

Government Orders

Is that not the kind of thing he ought to stand up and say: "Hear, hear. Canada ought to do this"?

Mr. Rompkey: Madam Speaker, the position is quite clear.

This party supports what the Canadian forces are doing in the gulf now, and has. It supports the ships, the role of the aircraft in patrolling for those ships and the presence of a field hospital. We have no problems with enforcing the sanctions and with Canadian forces helping to do that.

What we object to is the course of action that the government is on. The course of action the government is on is quite clear. I quote from the Prime Minister's speech: "Canada will join in expelling Hussein by force."

In those words, it is quite clear to all of us that the Prime Minister has committed the country to the course of war. This party is saying we do not agree with that. We think there are other options. We think there are other ways in which the Government of Canada should be acting. We do not agree with the words of the Prime Minister: "Canada will join in expelling Hussein by force."

That is not the position for Canada to be taking at this time. That is why this party objects.

Mr. Blenkarn: I am most interested.

Is it the view of this member, then, if the 30-odd countries that have forces there—including Britain, France and the United States—start hostilities in accordance with the UN resolution, that Canada should pick up its hospital if it is there and take it home, pick up its ships and take them home and send its aircraft home because we do not want to be part of what might be evicting Saddam Hussein by force?

Or, is it his view that simply being there as we clearly intend to be if force is used by our colleagues in the alliance, and enforcing and making sure that hostile actions do not take place against our allies in a defensive manner is in fact the kind of thing that we should not be involved in, that we should turn tail and run home? Is that the way he would have us support the United Nations?

Mr. Rompkey: First of all, Madam Speaker, the hon. member may have information that I do not have, but I do not have information that 30 countries are going to go to war against Iraq.

If that is what he is saying, he obviously has information that I do not have. I have no information that 30 countries are going to go to war against Iraq. If he can tell me which countries have declared war against Iraq, or which countries are going to, then I would listen to that argument.

From our point of view, we do not know which countries have taken those decisions.

Furthermore, it is our position that if we were to use that course of action it should be under a UN flag. We have no objection at all to supporting a UN force, as we have in the past Canadians have supported UN forces, but there is no UN flag here. There is no UN force at the moment, and therefore nothing for Canada to join.

• (1830)

Mr. Blenkarn: I presume the member has an objection to the Canadian flag; the Canadian flag should not fly over our forces but a UN flag, or a NATO flag, or somebody else's flag, but not our flag.

Is it the position of the Liberal Party that we should take our Canadian flag home, make sure it does not fly when there are hazards in the world enforcing UN resolutions? Is that the position of the Liberal Party?

Mr. Rompkey: I was happy to reply to the other two interventions because at least they had some substance but I am afraid that that particular intervention is just too silly to warrant a response.

Madam Deputy Speaker: On a point of order, the hon. parliamentary secretary.

Mr. Cooper: Madam Speaker, I would like to indicate to the House that we on this side would now like to break our speeches into the tens and of course the fives. However, I am sure that the House would agree, in the event there are no questions that perhaps what we could do at that point would be to move the third speaker into that third 10 minute spot in the normal 30 minutes allotted to our side.