

Government Orders

Please, let us talk about linkage perhaps, but not this kind of linkage at this time. Yes, there are many problems, but we cannot solve them all. The one we are discussing tonight—and it is almost the eleventh or the twelfth hour—is the question of Saddam Hussein and his rape of Kuwait. It is the impossible situation of the Kuwaiti people that has to be settled. We have to find ways to do that which do not put that whole conflagration into operation: nuclear holocaust, bacterial warfare, chemical warfare, and God knows what its impact will be on all of us.

We do have a moral responsibility. We have a responsibility as a people and Canada cannot walk away from it. We are not suggesting that we walk away from it. We are suggesting that we have to pick the proper time for Canada.

Mr. David Barrett (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca): Mr. Speaker, this is an important opportunity in front of so many members here because I do not fundamentally disagree with what the hon. member is saying. She is pointing out the idealized goal. I am pointing out some of the inconsistencies of the current Canadian government's position. I think they have to be understood.

The Prime Minister is the one who invoked Amnesty International. I am the one who reminds the House that it was the Prime Minister who brought in Amnesty International as a touchstone for his definition of good works. One of our partners here does not stack up too well in good works.

The linkage I referred to is not the one that Saddam Hussein has defined. I agree with the hon. member completely that he is in no position to define anything. He is the aggressor. But some of our partners have defined linkage.

What I was bringing to the hon. member's attention is the linkage defined by Syria which is now one of our partners. Mr. Assad's linkage is that if Israel is attacked and responds, he will pull out of the partnership. What kind of partner is that? The same with President Mubarak of Egypt. Furthermore, these things do not happen in isolated arenas. Who was it that armed Iraq to the teeth? It was the Soviet Union, the United States, and France that armed Iraq.

I am just pointing out that there is linkage in other dimensions and I did not want that opportunity to pass without understanding that linkage has more to say than just one single definition, and I agree with the member.

Mrs. Finestone: Mr. Speaker, there is no question that war makes very strange bedfellows. Of that, there is no question. I would say that the linkage has more to do with power and power hungry persons, and leadership of the Arab world. It is not with oil, and that is why perhaps one might see Syria talking out of both sides of its mouth. That is why I think that there may be that kind of linkage problem.

With respect to what the Prime Minister is doing, I have no intention of referring to the unpopular Prime Minister. I have much more interest in referring to the importance of Canadian's sons and daughters who are in this war and what they have to look forward to, and what kind of answers we as parliamentarians and their elected representatives have as a moral responsibility.

Hon. Kim Campbell (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise to participate in this very important debate.

I would like to begin by making some comments on the remarks by the hon. member for Mount Royal, which I thought were very articulate and very heartfelt. She articulated the issue very clearly and in a very straightforward way when she said: "There comes to be a point when enough is enough."

Really, the question is: When is that point? What is so vexing about the situation which faces us in the Middle East today is trying to determine when that point is.

As a member of the government, I must say that I cannot imagine an issue more difficult. It is one that has certainly occupied us and preoccupied us for some time now.

I think it is important perhaps to review why we are where we are. The key decision made by the countries of the world was a decision to prevent Iraq from any further aggression after it had occupied Kuwait. This required not simply the imposition of interdiction of shipping in the gulf. This was, in many ways, after the fact, but involved the landing of land forces in Saudi Arabia to prevent the further extension of Iraqi military occupation.