give the world the right and the capacity to deter aggression and to reverse it, by force if necessary, when it occurred.

Those purposes permeate the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations. But those purposes went unfulfilled for decades because a new war intervened -- the Cold War -- a conflict which turned the UN into a mere shadow of its intended force. And so we had wars -- dozens of them -- conflicts which flourished because the UN was frozen.

With the easing of East-West tensions, old excuses have disappeared and new opportunities have emerged. An opportunity now exists to make the United Nations united not simply in name but in fact.

That has been our accomplishment so far in the response to this crisis. The Security Council of the United Nations has worked as its architects had intended. The Charter of the United Nations has been acted upon. The process of seeking adherence to resolutions has been followed.

And so, we are approaching the moment where our words may have to become deeds. It is a difficult moment. It might be easier now to back away, to act not as we have resolved but rather to retreat from our principles and our promises.

To those who would have us back away, there are troubling arguments, worrisome questions.

Of what value would the United Nations be if we now said we were not serious? After 12 resolutions -- clear and unequivocal -- do we say that, after all, we were just bluffing? Do we say to future aggressors that all they need do is hunker down and wait us out, that we are hollow in our principles and words? Does Canada, not a great power in the scheme of things, say that Kuwait, also not a great power, is expendable? Do we say there are rewards for the ruthless, prizes for the powerful? Do we attempt to justify a wrong by saying that we accepted wrongs in the past and did not act then? Do we say we can do no better than we have done, that the future will be as the past, scarred by sacrifice, wedded to war?

If we as Canadians say these things, we are contemplating the destruction of the United Nations and the international order it now has the chance to build. If we as Canadians say these things, we are betraying the efforts of Louis Saint-Laurent, of Lester Pearson, men who had seen war, leaders and statesmen in times when 100,000 Canadians had died fighting wars which were undeterred, wars whose origins lay in the unwillingness of the world to enforce the rules which all claimed universal.