

risk in an area where our interests have yet to be defined, whether they be moral, political, or economic.

The government does not want to address questions about why Canadian forces are positioned in the Persian Gulf within a war zone if war breaks out. It does not want to deal with who calls the shots—pardon the pun—for Canadian forces if war does break out, whether it will be the Americans, the United Nations, or Canadian personnel.

It does not want to address what Canadian forces are expected to do, if war does become a reality. Right now, the reality is that we are participating in a blockade that is intended to force Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait, or to force Iraq into a war with the United States. We are being asked to support blindly Canadian government initiatives in this regard.

The build up of American forces, analysts said three weeks ago, is costing the American government more than \$1 billion per week. This is an indication that those soldiers were not put there because they requested a holiday.

Perhaps the main motives of why the situation in the Middle East developed to the state it has come is probably to be seen in analyzing American interests with respect to its own economic interest, its declining world political influence, and the emergence of a Europe in 1992 which might find itself much more independent of American influence globally, as well as in that particular area.

If the big question is the redistribution of economic power, if the big question is the impact on the industries of the industrialized world as a result of the politics of the Middle East, why were we not given the opportunity to examine those interests? I see that my colleagues from the NDP would probably agree.

This has nothing to do with isolationism. This has nothing to do with the policy of deciding if we are to the left or to the right. If, as a country, we have in the past supported the democratization of societies everywhere, if, as a country, we have tolerated military presence only in a peacekeeping capacity, why would we depart from those two very valuable principles now when they are needed most?

Government Orders

I am not naive, neither am I completely oblivious to the conflagrations that exist world-wide. There are areas that quite unfortunately are steeped in military conflict where we are not playing a role. There are other areas where our allies are involved in conflict and we are not playing a role. There are other areas where our friends and our allies are involved in the kind of circumstances that could at best be described as compromising of some principle and we are not involved.

It would appear that when the American eagle sneezes, we rush forward with our handkerchiefs. What have we seen in the course of this debate? Not only have we been attempting, at least on the government side, to seek reactive type of unanimous support, a whitewash of government initiative or lack thereof, but we are seeing seeping into the debate, very slowly and insidiously, the discussion that we can actually influence the outcome by now talking about a possible resolution called linkage.

For those who are becoming much more aware of what this term linkage means in international politics, I have heard hon. members from both parties talk about the secret to peace in the Middle East being seen in the resolution of the Palestinian question.

As one who has already avowed adherence to the principle of international peace, to the principle of international demilitarization, to the principle of harmony among people, I could hardly exclude the question of resolving the problem of Palestinians in any debate.

I am not here to discuss that particular issue. I was being asked—and I would have hoped that I had been asked two months ago—to debate whether in fact we ought to be involved in the activity of a legitimate president, no matter how much we dislike him, and I dislike him intensely, no matter how much we dislike the form of government, and I disapprove of it totally, to debate the action of one Arab leader against the actions of another Arab leader.

For those who do not understand it, Mr. Speaker, Saddam Hussein did not enter Kuwait because he was interested in resolving the problems of the Palestinians in the Middle East. He absolutely did not do that. For us now to start beginning to talk, as my colleague from Burnaby—Kingsway and my colleague from Trinity—Spadina said, saying we have to link the two in order to reach a solution, I think avoids the very serious question that all of us should address, and that is: What is