

Government Orders

on what we will do with the Canadian Armed Forces after first-hand knowledge of all of the very difficult and different aspects of this political and military confrontation.

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, I have listened with care to the remarks of the hon. member. I want to commend him for the eloquence with which he spoke and certainly for the concern that he expressed for the members of the Canadian Armed Forces, many of whom as I know live in his constituency and the constituency of the member for Halifax who spoke earlier in this debate. I also want to associate myself with the remarks of the member for Saint-Denis who pointed out the importance of looking at a broader regional approach to this question, including looking at the ongoing tragedy of the plight of the Palestinians in that region.

• (1610)

I want to just ask a very straightforward question of the hon. member for Dartmouth with respect to the government motion which is now before this House. There is an amendment which has been proposed by his colleague and a subamendment which we have proposed. I want to ask him, should the amendment and the subamendment be defeated, whether in fact he will be voting against the government motion.

Mr. MacDonald (Dartmouth): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for his comments and for his question. If the hon. member was listening, which I am sure he was, and I know he was busy signing letters, he would have heard at the end of my remarks that I had urged that we not get to a point where there is a vote yea-nay, nay-yea and indifferent and abstained in this House on this particular issue, and that I had hoped that we could come to a consensus where cooler heads would prevail and we could come up with a resolution that basically supported our Canadian Armed Forces.

If the hon. member wants to know whether or not I would condemn the government for not calling Parliament earlier, I would condemn it. If he wants to know if I would support the amendment put forward by the Liberal Party, I would support it. I would hope that by the time we get to the main resolution the government

will have seen the error of its ways in bringing phoney, partisan, political overtones to this particular resolution and that we will have a resolution that everyone in this House can support.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The time for questions and comments has now expired. Resuming debate. The Minister for External Relations.

Hon. Monique Landry (Minister for External Relations): Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to take part in the debate on the crisis in the Persian Gulf and to do so from a somewhat different perspective. As the Minister for External Relations, I am particularly concerned about the people affected by this crisis, so I would like to approach the issue from that perspective.

Mr. Speaker, the act of brutal aggression committed by the Iraqi government has had an overwhelming impact on the lives of the people who were directly affected. Saddam Hussein drove thousands of people from their homes, and because of him, hundreds of the thousands of workers have lost their jobs. They now have no food, no shelter and no money. He has forced these people to ask the international community to help them return to their country of origin.

His invasion of Kuwait may have even more serious consequences, increasing the poverty and dashing the hopes of many of the poorest people and nations in this world. As a member of the global community, Canada has a duty to help those who are in greatest need.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud that Canada was among the first countries and one of the most generous, with its donation last August of \$2.5 million to meet the needs of the initial waves of displaced persons that crossed the border from Iraq to Jordan. I am also very proud that from the very beginning, non-governmental organizations in this country provided support for aid and air transport operations. These dedicated people have maintained a Canadian presence in the most desperate situations.

I am also proud of the fact that when conditions in the evacuation camps deteriorated to the point of near-chaos and relief teams were hardpressed to help with the ever increasing flow of refugees, Canada asked the