

Government Orders

world? Consequently there is not a great deal we feel we could have done. Or if we had chosen to do something, we would have been really up to our necks in very great difficulty.

With respect to arms of destruction, why is it that we are not going after the U.S.S.R., China, Japan, France, Israel, South Africa, Libya or Syria? They have arms of massive destruction and they are not all countries we consider our allies.

I would like to focus on what we should do now that we are in this conflict. Will my hon. colleague tell me whether or not he believes his government's priority will be to find a peaceful solution to this particular war now? Surely this has to be our focus today, tomorrow and until we find that solution.

Mr. Hicks: Madam Speaker, I thank my hon. colleague across the floor for his question. As I have thought many times, all of us in this House attack this one problem from many different angles, but really everyone in this House wants precisely the same thing.

Getting to the point he asked regarding whether or not we are going to make a proposal, we have been proposing peace for 135 days. Not only Canadians and not only our Secretary of State for External Affairs, but also the Americans and, as you know, the Secretary General of the United Nations as recently as two days ago have done everything over the last 135 days. But all it did was prove that there was no possibility of resolving this matter by peaceful negotiations.

An hon. member: What about when the conflict began?

• (1540)

Mr. Hicks: Madam Speaker, my hon. friend asks what about when the conflict began. To the best of my knowledge, attempts to resolve it were begun immediately. He also made reference to the other countries that have all these destructive weapons. He made reference to the Soviet Union, which has all these destructive weapons.

What the hon. member did was to show to the House and to everybody a good example of where peaceful negotiations did work. The reason we are sitting down with the Soviets and the reason some of us can go to

Moscow and sit and talk to the Soviet minister of national defence is that negotiations have worked. The Berlin wall is down. All of the other countries with the massive weapons of destruction to which he alludes have those weapons, but they did not use them in the way Saddam Hussein decided to use his.

I do not know whether I have addressed all the questions of the hon. member, Madam Speaker, but I have tried.

Ms. Joy Langan (Mission—Coquitlam): Madam Speaker, I listened with a great deal of interest to the hon. member. Although his speech was prepared a couple of days ago, he felt it was still relevant today. At that very time, over 100 students from the high schools in my riding were in my office writing letters to the Prime Minister and to the hon. member's government. I have just two of the 100 letters here from which I would like to read a couple of lines. Then I will put the question.

Becky Bourque writes:

We are about 100 of B.C.'s youth. We—I personally would like to live my life to its fullest, not having to worry about war or having to bury 3 of my family members that are in Saudi Arabia right now.

There is a second letter to Mr. Mulroney:

We have spent the last 2 days protesting the war in front of Municipal hall. Around 400 people walked out of school and walked 6 miles into town to say what we had to say. Unfortunately so far it has not done any real help. We are the youth of this world and we will be the ones to live with your mistakes. Please don't make us have to live with this one.

It takes courage to stand up for peace like that when you are a student.

We have had some incredible reports on the results of the first strikes that took place. For example, the surface-to-surface missile threat to Israel has been successfully eliminated, they believe. The Iraqi nuclear, chemical and biological production complexes are expected to have been damaged or destroyed. Virtually the entire Iraqi air defence system seems to have been successfully disrupted.

My question is: With those pieces of information, would it not seem to make sense to take this as now being an opportunity to move for peace and to ask Mr. Hussein to consider peace, instead of beating this into the ground to the point where there is absolutely nothing