

Oral Questions

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the resolution to which my hon. friend refers contains the words "draft resolution" because it is just being considered by members of the Security Council. It demands that Iraq comply fully with Resolution 660 and all subsequent relevant resolutions and decides, while maintaining all of its decisions, to allow Iraq one final opportunity, as a pause of goodwill, to do so.

I think that the Secretary of State spoke about what all members of the Security Council who seek peace and who seek the respect of the Security Council resolutions and not war, have been addressing. The pause of goodwill would be sufficient to allow the President of Iraq another opportunity to reflect upon actions that he has taken and to do what the world community unanimously has called upon him to do, namely, to withdraw from Kuwait and to return to the borders of his own country.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has not denied that the Secretary of State for External Affairs was speaking for the government when he said that deadlines are artificial.

Therefore, I ask the Prime Minister: Has the government instructed its representatives at the United Nations Security Council to inform the other members of that council that Canada will not support a deadline being included in the draft resolution on Iraq currently being discussed among members of that council?

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I have indicated very carefully what the Secretary of State for External Affairs is seeking to achieve, and it is consistent with the participants at the Security Council who on every resolution, of which this will be the eleventh, have supported almost unanimously the requests that the authority and the moral authority of the United Nations be respected and defended. Yesterday, for example, by way of illustration, it is reported that Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev delivered an ultimatum to Iraq last night warning it to withdraw from Kuwait or face the worst consequences. "If Iraq really wanted to settle within the entire region and is interested in avoiding the worst, it must now openly pull out

of Kuwait and release hostages," Gorbachev reportedly told Foreign Minister Aziz.

• (1420)

President Gorbachev said: "He must weigh everything once more. The fate of Iraq is now in the hands of its own leaders and time is expiring". Indeed, this is the language and the substance of the resolution. Time is indeed expiring. What Canada is seeking is the opportunity for the President of Iraq to weigh this very carefully and to make a considered decision, such as the one that President Gorbachev yesterday invited him to make in the interests of world peace.

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, we all welcome the interest of President Gorbachev in peacefully resolving this matter.

I did not hear any deadline mentioned in the quotation from President Gorbachev read out to the House by the Prime Minister. The UN resolution does make a specific reference to a deadline.

[*Translation*]

Speaking to an American Senate committee this morning, former American Defence Secretary James Schlesinger said that so far economic sanctions against Iraq have produced the expected results but might have to be maintained for a whole year if they are to have a decisive impact. His opinion is shared by a good many international affairs experts.

My question to the Prime Minister is this: Does he share the views of these experts and, if not, would he explain why?

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, sanctions do have an impact on Iraq, and this is why the Canadian government approved them and support them with the troops that have been sent to the scene.

Nothing in the resolution proposed for the consideration of Security Council members flies in the face of that reality. However most council members see eye to eye on one point: if the president keeps insisting, they might have to consider other circumstances and other options. But that is as far as the resolution goes. Nothing there clashes with the position taken by the Canadian government, or those of the President of the Soviet