

American forces were already doing that and the Canadian ships were not required in order to deter Iraq.

If the goal was to enforce UN sanctions, at the time at which it was announced that the ships were to be sent the UN had not yet legitimized the use of minimum force to enforce the sanctions. Yet in a way the government was saved from more criticism by the fact that the UN eventually did sanction to the use of force to enforce the sanctions. When that decision was taken, that resolution had not been passed.

We feel that the government could have, in light of the comments that I have just made, put more of an effort into constructing an appropriate, forceful and certainly military, if need be, UN response to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

I would like to make a few comments about the larger picture concerning the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, and some of the things that have been said about western, or particularly American or whatever hypocrisy, when it comes to the situation in Kuwait. I want to agree with some of those observations and I want to disagree with some others.

First of all, I think it is unfortunate that President Bush on occasion has been heard to say, and I heard him say it myself, that all nations who benefit "from the free flow of oil" should be sharing the burden with the United States in the gulf.

I think we have to make up our minds, and the President has to make up his mind. I heard him say last night on the news that this is not about oil, this is about naked aggression.

Well, I think it should be about naked aggression and I think it should not be about oil. But the President himself has said these kinds of things and it is in the saying of those things that he gives rise to the criticisms that he has received not just from non-Americans but from American citizens themselves. They are worried that what is really motivating the administration is not a great concern for the welfare and the sovereignty of Kuwait but an attempt to protect the American way of life, a way of life—including our own—that is excessively dependent on the consumption of fossil fuels, dependent on the consumption of a finite resource.

Government Orders

At this point we are consuming far more than our share of that resource, particularly when you consider that it is a finite resource. When I say "we" I mean North America, Europe and all who are concerned about oil supply. We need to be pushed on this, for it seems to me that if we can leave out the character and the ambition of Saddam Hussein for a minute, sooner or later as a civilization we are going to have to face up to the fact that we cannot continue to consume a finite resource, in this case oil, in the way we have been consuming it. We ought not to be prepared either to go to war or do any other thing damaging to the future of the planet in order to maintain that lifestyle for as long as we possibly can and to hell with the future.

It is with respect to this so-called defence of our way of life that much of the scepticism about what is happening in the gulf arises. People know that the international community did not mobilize to save East Timor from invasion and annexation by Indonesia. People know that. People know that in many other cases there has not been a similar degree of outrage.

I think some legitimate analogies have been made and some not so legitimate analogies have been made. I think the one of East Timor is actually the best as far as I'm concerned. There is an analogy between Iraqi-Kuwaiti relations and Indonesia-East Timorese relations. Many other analogies are more complicated because the countries which have been invaded by another country have in some way or another, rightly or wrongly, been in a hostile relationship with the other country.

But in the case of Iraq and Kuwait, and in the case of Indonesia and East Timor this was not the case, and yet there was no comparable outrage. People are right in pointing out the inconsistency that attends this international outrage. But that does not make the outrage wrong. It just means that we should have this kind of outrage all the time when these kinds of things happen.

• (1230)

Those of us who point out these inconsistencies and these hypocrisies are not saying we should not be outraged, we are just saying let us be outraged all the time when this kind of thing happens. Let us have the international community focus itself like it has been focused in the last few months every time a small country is treated in this way by a large country, or by a neighbouring country, whatever the size of that country