

On November 29, the House passed a further motion, supporting the United Nations and, I quote, supporting "the United Nations in its efforts to ensure compliance with Security Council resolution 660 and subsequent resolutions", notably resolution 678 co-sponsored by Canada and passed the same day at the United Nations. Resolution 678 gives Saddam Hussein one final opportunity to comply with the will of the world community as expressed in successive United Nations resolutions. The 47-day pause for peace provided for in resolution 678 ends tonight.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, as we consider this matter on the floor of the House of Commons, efforts continue at the United Nations with a proposal that contains elements that are similar to ideas advanced in writing by Canada to the United Nations Secretary-General last week.

• (1130)

[*Translation*]

Diplomacy has been and is still being given every chance. Following U.S. Secretary Baker's unsuccessful meeting with Iraqi Foreign Minister Aziz last week in Geneva, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Perez de Cuellar, made the second of two visits to the Middle East on this issue. His appeal to Saddam Hussein to leave Kuwait was callously rebuffed once again. Mr. Perez de Cuellar told journalists yesterday that he saw "no reason to have any real hope". He has reported that Saddam Hussein "never mentioned... that he was prepared to withdraw from Kuwait." No one could have failed to notice Saddam Hussein's contempt for international opinion, international law, and common decency.

[*English*]

United Nations resolution 678 authorizes member states to use all necessary means to uphold and implement the relevant UN resolutions on this crisis and to restore international peace and security in the area.

Resolution 678, approved by this House on November 29, also requests all member states, including Canada, to provide "appropriate support" for actions taken in pursuance of this important goal.

Government Orders

The choice of peace or war remains Saddam Hussein's, and only his, as it has been for the last five and a half months; but time is very quickly running out on him.

Regardless of how they cast their vote last November 29, members on all sides of the House hope that hostilities will not be necessary.

It was clear to all of us then that we might have to impose the ultimate sanction on Saddam Hussein, military force, if he did not withdraw his forces illegally stationed in an innocent member state.

The United Nations made the threat of the use of force to, persuade Saddam Hussein of the seriousness of the UN's determination to see him out of Kuwait. It was not an empty gesture.

The question before Canadians now is a simple one. If Saddam Hussein does not withdraw peacefully from Kuwait and the use of force is required, where will Canada stand? On this simple question of right and wrong, will we continue to support the international coalition, or will we stand aside and hope that others will uphold the rule of international law?

There are very significant and understandable differences of opinion on such an important and sensitive international issue that has impacts of all kinds—many of them incalculable today—on the lives of many Canadians and many people around the world.

I understand and I respect the views of all members on all sides of this issue as they consider such a profoundly troubling and difficult issue and the manner in which it can be best confronted while keeping in mind the national interest and our international obligations.

The Government of Canada and I, as Prime Minister, have reflected very carefully on all aspects of this problem as I understand them. Our entire policy of the government is similar to policies of previous governments when confronted with similar challenges.

Our entire policy has been designed to achieve a peaceful solution to it. If, however, Saddam Hussein continues to reject the will of the United Nations, Canada will join with the United Nations in expelling him from Kuwait by force.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.