

Government Orders

I will answer the hon. member's question. I shall proceed, Mr. Speaker, because his comment was quite sensible. Mr. Speaker, the last part of the hon. member's question was about what we were going to defend in Kuwait, which did not necessarily have a spotless record on human rights. I think it should be pointed out that we are not going to defend a political system but a principle that says a nation is sovereign and that other nations have no right to attack or violate the territory of a sovereign state.

That is why Canada went to the Persian Gulf. What Canada is asking now, through the motion tabled by the government in the House today, is that the principle of a country's sovereignty is respected.

[*English*]

Mr. Joseph Volpe (Eglinton—Lawrence): Mr. Speaker, I do have a comment or two to make to the hon. member since she brought up the precept that if you want peace you have to prepare for war or at least be prepared to go to war. It seems that we are preparing to go to war.

The Canadian forces sent into the Persian Gulf were initially there to perform picket duty outside the zone and ensure that sanctions would be effective. In that regard, our members have already indicated that there is an element of effectiveness that the government is refusing to acknowledge, elaborate on, or at least refusing to take into consideration when it is discussing what step we must take next.

The government has already authorized our forces to move into a very active role of intercepting within the military zone and participating very actively in offensive American military manoeuvres that, unlike UN manoeuvres, are not sanctioned by our Parliament.

If we are to prepare for peace, we should not only prepare for war, which is what the member has suggested that we must do. The associate minister for defence took pains to demonstrate in a very detailed fashion that we are represented by Armed Forces that are second to none in quality. That is not the issue that this House should be considering. The question of the quality of our troops, the quality and commitment of our personnel in the Persian Gulf is not at issue.

Let no one for one moment suggest that to question the government's policies in the Persian Gulf is in any way questioning the commitment and the quality of our

men and women stationed there. It is absolutely irresponsible of the government to do that. It is very important that no member of the House on the other side be allowed to raise that issue again. What is at issue is whether the government really believes the commitment which it says it is addressing. That is the one of peace.

If we are going to be preparing ourselves for a new international order, which this member suggests and the associate minister for defence says we are doing, are we making plans for the peace that must follow the end of this crisis? What steps is the member from the government side willing to divulge to this House as part of the government's plan to prepare for the re-orientation of the military, economic, and political realities of the Persian Gulf which it sees as being so very important as to require the deployment of military activities—I am just about finished, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): There is only going to be a minute left for her to answer.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Marie Gibeau (Bourassa): I thank my colleague for his question, Mr. Speaker. This is the place to express our views. I would like to come back to the subject of the sanctions. They are probably beginning to work, as they were intended to by the members of the international community participating on the blockade, and that is precisely why it is working.

The problem is that we must remember that, while this is going on and starting to work, a territory is being violated, people are detained as hostages and crimes are being committed on some territories. Someone mentioned human rights earlier. You probably noticed—you must be following the events on TV—that some people's physical integrity is certainly not respected, nor their intellectual, political, or other rights.

Nothing proves for the time being that the sanctions will work. There is no way of knowing when Saddam Hussein will give in, but since he is not known for his logical and coherent actions, we have to make alternate plans. That is precisely what the international community is doing.

Its ultimate goal: peace, a peaceful resolution in the form of Iraq getting out of Kuwait. That is their goal. That is why the international community will make a decision tomorrow through the United Nations Security