

S.O. 29

given to us this morning in the official release by the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney). At the beginning of his address this evening the Deputy Prime Minister said that the U.S. had no alternative. I thought he was then going to provide us with a good deal of information to substantiate that alarming statement because it is not contained in the statement released by the Prime Minister this morning. I ask again, as others have asked before me, what information did the President of the U.S. give the Prime Minister or Canadian officials? What information did they give to connect Libya with the recent terrorist attack in Germany? Was this a one-sided conversation? Did the Americans simply advise us of what they were going to do and not ask us as a good ally for our advice and suggestions? What attempt was made to explore alternatives, economic and political?

As was mentioned a few minutes ago, in the days of Pearsonian diplomacy, when Mike Pearson was the Foreign Minister of this country and the Prime Minister, we had a reputation of exploring peaceful solutions to very difficult and complex world problems. Perhaps my doubts with respect to the statements made by the President last night are based in part on what we have been told in recent months about what was happening in Central America. A few weeks ago the American Government told us, at the time a vote was taking place in the American Congress, that there was a massive incursion into Honduras by Nicaraguan troops. When journalists and others went down there to search out evidence of this attack, they found it was not at all what had been alleged. It appeared to be some kind of trumped-up story simply to justify the U.S. Congress authorizing funds for the Contras. One must also ask: Even if Libya can be connected to the most recent terrorism, will this sort of action by the U.S. stop a person—and I only go by his reputation—like Colonel Khadafy? We must remember in using this type of action that we could trigger an even worse situation.

The U.S. and the Soviet Union as well bear a very heavy responsibility when they use their military power. I say this as a friend of the U.S. We cannot forget that any small incident, and this is not small, can escalate into a much more serious war, one which brings with it the threat of nuclear terror. I remind the House that the United States and the Soviet Union now have between them 50,000 nuclear weapons that are more accurate, more concealable, more destructive than ever before. These weapons have one million times the destructive power of the bomb that fell on Hiroshima. It is alleged by experts that they could destroy 800 million lives in less than one day.

● (2210)

This is the concern of many Canadians. I spoke to a man this afternoon who told me that his 12-year-old son asked him this morning, "Daddy, are we going to have a war? Are we going to have a nuclear war?" That is the kind of concern that touches many Canadians when they see a superpower like the United States launch a military attack like this in a situation where all the facts are not known, where we do not know the basis for their attack, the justification and so on.

As was pointed out by other Hon. Members in this House, many of the United States allies in NATO have rejected this action: Spain, France, Italy and the Netherlands. I presume they know much more than we know here in the Opposition. The United Kingdom has given its approval, and West Germany has given a limited approval. This contributes to the doubt that many of us have. Many who have disagreed with the United States on this are their good friends. I am a good friend of the United States, and I expect much of the United States because they are my friend. Maybe I am more critical of them on occasions because I expect so much of them. I expect certainly more of them than I expect of Khadafy and Libya, and I expect more of them than I would expect of the Soviet bloc.

We must also consider what this action will do to the balance of power, to the realignment of forces in the Middle East and the world, and the shift of certain countries in that area more to the Soviet bloc and away from non-aligned positions. That is a possibility that is being discussed by the experts. There are other alternatives. I do not believe that we used the economic sanctions that were possible to the extent they could be used. I do not believe that we used international forums, the United Nations, the World Court, and other instruments of international action—political and legal action—to the extent they could be used.

In conclusion, and I repeat once again that certainly we cannot tolerate terrorism in any form, and we must attack and destroy terrorism. Military intervention must be the last resort in dealing with a problem like this, and never the first resort. We must always prefer the rule of law and non-military solutions. Those with great military power like the United States and the Soviet Union must use that power with great wisdom and discretion. I and some of my colleagues are still awaiting evidence, information that this was done in this case in this unfortunate incident.

Mr. William C. Winegard (Guelph): Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for the opportunity to participate in this debate this evening. We Canadians are fortunate in the freedoms that we possess. Chief among them is freedom from fear. Terrorism is challenging that freedom. It has disrupted the lives of many Canadians, and for some has brought their lives to a tragic end. In looking at events in the Middle East we should recall that they represent no isolated incidents, no "bolt from the blue". Canada's own experience with terrorism extends back many decades. The tragedies have been many. According to figures published in 1984 by the Department of National Defence, between 1964 and 1983 there were 64 politically-motivated terrorist incidents involving Canada, all of which were violent, and some of which resulted in death. Here I recall the words of the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark) when he spoke before an audience gathered in commemoration of the Air India flight 182:

We are in real danger of allowing a new form of global conflict to dominate the international order and govern our lives. Death, as a result of international terrorism is as real and as shocking as any of the deaths in the last global conflict.