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I would like to set the record straight because it is important that we let people know where all parties and all MPs stand in regard to the United Nations resolution. There seems to be a misunderstanding out there as to our position with regard to the UN. In closing the minister mentioned that he supports the United Nations. I have to state that the Liberal Party of Canada also supports the United Nations.

Let us look at the events. When Iraq invaded Kuwait we supported the resolution in the House of Commons on October 23, 1990 which was in support of UN Security Council resolutions 660 and 662. When it came time for mandatory sanctions under UN resolutions 661 and 670, we supported them as well. When it came to using military force to enforce those sanctions, we supported that. But there comes a point in time when we have to consider whether we have gone far enough, and that is where we differ.

I think that all members of the House, regardless of what party we belong to and what part of the country we come from, have the same object in mind, that is to force Saddam Hussein to withdraw from Kuwait. The difference of opinion is in how to do that.

I want to make sure that the minister knows well that we have the same intention that he has, but we have a different means of achieving it. We feel that sanctions should have been given more of a chance to work. Statements in the fall by the President of the United States, by the Secretary of State of the United States, and by the CIA commissioner indicated that the sanctions were working. Experts would agree that it takes roughly 12 months for those sanctions to work. We feel that it is very important that we give those sanctions time to work. I felt it very important that I put those comments on record this evening.

I would also like to say—and I am sure the minister would agree—that we support the military efforts over there, in the sense that our military has been very professional in the way it has carried out its functions in the gulf. I would like to applaud our military experts for the way they have carried out their duties in the second major crisis in the last 12 months. They are very professional and they have proven it again. Let us hope that we can avoid this war.

Government Orders

Mr. Merrithew: Madam Speaker, I appreciate the obvious sincerity of the hon. member for Restigouche—Chaleur. I have known him for some time and I know that he speaks with deep sincerity on important issues.

The bottom line here is the fact that we have had naked aggression by one country over a neighbouring country. These people have used force, killed, pillaged, raped, driven out half the country's population, and annexed that country as a province of their own. That is the bottom line. Something had to be done. Somebody has to stand on principle. The United Nations and the 30-member coalition has done that, and they have given a deadline.

I know there is a good deal of argument—and I have heard a great deal about it in debate today—indicating that sanctions have not been given enough time. The fact of the matter is there is no proof and, according to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, he has received no proof that the sanctions or the embargo have really worked.

Proof positive of that is the fact that Saddam Hussein has not changed his mind. He is not the least bit sorry. He is not going to leave the country he has conquered. What will change his mind is not the sanctions. Some countries have had sanctions applied to them for as many as 10 years. How much time are we going to give them to dig in deeper, to build more defences, to develop more arms and perhaps even nuclear weapons to kill our troops when the United Nations finally would decide to take action? There has to be a time limit. That time limit has been given. It has been five and a half months since that aggression, and I think it is time that he did that. I do not see any proof that Saddam Hussein or the Iraqi people are repentant or willing to get out. They are just laughing with disdain and impunity at the United Nations and indeed the whole world. He does not care what will happen.

The two major negatives in allowing him more time are the fact that it will allow more time for building defences and, the sheer principle that a deadline was given five and a half months after naked aggression and the conquering of another country. He has had lots of time to show some movement, some willingness to co-operate with what the world agrees is a wrongdoing by his country and by his people.