

Government Orders

asking a question a moment ago, obviously not having listened as well as she could have, and perhaps for all Canadians, as well, who want to be sure what it is that we stand for.

I am sure I am clear, but at least I want that member who did not hear correctly to be sure as well.

Mr. Mifflin: Mr. Speaker, you have been very indulgent and I would like to thank you for that. I do not believe that we have reached the point when we have to use force.

Yet I cannot predict the events. Knowing what I know now, projecting it into the future and relying on the economic sanctions that we are using as a tool, I do not believe we will be ready by January 15.

I am going to end by once more saying that history has shown that democratic wars are not short and small. They are long, big and bloody.

Hon. Bill McKnight (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, being able to observe this debate both in the House and as it is being broadcast, I can assure you and the Canadian public that this is a worth-while debate.

I have some concern about the context in which the resolution we are debating here and the amendments that have been placed by the two opposition parties to the motion that has been put forward by the government. I think it would be important to read the motion that has been put forward by the government:

That this House, noting that the Government of Iraq has not complied with the United Nations Security Council resolutions concerning the invasion of Kuwait and the detention of the third country nationals, supports the United Nations in its efforts to ensure compliance with Security Council resolution 660 and subsequent resolutions.

Canada is a relatively fortunate country. We have little direct military threat. We have great opportunity because of that to play a part in the world that other countries are not allowed to play because of their circumstance and the region within which they are located.

We have an opportunity to work towards a more stable and peaceful world and a better international order. Typically, we have done this through multilateral agreements and alliances. We participate as a country in

collective defence arrangements with like-minded nations. We participate, as an example, in NATO. We participate in NORAD.

As a matter of fact, although being large in mass, Canada would not be considered a country of large military capacity. Therefore, we rely on the support of other nations for our own security. We join with other nations to have a secure Canada. I think it is important to understand that in the context of today and in the context of the aggression that Iraq has perpetrated upon Kuwait.

Canada has had opportunities to become involved in resolving disputes. The Canadian forces have joined in some 26 different peacekeeping operations in the world. Some 80,000 members of the Canadian forces have been involved in peacekeeping operations since the Second World War. Canada has participated in all but one of the United Nations peacekeeping missions. As a matter of fact, 78 members of the Canadian Armed Forces have been killed while participating in peacekeeping duties.

We have to take a look at the multilateral operations for collective security that we are discussing today. The last opportunity to be involved under the flag of the United Nations was the Korean war. Mr. Speaker, I suggest that because of the increase in tensions and east-west mistrust and lack of confidence since the Korean war, the United Nations has not been able to act with strength, concert or unity up until this time.

What allowed the United Nations to act this time with the strength it has shown and with the principles that are embedded in its charter for the first time in 40 years was the demise of the cold war. That came about because like-minded nations had the NATO alliance which was strong and steadfast and which assisted in bringing about the end of the cold war.

When we view the current crisis, the original dispute was about production quotas of oil. This escalated as Iraq revived some old territorial claims against Kuwait. As negotiations did not seem to progress, Saddam Hussein started a build-up of his military might along the border of Iraq and Kuwait. This dispute became the subject of intense negotiations and efforts on behalf of the countries in the region. As a matter of fact, Saddam Hussein assured President Mubarak of Egypt that there would not be an invasion of Kuwait and shortly thereafter when