

Government Orders

in war is a tremendous shock because there have been so many peaceful changes in the world during the last couple of years, so many positive elements.

In my riding of Broadview—Greenwood, I must tell you that I have been receiving hundreds of names on petitions. Holy Name Church personally delivered petitions last night. Many people have been writing, people in my riding, members who have family in the Armed Forces who are in the Persian Gulf right now, but who were hoping that we could put our minds to work over the war machines.

We on this side of the House have been trying and hoping that there was some way, some idea or some different approach which would maybe trigger an action that would cause Saddam Hussein to withdraw from Kuwait.

As our motion said, we did not support what was going on at that time. However, now we are at war, and I still believe that we should be continually putting our minds to work at ideas to stop this war, because it is going to be a lot harder to stop it than it was to start it.

I hope, as many members have said today, that we can keep the tone in this House directed toward peace and creativity. We should not get caught up in the fact that when we listen to the CNN or to many other broadcasts it is the military might that seems to be getting the pre-eminent play. We should be hearing more from people with ideas on how we can somehow have a diplomatic way of stopping Saddam Hussein.

Our leader said last night that we support our troops over there. There is no question of that on this side of the House. Now that the action has begun, it would be absolutely foolish for us to try to send a signal which would in any way, shape or form give anything but a sense that as Canadians we are all together.

As I mentioned last night, three summers ago I had the experience of staying in Kuwait for almost three weeks. I have friends there. Some of them have immigrated to Canada. We are not without feeling for what is going on in their homeland. We know that he is an absolute madman, but we also know that many of the 450,000 Kuwaitis who are still there are probably now at greater risk than ever.

I say to you, Madam Speaker, and I say to all members of this House that none of us here support war. We must

put our collective thoughts together whereby we can somehow break through or influence others who are senior politicians around the world to cause this war to end very soon.

Mr. Joe Fontana (London East): Madam Speaker, I want to applaud my good friend, the member for Broadview—Greenwood. He is trying to reflect not only the concern, worry and wishes of his own constituents but those of all of us on this side of the House including myself.

I have received hundreds of calls from my constituents in London East. It is a very sad day not only for Canada, because in fact we have embarked on this military action, but also for the Middle East and the world. We all understand that war at any time tends to erode that human fabric that holds all of humanity together.

War is not a solution, and that is what I think my hon. my friend was saying. War is not a solution to the problems not only in that region but to the problems of the world that we all have to work toward solving.

We on this side have been very frustrated that in fact a peaceful solution in diplomacy was not given a proper chance until the ultimate military weaponry had to be used.

• (1250)

We all agree that the dictator had to be removed, but are we all satisfied that the means justify the end? Will in fact a military victory bring peace to the area which the minister was talking about in a very complicated region of the world? Will the ultimate military victory bring peace in the world?

The other Arab countries in the area are also victims, I suggest, just like Israel. They did not want this dictator moving in on a sovereign state, because now what we have is perhaps further instability.

I want to ask my hon. friend what he believes are some of those things that can be done now that in fact armed conflict has commenced? Wars, as our leader said, are easy to start, perhaps too easy to start, but much more difficult to stop and for peace to be given as chance.

Can the member perhaps share his knowledge of the area and tell us some of the things that can be done as of today so that no more human blood has to be let on both sides? In the end, we all have to live with each other. We all have to build this world of co-operation which