

military action today, or the United Nations system collapses." "There is no choice," the government says.

The Secretary of State for External Affairs and the Prime Minister this afternoon offered that stark alternative: Either Canada participates in military action, and supports collective security through the agency of the United Nations or else that post war dream of security through collective action fades and dies.

Those are not the only choices. Why must Canadians think for one moment that we have to choose between either military action or the collapse of the United Nations?

The government narrows the alternatives. It suggests sanctions are ineffective and therefore force is the only remaining alternative. I do not think anyone on either side of this House would dispute that military force may eventually be required. That may be so, but we are far from that situation yet. We are far from a common determination among the member states of the United Nations that the only alternative is the use of military force. We are far, very far from any assurance among member states and among the people of the world that the economic sanctions, the embargo that has been placed on Iraq, have proven to be ineffective.

If we look at United Nations resolution 678, which is the latest resolution in series the Security Council about the situation in the Middle East, Iraq and the gulf, we find that the Security Council decision is somewhat different than that which the government has advanced in support of its argument that military action is now necessary.

First, the Security Council resolution does not address itself to all the members of the United Nations. It addresses itself to "member states co-operating with the Government of Kuwait." Obviously those who drafted the resolution had in mind that there are some states that are not of a mind of co-operating with the Government of Kuwait. Otherwise the text is meaningless.

There are some governments which, by the terms of this resolution, do co-operate with the Government of Kuwait. What are they called upon to do? They are called upon to use "all necessary means" to uphold

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resolution 660 which called upon Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait. "All necessary means" may well include military means, but it does not mean exclusively military means.

There is a range of others means available to the United Nations and to member states that are co-operating with the Government of and to bring about the implementation of the resolution calling for the withdrawal of Iraq from Kuwait. Then it requests all members states to provide appropriate support, not military support, to those nations which regard themselves as co-operating with the Government of Kuwait.

There is nothing in that resolution and there is nothing in the traditions of the United Nations, where I had the honour of serving for five years in our diplomatic service, that requires Canada to engage in military action. It is a choice. It is a decision for Canada or for any other sovereign member of the United Nations whether or not it chooses to express its opposition to the occupation of Kuwait by Iraq in terms of military action or in terms of other forms of sanction. The Security Council does not say the United Nations is now setting up a military force, and utilizing the military committee of the United Nations to formulate a UN force to operate under the UN flag. Not at all. There is no UN force envisaged.

What is envisaged is that each individual member state, some that regard themselves as co-operating with the Government of Kuwait, will take a decision on whether or not it wishes to give expression to its opposition by military force or other measures following January 15. We shall know in the days ahead what states have come to the conclusion that only military force will achieve the expulsion of Iraq from Kuwait.

• (2250)

That is not a decision that Canada need take. Canada is a sovereign nation able to make its own decisions under the terms of the Security Council resolution. It is perfectly free to continue its support, as I very much agree that it should do, of the economic sanctions.

The question before us, then, is whether in the view of Canadians the economic sanctions have been given time to work or whether now military force is required to bring about the expulsion of Iraq from Kuwait.