

As the world now knows, neither that diplomatic initiative nor any other succeeded, because the Government of Iraq refused to comply.

When Diplomacy Failed

When war finally erupted, Prime Minister Mulroney addressed the House of Commons: "What is happening in Kuwait has direct and substantial effects on Canada's interests. As a country with a comparatively small population, with two superpowers as neighbours, and with our own limited military capacity, Canada's most basic interest lies in the preservation of international law and order.... 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 law?"

Unfortunately, the crisis was resolved by overwhelming force. Canadian Forces personnel played a role in the liberation of Kuwait. The victory, however, has been no guarantee of peace and stability in a region that has suffered from decades of turmoil. If the invasion of Kuwait was symptomatic of underlying contagion, a lasting remedy will not be found in the arsenals of the world.

Canada Joins in the Reconstruction

In the aftermath of the Gulf crisis, Canada and the world have turned their attention to creating lasting peace and security in the Middle East.

The firm resolve of the United Nations enforced the rule of law between nations. Now, the same principles and institutions that brought the liberation of Kuwait are being used

to forge a true and lasting peace across the entire region. Great challenges remain. The world community demonstrated firm resolve in the face of military aggression. The task of creating a stable and secure region has begun.

The scope of the physical reconstruction effort is massive. Many Canadian firms are now busy restoring public services and utilities as well as participating in the longer-term environmental and industrial projects. But reconstruction is being overshadowed by the need to bring peace to the entire Middle East. It may prove much easier to repair Kuwait's infrastructure than to bring the nations of the Middle East together in mutual confidence and tolerance.

Arms Control

It will take time and effort to build a structure of peace and security that allows all the nations and all the peoples of the Middle East to live and prosper together. One key to peace in the Middle East, and around the world, lies in arms control.

Said Prime Minister Mulroney, "One of the main lessons to be learned from this war is the danger to us all of the proliferation of both conventional and non-conventional weapons and of missiles and other high-technology delivery systems.... The world is being given a very expensive and persuasive lesson on how dangerous these weapons are." Canada, in fact, has proposed to the UN Secretary-General that the UN convene a Global Summit on the Instruments of War and Weapons of Mass Destruction. For Canada, the presence of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons anywhere is a time bomb. Said former Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, "The balance of terror is not a portable concept. Mutual Assured Destruction in that region would bring precisely that — assured destruction. Exporting countries must

act to tighten their export controls policies and practices, particularly on missile technology."

Saddam Hussein looked to the world's great powers for the weapons to invade Kuwait, but he sought to justify his aggression with the long-standing grievances of the region. It is clear that Saddam did not act to correct Palestinian injustice, or to restore Islamic dignity or to represent the aspirations of the Third World. The problems, then, remain.

Unity of Purpose

The end of the Cold War has liberated the United Nations and the world from the divisions that compromised its ability to react. The UN has clearly demonstrated its resolve with patience and with action. The same unity of purpose that liberated Kuwait can now help the Middle East region to achieve its full potential, both in human freedom and material prosperity.

Canada stands ready to play its part in that process, when the conditions exist, but the immediate goal must be

International Trade Minister Michael H. Wilson on a recent trade mission to the Gulf states.

security and stability in a region that is still heavily armed with weapons and heavily burdened with the enmities and bitterness of the recent past.

Canada has an enviable reputation for its participation in UN peacekeeping operations around the world. Even before the invasion of Kuwait, Canadian military personnel were on duty in the Middle East, protecting the peace. As laudable as peacekeeping may be, however, such activities, by their very nature, indicate that diplomatic or political means of resolving disputes have failed.

As Mr. Clark pointed out, "Peacekeeping is precious.... But the point has to be made that the ability to stand between combatants who have agreed to stop fighting does not amount to one ounce of deterrence or one iota of ability to stop wars once they have started. What peacekeeping role in the Gulf would exist if Iraq's aggression against Kuwait had gone unchecked? Peacekeeping follows peace-making. It is no substitute."

Canada was asked in the immediate aftermath of the war to form the largest peacekeeping contingent (300 field engineers) to UNIKOM (the United Nations Iraq/Kuwait Observer Mission).



Michael Sage