

involved might not always act in ways that we would approve, but that we might still be politically and even militarily implicated? That risk exists, but the only ways of guaranteeing against it in the present context would be either to abstain, or to insist on a system of absolute consensus among all participant nations which would mean that not only Canada, but every other single contributor would have a veto. This would obviously hamstring the operation. Even if, or hopefully when, in the future we move to a system where the UN Security Council assumes more direct control of police or enforcement forces, the "Canadian Article" in the Charter, Number 44, insisted on by Ottawa at a time when we were a near-great military power, would give the right of consultation with the Security Council to force-contributing countries. This will be very difficult to work out.

Ottawa's early decision to commit the naval contingent was primarily of political and symbolic importance, but to be credible it required a significant tangible engagement of personnel and equipment. At the time of the announcement, the terms were not fully clear. The UN blockade resolution had not yet come forward, although sanctions were in place and obviously had to be monitored. A deterrent capability against further aggression was being mustered under Articles 1 and 51 of the Charter. The Canadian Government was presumably aware that while an immediate commitment was important for these primary political purposes, the period of several weeks for re-equipment and transit required for the ships to reach the Gulf region would probably mean that the tasks to be undertaken and the authority from the UN to undertake them would have evolved considerably. In this, the Government was proved correct with the passage of the resolution authorizing a naval embargo.

Another early Canadian debate was over the age and suitability of the Canadian ships committed. An unholy alliance developed between critics from diametrically opposed camps. Some, who really wanted Canada to take no part at all, seized on the issue of Canada's "ancient ships" to simultaneously deride the Canadian forces and profess concern for their safety. Others, in parts of the defence support community, saw and see this crisis as vindication of their warnings over many years that Canada was neglecting its defence