

*Government Orders*

If we are really sincere in our adherence to the principles of the UN, then the first principle starts with the charter of the United Nations. That is why we object strenuously to giving blank cheques to the government to go ahead and do what it wants to do, when in fact it is clear that it has been guilty of a very serious error and sin of omission.

What I find incredible and disturbing to listen to, and about which I am distraught at the kind of argument, is the way members of the government have talked in such a facile and cavalier fashion about going to war.

The Secretary of State says there are some costs to pay. What kind of costs are we talking about? My God, when we are talking to Canadians about what they are facing in the next 24 hours or the next week, what kind of costs are we really talking about? Military casualties in the thousands. Civilian casualties of untold nature.

The Secretary of State says: "Look at the atrocities going on in Kuwait." I bleed for them. I feel badly for them. But what is worse? To kill them, to bomb them, to destroy the country? Is that a better solution? To totally wipe out their lives, and not just their lives but the lives of countless hundreds of thousands of others? Is that the preferred solution of the government? Is that really defending their civil rights and liberties?

With regard to discovering the reality, in terms of losing our innocence, we should be asking ourselves why it is that we did not hear the brave words we are hearing today a few short months ago when Saddam Hussein was gassing thousands upon thousands of Kurds in his own country. There were atrocities then and I did not hear any call to arms at that point in time. I did not hear any call to arms when Saddam Hussein was fighting against Iran and we thought he was a good guy because he was taking on those crazy fundamentalists such as Ayatollah Khomeini. We said: "Hey, go to it, Saddam. You're doing our job for us in the Middle East."

We were prepared to accept that, not only to accept it but we were selling them weapons and giving them food credits. The West Germans were helping him build his nuclear technology and the French were selling him jets. The Americans were having a wonderful time with him.

It was only two or three days prior to the invasion of Kuwait that Saddam Hussein had an interview with the U.S. Ambassador about the major borders dispute, and she said: "I am under instruction to tell you that that is purely an Arab matter in which we have no interest." Holy cow! Wow!

Where were the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State then? Why were we not standing up and saying: "My goodness, me, look at this affront to international law that is taking place. Look at what is happening. Quick, let's get out there. Let's get the troops mobilized." No, it was total silence. Nothing was said.

I am not saying that that past wrong should be repeated. What I am saying is let us recognize our own guilt and our own culpability as western nations in creating the Saddam Hussein's of the world by selling them arms and by giving them license to continue his kind of political adventurism without any restraint because he happens to be supporting our objectives at that time. That is what was going on.

How can we justify that kind of action now? It is not only human casualty and human suffering that will be felt. Just think of the political catastrophe that will occur. Do you think that by beating Iraq into the ground that all of a sudden there will be the gentle flowing of milk and honey down the Tigris and Euphrates? No, sirree, Mr. Speaker. The Syrians and the Iranians are going to be moving in to fill the political vacuum.

One of the questions we have to ask is, are we prepared to spill Canadian blood to help the Syrians and Iranians exercise further domination in the Middle East? Is that one of the objectives that the government is setting out? Let's hear from them. Is that what we are after? I tell you that political vacuum will be there and it will be filled.

• (1630)

What happens in terms of the Secretary of State for External Affairs saying: "Well, let us really consider how awful sanctions are that we have to wait and there will be instability and economic deprivation"? Do you think you can recreate and reconstruct the entire Middle East of Jordan collapsing within 24 hours by a full invasion of both sides? How much money will it take to rebuild that