answer. War will only lead to the creation of new problems, new Saddam Hussein's, and new brutal regimes that arise out of the ashes, certainly not democratic regimes. That is one of the things that the government does not seem to be taking into account.

I say out of the ashes, and I know others will speak about this, but we also need to take into account the ecological dimension of this war. This may be indeed the same kind of war that we refused to fight in Europe for the last 45 years because the consequences were too terrible to contemplate. They were worse than the problem that the war was intended to solve. When we take into account the ecological dimension of this war, it may indeed be that we are faced with that same kind of very difficult choice. The choice that we have made in the New Democratic Party is that we do not want Canada to be part of initiating any such conflict.

The government says that the credibility of the United Nations is on the line, but it is a credibility cornered by the actions of the U.S. administration in sending so many troops to the Gulf, the amount of troops and resources that could only have been sent with the idea that there was going to be an invasion of Kuwait and Iraq, regardless of whether or not there was any UN acceptance of that.