

*Government Orders*

It has been, I guess, one of the most shocking realities that I have had to come to grips with as I read the Amnesty International reports, read the publication "The Rape of Kuwait", and met with Kuwaiti refugees, as I did recently when I was in the Middle East. They said to me: "How can you let this continue, while you sit back comfortable in your own living rooms in your own countries saying let sanctions work? If this continues, our country is destroyed. Our people are being destroyed. We have asked for your help. Please help us now".

We know with our own participation in our naval forces, they have done an outstanding job. In fact, it is their assessment that they have blocked probably 95 per cent of all the traffic coming into the Persian Gulf. Our own ships, in fact, have done about 25 per cent of those interceptions.

We do know through other ways and other methods that certain goods have been able to get into Iraq. What we really do know is that it is not having an impact on Saddam Hussein's military might. Ordinary people may be suffering. They may not be getting through. Women and children are the victims of this brutality in Kuwait and in Iraq. The military is being looked after. They are getting food.

While I was there he announced a big increase in wages for the military and the officers were all going to get cars. The Minister of National Defence mentioned that the number of aircraft sorties has increased significantly. It is not having an impact on his will to support this military. Again, when I was there and talking to people in that region who have dealt with him, who know him and know that regime, they were quite honestly saying: "We appreciate the sanctions. We appreciate that that has brought together the international community, but they won't work". They were beyond any discussion about the possibility of sanctions having any impact.

I listened to them and I must admit that it was after that trip that I came back with a much different view about the possibilities of any kind of a peaceful resolution for the dispute in that region. Diplomacy has been tried and sanctions have been tried, but to no avail. We are now dealing with a situation where, through the United Nations, we have said that we are prepared to use

force, if necessary, in order to get Saddam Hussein to comply with all the other resolutions and perhaps now the time has come.

• (1840)

I believe that Canada has to back its words with action. We have over there over 1,800 Canadians, three ships, a squadron of CF-18. We have medical personnel on the U.S hospital ship *Mercy*, we have a headquarters in Bahrain. We have announced today that we will also be sending over a field hospital unit to support the United Kingdom. Those men and women there with whom I met are very proud of their professionalism. They do not want war any more than any of us want war but they know that they are capable of doing their jobs and they are prepared to do their jobs in the interests of Canada and in the interests of international peace and security.

**Mr. MacDonald (Dartmouth):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I think, in fairness to the House and to the associate minister, I should let her know that on television, live, right now, is a report from Baghdad that the American troops have started their offensive action in Baghdad. I think that it is fair to the minister to let her know that. Perhaps she may wish to reflect on that or perhaps change her remarks.

**Mrs. Collins:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for bringing that information to the House in this very timely way but, no, unfortunately that does not change my remarks because, quite honestly, I have been prepared for that eventuality as I think the men and women who serve in the forces have been. I in fact am not surprised, quite honestly, that it would happen at this time. I think what we all have to do now is hope and pray for our people and for their families. I know that they will do what they have to do, and we hope that they will come home safe and sound. I hope all members in the House will show support for our Canadians who are there.

When I was there, they told me that what was really important to them was receiving the good wishes and the letters from people across the country, and it was very important to them to know that they had the support. I know the hon. member, along with so many in his riding, has shown that support to them.