

CANADIAN RESPONSE TO TERRORISM

Hon. Warren Allmand (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine East): Mr. Speaker, everyone agrees that terrorism is reprehensible. That is not the question. The question is how we deal with terrorism. The Deputy Prime Minister said last night that the only alternative to this terrorism from Libya or elsewhere was the military attack launched on Libya by the United States, while the Prime Minister said we must have negotiated settlements—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Does the Hon. Member have a question?

Mr. Allmand: Mr. Speaker, he is not answering the question. Once again I ask him what is the Government's response to that situation of terrorism, the answer he gave last night or the answer the Prime Minister gave yesterday morning? The two responses are different. What is the official position?

● (1430)

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, there is no difference, as hard as the hon. gentleman works to manufacture a difference. I reread into the record what I said last night and what the Prime Minister said in his statement. They are entirely consistent, and try as he might to distort that consistency, I am afraid it is there for all to see as plain as the nose on my face.

CANADIAN ALTERNATIVES

Ms. Pauline Jewett (New Westminster—Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, in order to help clear up this inconsistency for all of us—

Mr. Crosbie: There is no inconsistency.

Ms. Jewett:—would the Deputy Prime Minister, and I give him this opportunity now—

Mr. Epp (Provencher): Oh, thank you.

Ms. Jewett:—tell the House what specific alternatives the Canadian Government presented to the United States in response to the crisis in the Middle East over the past year?

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, it is not necessary to stay within the last year. We can go all the way back to Bonn when economic sanctions were first proposed. When the United States imposed sanctions, we were the first to support that route. Diplomacy has not worked. Efforts have been made there. Economic sanctions have not worked. Efforts have been made there. The alternative was left to act as the United States did with the objective of eliminating an evil which we all recognize as evil and reprehensible. That does not mean to say that the matter is cured and stops there. Of course not. Ongoing efforts have to be made, as suggested by the Hon. Member's own Leader. We will take all those suggestions into account in the discussions in Tokyo in two weeks' time.

Oral Questions

FORCING DOWN OF EGYPTIAN AIRLINER

Ms. Pauline Jewett (New Westminster—Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, let me be absolutely specific. Did the Government, at the time of the forcing down of the Egyptian airliner, propose specific alternatives to future military action to the United States?

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, specifically, efforts have been made, not only by Canada which has led the way, but by other nations ever since Bonn to find a solution to the terrorist problem. Those efforts will have to go on in good faith and in co-operation with other like-minded nations to find that solution. It certainly does not help to try to manufacture discrepancies that do not even exist in respect to our policy, that is, Canada's policy in this regard, which has displayed a good record over the past many years, even before this Government came into office.

NOTIFICATION OF PRIME MINISTER OF PROPOSED U.S. ACTION AGAINST LIBYA

Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister. Did the Prime Minister learn in advance about the American military action from the President directly in any conversation and, if so, was he given evidence by the President justifying such action?

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, the right hon. gentleman knows, or should know, that a detailed response to a question of that nature is certainly not helpful to the discussion.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Nielsen: It is certainly not helpful to the safety and well-being of our own citizens in Libya. It is not my intention to respond in that kind of detailed fashion, and the right hon. gentleman should know better than to expect me to, having been a member of a Government and privy to the very reasons which compel me to answer as I do.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

CANADA-UNITED STATES RELATIONS

Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I do not accept that advice for one moment. Every time the Prime Minister sees or telephones the President of the United States, he loves to boast about it. This time we do not know the answer. If he did not receive a private communication from the President of the United States, how else was the matter dealt with and how else do we have the direct proof of a justification for the American action?

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, I have given the answer to that question. However, I could ask the right hon. gentleman to cast his memory backward, in respect of domestic security