

Government Orders

While we fully understand the importance of the presence of troops moved into the Middle East, we know that that has taken place in order to buy time. We know the solution can only be a political solution. It cannot be a military solution if it is to be a lasting one. That point was extremely well made, Mr. Speaker, and I am sure you will remember a few weeks ago, at the meeting that took place between Mr. Bush and Mr. Gorbachev. There were evidently the elements in that meeting for the search of a political solution. The means probably were different. The way of thinking in Washington is suddenly quite different than the way of thinking in Moscow as to how to get there is quite different, but I am convinced as I stand in the House, Mr. Speaker, and I am sure you are too, that in both capitols the desire is to arrive at a political solution. The same applies in our House of Parliament. We want to arrive at a political solution, one that will bring us together rather than divide us when we vote on the motion on Tuesday.

For this reason, I appreciate very much the opportunity to participate in the debate, to reaffirm the confidence of my colleagues and myself in the final role of the United Nations, and to recall that it was under the leadership of a former Prime Minister of Canada before he became Prime Minister, namely Mr. Pearson, that Canada became an active initiator of peacekeeping missions in many parts of the world, some less publicized than others. I am glad to see that a Pearsonian sense of world responsibility by way of peacekeeping has also been continued and adopted by the present Secretary of State for External Affairs. Along that path, the government will have the full support of Canadians because deep down in the heart of every Canadian there is this confidence, this tremendous belief, that only through the United Nations can the diffusion of world disputes, differences, and potential dangers be achieved.

Mr. Mark Assad (Gatineau—La Lièvre): Mr. Speaker, as I begin my speech, I would like to remark that our colleague from Davenport gave an excellent analysis of the situation and the role of Canada in peacekeeping.

For those who were riveted to the radio and television in the past months after Iraq invaded Kuwait, many people were upset and with good reason. We were hoping for, and we got, quick response from the United Nations. The United States took immediate action, and Canada, contrary to its tradition of following the banner

of the United Nations, decided to deploy men and material to the Middle East crisis. But I guess it would be impossible to expect the average Canadian to really understand the whole complex situation that has been that of the Middle East ever since 1948, or hundreds of years, for that matter. It has always been a very complex problem and there are probably too many factors that come into play. Do not forget the Middle East, for all practical purposes, was the cradle of civilization as we know it. Yet the problems over the years have compounded themselves to the point that it is hard to distinguish what is fact and what is fiction, and where is the truth and where are the lies. God knows there is a lot of truth and there have been a lot of lies that have come out of the Middle East.

• (1940)

I guess many people have taken a position on this whole issue without knowing the facts, and I can understand. Members of Parliament, our fellow Canadians, and many people throughout the world maybe just do not have time or the inclination, or they do not want to take the time, to realize there are reasons why this kind of conflict that has developed in the Middle East. A tremendous amount of resentment has been built up throughout the years, and it is understandable. I would like to point out one particular paragraph that I thought summed it up quite well.

The Arab masses resent the role that the United States is now playing in the Gulf and the financial support that some Arab states are providing, all of which they perceive as designed to protect undemocratic and feudalistic governments. They can be expected to ask with frustration and anger how many houses, schools, hospitals and highways could these funds have built in poor Arab parts of the world? How many farms and factories could have been established for hungry Arabs?

Why should this enormous amount of Arab money be diverted for the perpetuation of unjust and outdated governments? It is the anger and the frustration which breeds the Saddam Hussein and the Ayatollah Khomeinis of the Middle East.

Mr. Speaker, it does not take a genius to understand that in the past years in the Middle East the Arab nations have constantly been frustrated, especially by the United States, in finding a solution in the Middle East,