

Knowing of the strong record of service and involvement in the military of my hon. colleague from Bonavista—Trinity—Conception, yes, there were different points of view about when a debate would be most appropriate.

Mr. Speaker, looking back at that calendar knowing Parliament was coming back before the ships would actually become operational—there was going to be a significant period of time to get them there—there would then be the opportunity for debate. In fact, that was the first motion that was moved. We had the debate in the early days.

I think the hon. member is probably aware that there is no actual legal requirement to have a motion. There is a requirement in the National Defence Act to table an Order in Council within 10 days. This has been done in different ways.

I recall reading the debates from the time of the Suez crisis. The Liberal government at that time during the debate indicated that it is the role of the government to make the decisions in these instances. Then there should be an opportunity for debate. Ultimately it is the executive that makes the decision.

Second, how long they will be there? I wish I knew. I really do not think anyone knows at this point in time. On balance, one would hope that they could be home as quickly as possible. If it is necessary to ensure a peaceful resolution to this dispute to work for longer periods of time for the enforcement of sanctions to finally persuade what we hope is Iraqi's agreement to withdraw from Kuwait, we are prepared to stay there along with like-minded nations, as long as it takes. We will be watching on a daily basis.

• (1730)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Questions and comments are now terminated. Do I have unanimous consent to recognize the hon. member for Markham—Whitchurch—Stouffville for a short question or comment.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): No. Sorry. Debate.

Mr. Jesse Flis (Parkdale—High Park): Mr. Speaker, I am sure the hon. member who wanted to put a question

will have time at the end of my remarks. As he knows, I speak very briefly and to the point.

I am very pleased to participate in the debate on this motion put forward by the right hon. member for Yellowhead and seconded by the government House leader.

The Associate Minister of National Defence said that this motion enjoys widespread support among Canadians and in the House. I would like to correct the hon. minister. This motion could have received wide support had her government not bungled this process and come up with an all-party resolution. There are parts of this motion which are very good. There are parts that our party and I, as an individual, can support. Let us break it down.

The first part states:

That this House condemn the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq and, encouraged by the unprecedented international consensus demanding the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait—

No one would argue with that. I think all Canadians would give this full support.

The second part of the motion states:

—and the full restoration of the legitimate government of Kuwait, affirm unequivocally its support for Canada's actions in the United Nations Security Council and its support for all relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions adopted since August 2—

Our party supports that wholeheartedly. But the associate minister is not even interested in hearing this side. It is typical of that government. It refuses to negotiate with us. It refuses to try to come up with an all-party resolution. It puts in its two cents, and then it runs.

The last part of the motion states:

—and for the despatch of members of the Canadian Forces to take part in the multinational, military effort in and around the Arabian peninsula;—

Our party supports a multinational military effort too. But under whose auspices? Under the auspices of one of the superpowers plus some smaller countries which would not get the support of the United Nations? We could not support that. I am saying one superpower or another plus a few countries. But if this multinational military effort would be under the auspices of the United Nations, we could fully support this motion.