Throughout this crisis, the government has taken a clear, consistent and constant position -- a position of principle. We have opposed aggression, we have supported the United Nations and we have been determined that Canada carry its share of the burden. There has been no equivocation and no shift of position. No one can be in doubt where the Government has stood from the very beginning.

Last November, in the second of three debates this House has had on the Gulf crisis, the Government outlined Canadian interests, stated our intention to support the will of the United Nations, and set out what action might be necessary if Saddam Hussein continued to defy the world. These issues were debated fully at that time. And since January 15th, we have debated whether or not to continue to support the United Nations and its resolutions. Since August 2nd, this House has debated Canadian policy towards the Gulf crisis for over 75 hours. The debate has been much more extensive than in the U.K., Australia, France, the United States and other democracies around the world.

When we first despatched our ships to the Gulf, there was an urgent need to deter further aggression. As time passed, as Saddam Hussein's determination to keep Kuwait became clearer, as doubts grew that sanctions alone would be enough to get him out, the world community realized that force would be necessary. In voting in this House on November 29, we were voting for U.N. Resolution 678, authorizing the use of force as of January 15, which was adopted in New York that same day. The U.S. Congress debated a similar motion, for the first time, in the second week of January, some six weeks later.

Parliament has had many opportunities to express itself on the principles, as it should. And the government has assumed responsibility for the decisions, as it must. We are confident that we have followed both the letter of the law and the spirit of the law. I call on all Members, including those Members who may have had different views before November 29th or before January 15th, to support the motion before us to reaffirm Canada's support for the U.N. No Canadian wanted this war. Every Canadian wanted peace.

The world gave Saddam Hussein a choice between war and peace and he chose war. Given his deliberate choice, Canada has followed a resolute and unswerving course: we have chosen to stand with the United Nations; and we have chosen to stand against aggression. We have chosen to stand up and be counted when freedom and world peace was under challenge.

On December 11, 1957, Lester Pearson spoke at the University of Aula in Oslo, in accepting the Nobel Peace Prize. He said: "...There can be no enduring and creative peace if people are unfree. The instinct for personal and national freedom cannot be destroyed, and the attempt to do so by totalitarian and despotic government will ultimately make not only for internal trouble but for international conflict."