

confrontation becomes more spectacular in his eyes, are very good questions.

We are aware that Iraq has one main business, one main export, and it earns all its foreign exchange by selling oil abroad. It imports three-quarters of its food and much of its manufactured goods. Therefore, the economic sanctions are likely to hit them fairly hard, but over what period of time and how self-sufficient can they be? I think this is worthwhile spending a few moments on.

Analysts, like economists, have different assumptions and look at different things, but they have different estimates of how long the food supplies might last. Most of them agree that no Iraqi should be malnourished—that is, to feel the effects of starvation—for at least one year.

There are certain aspects that I think are worthwhile mentioning here. First, this year Iraq had a bumper crop of wheat. Generally it is sufficient in fruits, vegetables, and the staples of the diet that keep people healthy. It is expected that they can go on for a year.

There was a bit of a loophole in the Security Council resolution imposing the embargo and there was some reference made to the humanitarian aspects. I believe that human rights aspect is still being discussed. What is humanitarian is sometimes different for one than it is to the other. I am going to skip over that and look at another aspect here.

Iraq's economy, I think it is safe to say, is only semi-developed and it is likely to grind on in other aspects rather than food for about nine months, according to the general analysis. The need for imported clothing and household appliances is not pressing at this point in time. As the shortage of spare parts becomes acute, water and power supplies will only gradually begin to decline. When a generator breaks down, if there is not a spare part then there will be problems with water and electricity.

There is scope for some flexibility in their self-contained economy, but not very much. There is not a manpower problem. One of the greatest assets that Saddam has, of course, is his one million man military machine and it is not likely to fade away in the immediate future. In addition, from a military aspect, they have stockpiled conventional weapons and spare parts and they continue to assemble the exotic ones. I am referring

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to here the missiles and the chemical weapons which are a formidable threat. I pray to God that they do not even consider some of the implications of that. They are reasonably well stocked with parts and ammunition, but if a shooting war breaks out the consumption will be at a fantastic rate.

The key question, at least the analyses agree, is how long the foreign exchange will last. The higher estimates put Saddam's reserves at between \$10 billion and \$12 billion and last year the country spent more than \$17 billion on imports. Although they will have to buy what they can this year, the cost of the embargo breaking will increase and the money will eventually run out.

One way or another the sanctions calculations seem to come back to the same timeframe, from six months to about a year. If the international coalition holds together that long, and there is every indication that at least at this point in time after about 10 weeks that it is holding up, Saddam should be hurting pretty badly.

The key question then is, will he withdraw from Kuwait or would he push on to a violent attack. He has got a lot of credibility to guard. He has got a lot of credibility to protect. When he gets in the corner, is he going to give up or is he going to pull the plug? That is a good question. Really whether or not the embargo is successful, or whether or not it is an alternative to war it is still possible, but let us hope that we can continue in the six-month to one-year timeframe and, at every possible opportunity, every second if necessary and through the United Nations or any other body, try to seek a peaceful means to this difficult situation in the world that we have ourselves in.

Mr. Blackburn (Brant): Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend and colleague for his very relevant information and his remarks.

I can only add, and I think he would agree, that it is pretty difficult to gauge ahead of time the actions of a madman. I am not suggesting that Saddam Hussein at this time is clinically insane, but if pushed to the wall, as it were, what would he do as a fanatic on his way down? How many he would take with him? What drastic extreme actions would he take? It is true, he does have some chemical weapons. He may have nerve gas. His missiles apparently are not very accurate and by extending their range they are even less accurate than they