

*Government Orders*

During the intervening weeks over the Christmas season and into the new year, I have watched and listened anxiously along with all other hon. members and with all Canadians as events have unfolded in the Middle East.

In so doing, I have continued to search deeply for any contribution I might be able to offer toward resolution of the Persian Gulf crisis. Regrettably, I have not been able to much improve on the position which I took in the original debate.

Simply put, the order of law must be preserved throughout the world. The United Nations is the best vehicle for accomplishing that goal and armed force must be used to do so as a last resort in the failure of all other alternatives.

Last night the combined wisdom and judgment of the leaders in the United Nations coalition, led clearly by the United States, which has by far the greatest tangible commitment to the mission, determined that the balance of other alternatives had failed in Kuwait and decided to proceed with the final option of armed force.

I have respect for the concept of collective security represented by this unprecedented alliance under the mantle of the United Nations and, therefore, albeit with despair and regret, I accept and support the judgment and decisions which have been made and are now being exercised.

There has not really been much division in this House about the order of law or about the importance of the United Nations. Where we have had difficulty, and the issue which has really been before us is the course of ultimate action that must be taken to live within those principles of law and order and the work of the United Nations. How is the order of law to be preserved, how is the United Nations to accomplish that purpose? To a very considerable extent there has even been a consensus in the House for the unwelcome prospect that armed force would ultimately be contemplated to preserve the order of law when clearly there are no other effective alternatives.

I seem to have heard, or at least have gained the impression from listening to the leaders, that all parties in this Parliament would agree that at some point aggression must be met with force if there is no other way to stop it.

The Liberal Leader even hedged his earlier amendment with a proviso "at this time". The NDP Leader has also said clearly that she could conceive when force would be a final option. Surely, therefore, that means that no member in this House has a monopoly on the commitment to peace, nor does any member hold absolute purity about the prevention of war. We all share the quest for peace, but we all do seem to agree that force must ultimately be used if necessary to preserve that peace.

What we really have been debating are the questions of when and how the ultimate sanction of armed force should be used. That also puts the debate within the context of risk and responsibility for which there is a distinction within this House because only one party, the government, can make the final determination of risk and exercise the final act of responsibility. In the final analysis, the hard decisions must be made by the government, and that is not to complain, that is the government's duty.

Where there still does remain division in this House now that the time to use force has been determined is in whether Canada should remain committed to collaborate with its allies in the application of that force. I reject that we should withdraw our forces to seek only a peacekeeping role. Canada is not a neutral country. We must do our share to fulfil our responsibilities and our commitments in full alliance with other members of the United Nations coalition, particularly the United States.

Frankly, it is a practical matter of fact that decisions for any action against Saddam Hussein, even the imposition of economic sanctions, would have been sterile without the major participation of the world's leading economic and military power. Let us all be realistic and acknowledge that we are fortunate to have the United States committed so completely to this mission for peace as otherwise it is doubtful that Saddam Hussein would be stopped at all.

Therefore, nothing could be more natural and responsible than to join those allies under the mantle of the United Nations. In fact we are told that Canadian leadership did as much to build that alliance as to follow and support it. It would be the height or irony, of irresponsibility, and perhaps even of cowardice for Canada to renege or back away from its commitments to this alliance in any way. Most certainly, it would be humiliating for us to do so, particularly for petty reasons or false