

Government Orders

There is the question about sanctions: What good have they done? What have been the costs of the economic sanctions? There certainly have been painful repercussions for Kuwaitis because they have been occupied for some five months now. There has also been the cost upon those nations which are enforcing the sanctions. We in Canada have felt the effects of it as well, as we saw budget cutbacks of government spending of about \$350 million some weeks ago.

Turkey has been facing \$3 billion worth of direct assistance taken away. I read in a magazine recently that it has cancelled tourist bookings and is facing incredible problems because of the sanctions it has tried to impose and keep up with.

Jordan, of course, is in a very tenuous position right now as it is basically a supporter basically of the allied nations but is very frightened about what is happening in fact now, as we look at the clock at 7.50 p.m. on this night some eight hours ahead of us in the gulf.

I said again just a few minutes ago that we all would have wished this would have resolved itself in the most peaceful manner. In fact now that we have begun, we look forward to this being resolved with the least human cost possible.

I want to say as a Canadian citizen and as the member of Parliament who represents the riding of Beaver River in which we have two air force bases, CFB Edmonton at Namao as well as CFB Cold Lake, one hour north of my house where we deployed the CF-18s from, that we are very concerned about this. In fact, my neighbours are family members of those who have left CFB Cold Lake and are on active service now in the gulf. Many people in this House will have people for whom they feel directly responsible in terms of family members, friends, as well as members of Parliament, as this is the only place in this whole land that represents every square mile of this country. All of us in this Parliament of Canada will be touched in one way or another by this war which is now taking place.

• (1950)

There is no doubt in my mind as the member for Parliament for Beaver River representing these air force bases, that those people who are serving in the armed forces right now, all of whom are volunteers, joined the forces because they were proud to do so. They will do their duty and they will obey their orders regardless.

They will do what they are told to do no matter what process is followed. Unfortunately, it does little to enhance democracy and broaden public support when these decisions are made perhaps after the fact.

No one in the House tonight should get into any kind of partisan wrangling, which I mentioned earlier, and say what the government should have done or what we thought should have happened. We are at this point in our history, and in fact it has begun. We need to move forward now and say this is the position we are in, but nonetheless we have to ask those questions. I daresay we will be asking them of ourselves for years to come.

Military force is always a last resort after all other reasonable alternatives have been explored. Again, my remarks were prepared earlier. They are out of date because they were written only a few hours ago. We have crossed that boundary now in the world. The right hon. member for Vancouver Quadra earlier today said we are global citizens and we have now crossed that boundary and we are involved.

Let me just say in wrapping up my remarks that I believe at this point there is really very little that we actually can say in terms of what we should have done, could have done, or might have done. I have said that we have crossed that threshold. Whatever the motives are, or were, for this war, we could be critical and say it was just oil. We could also be critical as global citizens and say that we as human beings lust for money and power. I think that is a world-wide characteristic of the human condition.

Let us put that aside and say yes, perhaps oil was a factor. I daresay it was not the only factor, but certainly a factor that all of us have to agree, whether we like it or not, is a part of our life. If I may get really personal for a moment, I know how much gas I use, because my riding is 28,000 square kilometres and I am one of those people who uses a great amount of petroleum products. I appreciate that, because it enables me to travel the length and breadth of my constituency and get together with people.

The United Nations Security Council, as we are watching it now, is doing something that we have not seen happen for a very long time. We are seeing countries coming together, Russia and the United States for instance, where even a year ago or a year and a half ago such a thing would never have happened.