

Will the Prime Minister listen to his own members from Quebec? Will he announce in this House today that the Canadian Armed Forces will take no part in offensive actions in the gulf?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member knows perfectly well that last night the government announced an international policy consistent with the actions initiated last August and September by this government. I believe that last night the Leader of the Opposition indicated that his party intended to support the government in this respect, considering the turn of events.

The hon. member mentioned the position taken by a member for Quebec. There is a wide range of views in Quebec. We find them in my own riding and in the hon. member's riding, and they are all valid. Someone mentioned 58 per cent of Quebecers are against war. I think that ought to be 100 per cent. Personally, I am against war, and I think we all are.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Mulroney: However, there comes a time when we must stand and defend the interests of the United Nations. In doing so, we are defending the interests of lasting peace in the world. Since you mentioned one Quebecer who is against the war, I will mention another one who supported the government yesterday, Premier Bourassa.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Chambly, for a very short supplementary.

• (1500)

Mr. Phillip Edmonston (Chambly): A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. One sure thing is that the Prime Minister knows there is a number of alternatives. His member for Abitibi knows there is a number of alternatives. As a former service man I know we have several alternatives other than war, and war with the active participation of Canada in offensive manoeuvres. Here is my question to the Prime Minister: Why would the Prime Minister always insist on an offensive role for Canada when our traditions call instead for a humanitarian role in such conflicts.

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, on August 2 last there was an act of aggression against Kuwait on the part of Iraq. This was a declaration of war by one Arab state against another. Canada joined

the other members of the United Nations in deploring this initiative and attempting by every peaceful means to find an acceptable settlement of the conflict. Despite all attempts, despite all efforts made by Canada and a number of other countries, they were all unhesitatingly rejected by the President of Iraq. Following a United Nations decision setting the deadline for last January 15, the countries that defend the interests of the United Nations decided to act in the interest of peace, of freedom and of human dignity which is being vilified by troops under the command of Saddam Hussein. Canada is there, not to play an aggressive role but to uphold the basic interests of the United Nations because the government believes that without the United Nations there will be no lasting peace in the world. That is why we are defending the interests of the United Nations.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

[English]

Mr. Speaker: I notice that the hon. Leader of the Opposition is seeking the floor, but I must advise the House that it is after three o'clock.

[Translation]

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Speaker, I think the Prime Minister would not want to mislead the House, and truth ought not to be the first victim of the war but—

Mr. Speaker: Is the Leader of the Opposition rising on a point of order?

Mr. Chrétien: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: On a point of order, the hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

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POINT OF ORDER

STATEMENT MADE BY RIGHT HON. LOUIS ST. LAURENT
ON JUNE 30, 1950

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Leader of the Opposition): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I want to point out to the Prime Minister that on June 30, 1950, Prime Minister St. Laurent said in this House, and I quote: "It would be our part in collective police action under the control and authority of the United Nations for the purpose of restoring peace to the area where an aggression has occurred"—I repeat: "— our part. . . under the control and authority of the United Nations."—That is not the case at the present time.