

Government Orders

It also needs to have assurances that the government will not allow peace to emerge at the expense of interests of other nations in the area. I refer specifically to Israel. It should not be asked to sacrifice its national interest and security in order to arrive at an arrangement that will satisfy some members of the alliance.

It is only right that Canadians understand that the Canadian government has an over-all objective, after the conflict, after tomorrow, before we consider the motion that the government has presented to us. Will we get an answer to that from the hon. member?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, I get the impression the hon. member is not really interested in the answer, since he used all his time to ask his question. I will try to be as brief as possible.

The plans to which he referred are in fact the approach we have taken from the outset. The hon. member seems to think we have a whole set of tactics and secret plans that will come into play at the stroke of midnight or five to, which it will be very soon.

Our plan in this country has been consistent. What I can't stand is the kind of hypocrisy I am seeing here. We discussed this in September and October, in the House. A number of resolutions were adopted. Your party and the New Democratic Party opposite said that they were prepared to support this kind of resolution, provided this is done under the auspices of the United Nations. This resolution is under the auspices of the United Nations, and still they don't agree.

Canada, unlike other countries which are not so far away, has always had a profound respect and has always worked very hard for the UN. We are one of the pillars of this organization. In fact, I think we are the fourth largest country in terms of contributions. We play a major role at the UN because we believe in the UN.

• (1720)

There are other countries that are more skeptical. There are other countries that would rather go it alone, and their game may have been upset by the action taken by Canada and certain other powers that got on board with people who got itchy feet at the very start of the conflict, in order to prevent a conflict from breaking out in August. It is now January 15, a fateful date, and we have progressed considerably since what happened in August, and we are getting there.

I still think that if we manage to get together and take up a strong position—not an armed position, but a strong position—we can make this dictator listen to reason.

[*English*]

Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, I have a number of statements from President Bush, Secretary of State Baker, and the CIA Director Webster made in the early fall indicating the gravity of the impact of sanctions on Iraq. They talked about oil exports having been halted and virtually nothing getting in or out of the country.

I have more recently similar statements from Senate Majority Leader Mitchell and Senator Edward Kennedy. Debates were held last week in Congress.

Will the member opposite admit that sanctions could achieve the retreat of Iraq from Kuwait?

[*Translation*]

From what he knows and has heard, does he think it would have been possible to get Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait with sanctions alone?

Mr. Speaker, that would have been ideal, but I don't think it will get that far.

Currently, President Saddam Hussein has become an expert at letting the civilian population bear the brunt of the sanctions. The army is not affected by rationing and continues to get its arms and military equipment, while the civilian population suffers. This could go on for ages. I do not think sanctions alone would be enough to bring a government to its knees. However, sanctions were useful in sending a clear message to this president who was not open to any other kind of message.