

Government Orders

More important, we have to look at the reality of the situation. If in fact the community of nations, or at least the coalition or members of the coalition, decide to abandon sanctions and to launch an attack, an attack which would involve aerial assault and land forces, quite clearly the strategy of sanctions would have been overtaken. Given the fact that Canada's role is there to enforce sanctions, surely we would recognize that we would not want to be part of that kind of military offensive in those circumstances. I believe that is the position the people of Canada would take, that we should be enforcing sanctions and not be part of a military offensive.

Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate my colleague and state how strongly we support the views that he presenting and those of our leader earlier today.

I would like to raise one point that has been niggling at me since the Prime Minister spoke this afternoon. If I heard him correctly, he used the Korean war as an example of a justification for another UN-U.S. armed intervention. I know he will recall that in that instance it was a UN initiative or a U.S. cloaked in the UN initiative. Canada participated as part of Commonwealth troops. The North Koreans succeeded in pushing the exceedingly well equipped U.S. forces, to the middle of Korea, which is essentially where it all began in the first place.

During that period many thousands of people were killed. There were massive numbers of refugees. I saw many people in hospital including Canadians who were injured. There were many orphans. A whole generation was affected. The war ended up in a complete no-win situation, which I think is where all wars end up. Korea was child's play compared to the gulf war with regard to chemical and nuclear threat.

Would the member like to comment on the fact that war is really a no-win situation from anyone's point of view and that there is absolutely no justification for the killing of men and women in the armed forces and for the many civilians who would be affected?

Mr. Robinson: Madam Speaker, before responding to the specific question, I would like to pay tribute to the hon. member for Vancouver East and point out that as a woman she in many ways has represented very eloquent-

ly and forcefully the position of women across this country who according to the opinion polls in significantly greater numbers than men, are recognizing the madness of war. It is an interesting point that that is the case. I hope that we will hear the voices of many, if not all, women in this House before this debate is concluded.

Just briefly, I would like to agree with the point the hon. member is making. Korea is surely not an example of the success of the United Nations. Yes, there was a UN command, but the Soviet Union was not even present at the Security Council when the decision was made. It was outside the Security Council. Instead of looking backward at what has happened in the past—yes, we must draw the lessons from the past—surely we should be looking forward.

A challenge that faces all of us is to build a new collective security framework through the United Nations and through regional bodies such as the CSCE that makes the possibility of war unthinkable. My personal view is that that is exactly the situation: war would be unthinkable in the gulf and it should be unthinkable in any arena. Surely we have moved beyond the madness of war. As a community of nations through the United Nations, we must be able to come up with other alternatives including sanctions that recognize that no one ever wins a war.

• (1900)

Mr. Dan Heap (Trinity—Spadina): Madam Speaker, briefly I would like to commend my colleague, the member for Burnaby—Kingsway, on his very good outline of our position against the war.

I would like to invite him to comment further on the question of sanctions, which is the principle means that has been used until now to try to bring about a negotiated solution. Are there ways in which the member suggests the sanctions against Kuwait could be strengthened?

It has been suggested by the Secretary of State for External Affairs that the sanctions may be effective against Iraqi people but not against the Iraqi ruler and military. Can the member comment on whether it is possible for even the most blood-thirsty government to continue military action, which he is doing now, with absolutely no support from his people?