

I wanted to point these things out because there seemed to be an indication floating from the other side that these things would automatically come about because we are all powerful, we are right, and God is on our side. The fact of the matter is that this war could be very protracted. There could be thousands upon thousands of casualties. If early reports are any indication, there have already been thousands and thousands of casualties on the Iraqi side.

Aside from the military part of it, is there any guarantee that we are going to get the political result that we want? Sure, we could knock off Saddam Hussein. We could destroy his armies. We could have an Iraqi pull-out from Kuwait. We could win that particular battle. But, can we win the political war in the Persian Gulf? Can we win the political war in the Middle East? That is in doubt. When I look at what is taking place in the Persian Gulf or in the Middle East in the last 40 years, I say that it is problematical at best. My worry, after we unleash the dogs of war, is that there will be an unbelievable destabilization of politics in that particular part of the world.

God only knows where war will take that region of the world. I do not know, but it worries me sick. In roughly the last 40 years, there have been what, five wars in the Middle East? Is this number six? Could there be a seventh, an eighth, a ninth?

I simply remind hon. members of this, because there is just no guarantee that we are going to get what we want out of war.

In my final remarks, I want to say that, as a member of the Liberal Party and of Parliament, I wish we were not a party to this war at the moment. I think we could have found a better way. It is a judgment on my part, but I think that we were on to a better way and should have continued with economic sanctions.

I will tell you, Mr. Speaker, my thoughts and my prayers are with every man and woman in our military operations in the Middle East. I say: Godspeed. I wish you luck, and I hope you come home soon and in good health.

Mr. Larry Schneider (Regina—Wascana): Mr. Speaker, I have watched this debate throughout the past several days, and I have had a great amount of difficulty in putting down on paper the words that I think most appropriately express one's true feelings with respect to the subject matter at hand.

Government Orders

As a result of that, I will not likely take the opportunity given to me to formally make a presentation to the House of Commons.

I would just like to make some comments that to a degree parallel the comments made by the previous speaker. I am not aware of any residents from my constituency who are directly involved, which should not for a minute make the trauma of the subject any lighter. As we have heard in the House, there are people whom we know and whose families are directly involved. As a result of that, we share the emotions that they must certainly be feeling.

There was a comment made earlier about how people intend to vote on this and how they are inspired to vote. I have given that some thought, and my comments relative to that particular subject are that essentially my hands are tied as to how I will vote. They are tied by my conscience and nothing else.

I have not been asked or told to vote in any particular way, but I think really and truly if one sits back and analyses where we are today and deals with the subject matter before us seriously as we must—if it was not before us seriously I am sure we would not be talking about it—we must, I think, vote with our conscience.

Those who have fought in wars before this one have paid the price. All the costs when rolled up together either by way of loss of life, psychological well-being, the loss of family, or the loss of family time together nevertheless spell a cost that has been paid for by and given toward wars of the past. For what purpose? For the purpose of peace, I say to you, Mr. Speaker.

Peace is not the sort of thing that, once attained, can be maintained without some additional costs. We are experiencing one of those costs unfortunately and regrettably today.

In the war that is currently going on, I understand that some references have been made to some rather significant losses of life. I further understand that these losses of life are directly attributable to military action on both sides, not that that loss of life therefore is justified any easier.

For those who are trying to put emotion into the debate and are saying that this represents a loss of life of children and of those not affected with the military conflict when all is said and done, we do know the facts. We will find that perhaps a major portion of the death is attributed to the military. I do not feel any better having said that, but I just simply to explain it. I believe that if you were to take everyone's position on where we are today, you would find no major divergence of opinion as to where we should go from here. There is some