

*Government Orders*

On the religious side, I will in this forum simply say that I believe the world was made good, meant to be enjoyed by all and that there are troubles in it. The intention of our Creator is not to wipe us out, even through our own act but to cure what is wrong. That is the basic point of view from which I look at today's debate.

When I look at the government's motion, I feel that it is defective in the sense that we say we support the United Nations and its effort to ensure compliance with the Security Council resolution 660, and subsequent resolutions, with the ambiguity that is loaded into that word "subsequent"—which the Prime Minister refused yesterday or today to make any effort to clarify. If this is not a declaration of war, it is far too close to one. There is too much emphasis on punishment and on destruction.

- (1930)

The reason I prefer the resolution that the NDP supports is that it emphasizes more fully, and I think more realistically, the possibility of change for the better. We oppose the use of force against Iraq until sanctions have had the opportunity to work. We urge the government to seek an amendment to the Security Council resolution requiring member states to give sanctions and other UN efforts time to work and call on the government not to send Canadian Forces into military action beyond the current enforcement of UN sanctions without further approval from this House. The hon. member who just spoke feels sure there will be an occasion for that, but we want it to be laid down clearly because last summer we were denied that very right and responsibility.

In fact the position I am taking and that our party is taking is consistent with the position of the United Nations Association in its testimony before the Standing Committee on External Affairs and International Trade on November 6 when it said:

Let us be quite clear about this. The harsh economic sanctions which have been imposed on Iraq have not had time to produce results and there are other measures that could be taken before resorting to force. It may be useful to recall that even during the worst moments of its war against Iran, Iraq was still able to continue its oil exports. Under the current UN sanctions, this is not the case.

Others have gone into that question more fully and I do not intend to repeat most of what they have said. It seems to me that at this time and in the foreseeable

future, in the coming months, war, which is envisaged in the resolution of the Prime Minister, would be premature. It would be too harsh both to our foe—and Saddam is our foe; there is no question—and to ourselves. He has broken the law. If he has a complaint, which is quite possible, he should have taken it to the United Nations with some patience, rather than unleashing the beginning of what could be an unimaginably wide war.

If we join as war makers in that, the damage to our enemy, to ourselves, and to many others who may not even be party to it, is beyond our ability to measure and contain at this time.

I was willing in the 1940s, in World War II, to volunteer for the Canadian forces because I thought there was no other way, as far as I could see, to do what was necessary. Some of my acquaintances were conscientious objectors. I did not see their view as mine. I was willing. I have not changed my view on that occasion. In principle I believe that should still in the present situation be a possibility in some cases. I have sons and daughters of an age where they must consider this same question. I know they would think responsibly on this occasion and on others like it.

On this occasion I think it is too soon, both too soon in the case of Iraq and too soon following on these other examples that have been mentioned: the invasion of East Timor, tolerated; the U.S. invasion of Vietnam and its years of war there; the U.S. action in overthrowing the elected Government of Guatemala, the elected Government of Chile, and the elected Prime Minister of Iran; the invasion by the U.S.S.R. of Afghanistan; China's invasion of Vietnam; and France's hard-hearted continuation of testing of nuclear weapons in the Pacific, poisoning the land and the ocean.

These are all members of the United Nations, most of them members of the Security Council, that is to say of the big five, the permanent members. I do not think the record shows that these members are to be trusted with the blank cheque that is in the motion before the United Nations tomorrow, which the Prime Minister has asked us to endorse. Especially they are not to be trusted when oil is one of the major concerns. That is not only my opinion. That has been stated by many others much closer to the responsibility. That is the trouble with the government's motion.