

*Government Orders*

We kept them there. We were patient. We realized it was a sacrifice and a burden, but we did not even have sanctions on the Soviet Union. We were selling them wheat at the same time.

What would happen if the United States reduced its troops substantially, had a defensive posture in Saudi Arabia, maintained the sanctions, put more squeeze on and said: "Okay, Saddam Hussein, hands up baby because we are going to get you. You are going to have to capitulate. You are going to have to give in because you cannot sell any oil. You have no more foreign reserves. It is just not only a matter of starving your people, but you cannot get your heart operations. You cannot drive your trucks. You cannot do anything any more." Mr. Speaker, I tell you that Saddam Hussein would be at the table soon enough. But he will not be there under 678 because we say that is an ultimatum. I guess if you know anything about Arab politics, and I do not pretend to be an expert, you do not force their backs to the wall, you do not say, "lose face", you do not say, "give in right away" and "Here is the time, and if you do not do it now we are going to hold a gun to your head". That is not the way to bring about a peaceful solution.

Just let the squeeze take place, just keep rationing going. That is the argument I would make and that is the kind of argument Canada should have been making during that period of time.

• (1640)

I could cite a variety of supports. There is one, though, which I would like to bring to the attention of the House. It was sent to me by a group of researchers at the Centre for International Strategic Studies at York University, and talks about the choices, sanctions versus others. Let me just comment on this because these are experts with no axe to grind.

They said an economic blockade and boycott have unique advantages over a military attack because, first, acquiring nuclear weapons are of little use against an economic blockade. Second, the target nation cannot reply in kind in any effective way. If you are Iraq, how the hell do you put an economic embargo on the United States? It is impossible to retaliate. Third, blockades and boycotts work slowly. This is an advantage as events are less likely to run out of control. Fourth, they allow negotiations to proceed even while economic pressure is being applied; military action interrupts negotiations. Boy, that is an understatement.

They go on to say that, fifth, they are highly reversible and one can ratchet the strictness up or down in response to diplomatic progress. That is an important point and let us not forget that. The good thing about sanctions is you can reward response and you can punish lack of action. We have not used sanctions that way. We have not turned the screws to tighten them and released them. For example, I make this case: there was a lost opportunity by this country and others when Saddam Hussein released the hostages. There was an opportunity there for us to respond, just a little bit. Maybe we could have said food and medical supplies could go through more freely. There were real shortages and a real squeeze in that country so we could have said: "All right, you are releasing the hostages, that answers one part of the UN resolution," a very important part.

That was the time to relent perhaps a little, ease the pressure. That might have got some kind of response but, no sir, that very day the President of the United States said: "Hey, the hostages are gone, good; now we can go in an bomb the hell out of Baghdad". That was the response not "Let's use sanctions as a way of giving it a little bit of a lurch, a twist a spin". No, no, he said: "Now we can bomb". So, Saddam Hussein said: "Hey, I just released the hostages. You have been asking me. You have had all these crazy parliamentarians coming here for months. We finally listened to them and let the hostages out." Why did we not show some response? Why did we not show some initiative?

The fact of the matter is, as I have just gone through this kind of analysis, that sanctions do have a lot of advantages. Perhaps the biggest advantage is that you do not kill a lot of people with sanctions. You do not destroy countries with sanctions. You do not destroy an entire region with sanctions. I do not care what the Secretary of State for External Affairs says, by any reasonable, logical, common-sense calculation, putting the balance sheet down in black and white, adding up what is the preferred method of getting Saddam Hussein to withdraw, I would say sanctions and diplomacy versus military action will win every single time.

To give up so early and so quickly and to abandon sanctions right now means that the international community can never use sanctions in the future because Iraq was such an ideal opportunity, according to the Brookings study, which showed that perhaps there is no country more vulnerable to sanctions than Iraq. In a sense, if you wanted a model to test, here it was and we have given up on it within four or five months. When are