

*Government Orders*

• (2230)

The government members in this debate tonight have been pointing at the support of the United Nations. It is very selective support for the United Nations. They would not bring back the House to talk about sending troops to the gulf in August. They did ask the United Nations what it thought at that point. Theirs was a slavish following of the U.S. line. So this high moral fibre that they are talking about now in support of the United Nations is very dubious, Mr. Speaker. The ebbs and flows of support for the UN from this government seem to go with political expediency.

I want to talk about sanctions. A number of members have pointed out that there has not been sufficient time for sanctions to take effect. We have seen in the South African experience how there have been sanctions for nearly 30 years, and it is only now that we are seeing change. I am not advocating that we wait 30 years, because in this instance there has been unprecedented unity of the international community in following up on sanctions. I think it would take months, not years, for sanctions to take their effect.

What is the rush? We have heard the high-minded arguments of the government members for proceeding with this tack of going to war. That is what we are talking about this evening in this House, going to war.

One of the government members talked about the morality in international behaviour. If that is so, where is the consistency? Where was this government and where were these members when we talked about the invasion of East Timor in Indonesia? What happened when China invaded Tibet? We did nothing. There was no response.

I think what we have to look at is the real agenda here. There are numerous examples beyond East Timor and Tibet.

The government is also saying that we condemn Saddam Hussein. We all condemn Saddam Hussein. But what we have seen with the kind of rhetoric in this House and in the United States is an attempt to personalize this issue in one man, to make him so evil. He is evil. I believe he is evil. But the attempt is to personalize this issue to one man so that we are capable of taking unthinkable action, of sending our young men and women into war, the kind of war that is beyond imagination.

I have a document that was provided me by Greenpeace, Mr. Speaker. It is four pages, dealing only with the U.S. capability in the Middle East, the nuclear capability: seven aircraft carriers, each with over 100 nuclear bombs on them; two battleships; eleven cruisers; three destroyers; then there are all the support ships that go along with them, and the submarines, all nuclear capable. That is only the United States capability. We do not know about France, we do not know about the Soviet Union, we do not know about Iraq. There are probably biological and chemical weapons there. This is what we are sending our young men and women into, Mr. Speaker.

I know that some of the Liberals were saying that I was getting exercised earlier on on this issue. You are damn right I am getting exercised. I think war is something to get exercised about, when we are talking about going to war.

When I came to this House I was here as a member of the New Democratic Party and someone who had worked for a long time for peace. This is not the way of achieving peace. We should be allowing time for sanctions to work.

That whole picture of Saddam Hussein as a madman, as an evil being, is of course true. I believe that is true, but we have to look beyond Saddam Hussein. One newspaper article that I have read recently gave an interesting statistic, and that is that 50 per cent of the population of Iraq is 14 years of age and under. That is who we would be going to war against.

As a mother of a child who is 14 and another who is 17, I am not willing to put my vote for that action. It is always women and children that are the first victims in any war. It is the civilians, especially in the kind of war that we have already seen Saddam Hussein quite capable of waging, using chemical weapons against his own people. We do not want that to happen. We do not want our young men and women injured. We do not want the children of Iraq injured, the innocent victims of war.

Why are we doing this? I think all of us know why we are doing it. It is because Kuwait and Iraq have vast quantities of oil.

As the associate critic on the environment for my party, responsible for the international aspects of the environment, this is another aspect: we have been working for the past 18 months in the environment committee on the whole issue of the changes to atmosphere, of global warming, and of carbon dioxide emis-