

In spite of the decline in living standards suffered since sanctions were imposed, there had been no public demonstrations of discontent nor evidence that the Iraqi regime would respond to pressure from the public to change its policies. Even if it could be done, would we wish to starve the people of Iraq and occupied Kuwait in the hope of influencing Saddam Hussein?

Those are the reasons why the coalition made the right decision on January 16 to use force, rather than waiting longer and simply hoping that Saddam Hussein would withdraw from Kuwait. I want to emphasize here that the deadline for the use of force was not an American decision, it was a UN decision. And the action taken on January 16 was not merely by American armed forces, but rather action by a coalition of 29 states contributing militarily to multinational operations in the Gulf.

The members of the coalition are Australia, Argentina, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Egypt, France, Greece, Italy, Kuwait, Morocco, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Spain, Syria, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

Canada was not compelled to act with the other 28 members of the multinational coalition in using force on January 16. Canada had a choice. We could have decided, as Mr. Chretien suggested on January 15, that "our troops should be called back, not be there if there is a war." We could have decided, as Mrs. McLaughlin suggested on January 15, to "not support UN Security Council Resolution 678 which imposed the January 15 deadline for Iraqi withdrawal and which authorizes the use of force after this date."

We did neither of these because wishful thinking that evil will go away if we want it to badly enough cannot be the basis for serious decision-making. Instead, we said "yes" to the necessary evil of Canada's standing with its 28 coalition partners in the use of force on January 16. We believe it is necessary to press the campaign and not have, as some have suggested, a pause in the conflict.

Saddam Hussein continues to show contempt for the United Nations by his occupation of Kuwait. He continues to use weapons of terror against Israel and others. He continues his unconscionable brutality by using prisoners of war as human shields. And he would use a pause to strengthen his military position in occupied Kuwait. The only pause he should get is when he demonstrates unequivocally that he is withdrawing totally from Kuwait.

On January 22, by a vote of 217 to 47, the House of Commons expressed its support for Canada's role in the Gulf conflict.