

The cabinet is meeting momentarily to discuss the situation. The Prime Minister of Canada will be in this House later tonight after that meeting to report to the House of Commons.

[*Translation*]

I would like to say a few words in French. I can confirm that an attack has begun against Iraq. The Prime Minister was informed before the attack by the president of the United States. The Canadian cabinet will meet a few minutes from now, and the Prime Minister intends to be here to address the House of Commons after the cabinet meeting.

[*English*]

Mr. Prud'homme: Mr. Speaker, I said earlier that reason must prevail. We must have cool heads. It makes so much sense to me, and as I said personally to my friend, the hon. member of Edmonton Southeast, it would make so much more sense if we at this time adjourned the House, suspended the House, until a time when our Prime Minister would come and speak to the House. Then, again, suspend the House so that caucus could meet.

I do not know what the Prime Minister is going to say but we would at least like to have intelligent discussion with our colleagues from each party as to continued debate on this matter.

It would seem to be so logical to suspend the sitting of the House, get an indication as to what time the Prime Minister of Canada will come to the House and speak, then suspend again until an agreed-to time. The Whips and House leaders are here to discuss the matter and decide if we should come back to the House, and then decide the kind of speeches we might make.

I humbly say that on this occasion—

• (2010)

[*Translation*]

I submit, with respect, that in the circumstances this is the best and most intelligent way to proceed.

Government Orders

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): If I am not mistaken, and for the benefit of those who are listening, we seem to be reverting to the motion tabled earlier by the parliamentary secretary, namely that the House be allowed to suspend its business with unanimous consent. The hon. member for Edmonton Southeast.

Mr. Kilgour (Edmonton—Southeast): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate what the hon. member just said. The Secretary of State for External Affairs has already made the announcement, and if the Prime Minister has something to add, I think it is very important that we should hear it.

I was told earlier that all caucuses are now meeting to discuss what may be the most important question we have ever debated in our lives. Although I think the debate can go on, I respect the opinions of members on both sides of the House. Since I am the only independent member present at this moment, except for my hon. colleague who will probably have a few words to add, I am quite prepared to accept the motion moved by my hon. friend.

[*English*]

Mr. Cooper: Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate that we as members on the government side had agreed to this earlier. In fact we encouraged it.

We want to suggest that probably what we should do is suspend the House to the call of the Chair, with a 15-minute bell to make sure that members have an opportunity to be alerted of the House coming back.

Mr. Gauthier: Mr. Speaker, we agree, but we would like to have some indication as to approximately what time. I was told ten o'clock earlier this day. I was wondering if it could be confirmed that it would be around ten o'clock.

Mr. Cooper: Mr. Speaker, I can confirm to the House that it would be our intention to come back at approximately ten o'clock. I hope the House will forgive me using the word "approximately". Since cabinet is meeting, I have to have some allowances. Certainly it is our intention to come back around ten o'clock.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): Is that agreed?

Some hon. members: Agreed.