

opened, Saddam Hussein slammed shut. And so, on January 15, after a final, 48-day pause for peace, the Members of the United Nations were faced with the choice of following through with the use of force which the Security Council had authorized if Saddam Hussein did not withdraw from Kuwait.

Canada has joined that effort along with every other Member of the 28-nation Coalition in the Gulf. We are determined to secure the withdrawal of Saddam Hussein from Kuwait. We are now doing by force what diplomacy and sanctions were not, in the end, able to do. That purpose is firm and the Coalition is firm. Canada was with the United Nations before this conflict, we are with it now, and we will be with it after to build a new peace.

That the world chose the United Nations was historic. At the beginning, it was not clear that this choice would be made. President Bush was pressured by respected advisors to launch a unilateral surgical strike. Canada argued against that, strongly. The Prime Minister made that case directly to the President. Earlier in this conflict, the United States was contemplating acting alone, without the authorization of the United Nations Security Council. Canada argued strongly against that. And the United States came to the United Nations.

The United States remains with the United Nations and so does every other Member of the Coalition. We must not underestimate what a sea-change this represents, what a precedent it sets, what an opportunity it presents. For the first time in 40 years, the great powers have returned to the United Nations, to work within it as its architects had intended, to compromise, to seek consensus, and in so doing to build order.

That is something Canadians have sought for decades. It is not something we have sought because we have been idealists. It is something we have sought because Canada requires order and because we know what order requires. We take the United Nations seriously because we are not a superpower or a great power, because the order we need to live and prosper is an order we cannot impose, an order we must build with others. There is no country in the world more serious about the UN than Canada. And there are few countries which depend on a serious UN more than Canada.

If, on January 15, after almost six months, after 12 UN resolutions, after an intensive period of exhaustive diplomacy, the Members of the United Nations had walked away, they would have walked away, not from conflict, but from the United Nations itself. Under what possible circumstances would any great power in the future bother with a body which proved itself incapable of following through on its own decisions? The United Nations cannot cry foul and then cry wolf.