

*Government Orders*

present situation, Mr. Hussein would already be out of Kuwait. He would have gone out rapidly. If Mr. Hussein had informed his people about the risks involved in the invasion of Kuwait, he would never have invaded that country, never. Would we be here debating? I am not so sure. Must Canada use force if necessary? Some have asked if Canada had the right to declare war. Canada has been in a state of war for several months already. When this House agreed to support the UN measures, when we agreed to send our ships in the Persian Gulf, to send our aircrafts to protect them, when we agreed, as a nation, to support the economic embargo against Iraq, we have put our country to the service of the UN in a state of war. That's the truth.

• (2320)

Last November I was in Qatar and Bahrein. I met with Canadian soldiers who were there, real professionals, men and women of outstanding quality, the best we have in this country, people who are greatly appreciated by the residents of Qatar and Bahrain. Why are Canadians so appreciated over there? Because they are not seen as conquerors and invaders. Quite the contrary, they are considered as friends who come to lend them a hand, who come to help them protect themselves against a man who has attacked a small country like theirs.

This also marks the first time at the UN that people are so united, regardless of religion or language. Never have so many countries, so many different flags, or so many different nationalities formed a common front against a single individual.

Mr. Hussein did all he could to suggest it was a holy war and to rally his own blood brothers. They said: "No, Mr. Hussein, we do not agree with the way you are acting. This is no longer legitimate behaviour on the eve of the 21st century. We want peace in the Middle East. Mr. Hussein, you are leading us to war."

Madam Speaker, the moment a country like Canada decides to get involved in an international organization it has to be fully aware of the fact that it will have to live with its own decisions. This evening we are asking ourselves whether Canada will be compelled to resort to the necessary force. Let me put the question in a different context.

When an individual or a group of individuals goes into a bank or a building and takes hostages, how do we react when we hear about the incident? We call the police. We say: "There are people who took others as hostages, who do not respect our laws. We ask you to do your job, to get them out of there and to free the hostages." That is what we do in Canada. Everybody understands that. People in Canada do not ask themselves: "Are the police going to use their weapons? Could the hostages get injured or killed?" We do not wonder about that. We say: It is normal that the police do their job. We do not ask ourselves if a policeman could get injured or killed. We ask him to do his job, to protect us, because there is someone who does not respect the law in our country.

And when we get to the international level, then we say: No, it is not the same. Well, I tell you that Canadian military people in the Gulf play exactly the same role as a policeman would in Montreal, Toronto or Vancouver. It is a policeman role that our people play over there. It is strictly that. And we say to Hussein: You took people as hostages in Kuwait and you will free them, otherwise we will do it ourselves. Except that the issue is not the same. We are not talking about three or four individuals and we are not using hand guns or small weapons.

Weapons are much bigger today and they are also much more effective. But the issue remains the same. The same reality exists but on a different scale, a monstrous one. The decision we must make as parliamentarians is whether or not we should enforce international laws. I say that we should, Madam Speaker. I think that with all the efforts that Canada has made for the cause of peace over the years, now is the time to act and to show other countries of the world that the UN is a serious concern and that its laws are serious and credible. We cannot shirk our duty and say: "Well, we will see once the hostilities break out". It is now that we must determine our course of action. We must not wait for the problem to come up before acting, but we must be on the spot to prevent it from happening if possible. It has not been possible to anticipate the problem this time, to prevent Mr. Hussein from invading Kuwait. But his action must be stopped. He must withdraw his troops from that country fast.