

STATEMENTS
AND
SPEECHES



DÉCLARATIONS
ET
DISCOURS

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"PEACEKEEPING AND PEACEMAKING:
THE PERSIAN GULF CRISIS AND ITS CONSEQUENCES"

Notes for a speech by
the Right Honourable Joe Clark,
Secretary of State for External Affairs,
to the Seventh Annual Seminar
of the Conference of Defence Associations Institute

Ottawa, Ontario
January 24, 1991

Affaires extérieures et
Commerce extérieur Canada
External Affairs and
International Trade Canada

Canada

Canadians are a peaceable people. We do not fight wars at will. But we are at war now. No Canadian is happy with what is now happening. War -- any war -- is a failure of diplomacy. Wars destroy; they do not build. They bring sacrifice and suffering to those called upon to fight and to those innocent civilians who are caught in conflict. War should never be a point of pride. However, some wars can be a point of principle. This is one of those wars.

I want to talk today about that principle. And in so doing, I want to talk about the choices the world has made, the consequences which come from those choices, and the obligations we now bear as Canadians to ensure that this war helps build a durable peace.

When Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait, he threw a gauntlet down to the world. The world then was faced with hard choices. One choice was to do nothing, as so often in the past, to allow aggression to proceed unopposed and in so doing to confirm the arithmetic of aggression, the age-old power of the strong over the weak. The world rejected that choice.

There was a second choice that could have been made. And that would have been for individual countries to respond immediately, unilaterally and with force. That action might have reversed Saddam's aggression. But in rejecting diplomacy and ignoring the United Nations, it would have done nothing to reinforce institutions of international order or the use of diplomacy as an alternative to war. The world rejected that choice as well.

The world made a third choice, an historic choice, a choice it had not made for 40 years. That choice was to work within the United Nations. That choice was to give peace a chance.

In the fog and frenzy of war, we must not lose sight of the painstaking diplomacy that was tried and failed. After Iraq's attack on August 2, there was a long pause for peace, a pause designed to give diplomacy a chance. Twelve resolutions were passed by the United Nations Security Council, almost all without dissent. Comprehensive and mandatory sanctions were applied universally to a degree never seen before. Dozens of countries were involved in the most intense period of diplomacy mounted in modern history to avert conflict.

Those facts demonstrate the absolute preference of the world to avoid this conflict. War was not the first choice, but the last.

That period of intense diplomacy -- a period lasting almost half a year -- bore no fruit. Every door the world

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.

Other organizations have done that and they have failed. The League of Nations cried foul and then cried wolf. And it collapsed and with that collapse came conflict. And the UN itself, gripped by the Cold War, so often issued declarations, and statements and condemnations -- fine words. But they were words which the world ignored because the world knew those words would not be backed up by action. The United Nations was not created as a seminar or as a soapbox for sermons. It was created as a place where world leaders could talk to avert war and where, if that talk failed, action would be taken. That's what the UN was for. That's what the Charter says. That's what the world was unable to do for decades. That's what it is able to do now.

The United Nations we now see is not the United Nations we had come to expect. We were used to a United Nations which talked and exhorted and condemned. We were used to a United Nations which took action only in other fields -- in the field of development, humanitarian assistance, education, and the exchange of information. That action is important in its own terms, as well as for peace and security. But that action does not reflect the United Nations' security mandate, its agenda to act against aggression.

The United Nations was invented to deter aggression and reverse it if deterrence failed. That is sometimes called peacemaking, the topic of your deliberations today. The debate over the Gulf has seen distinctions made between peacemaking and peacekeeping. It is stated by some that the UN should keep the peace but not make the peace. It is stated that Canada should keep the peace but not make the peace. It is stated that we will not now be able to keep the peace because we are making it now in the Gulf.

I do not accept those statements nor the trade-offs they pretend. Peacekeeping does not even appear on the Charter of the United Nations. Peacekeeping was an invention of the Cold War, an invention of necessity because the UN did not work. It was invented not because of the great powers, but despite them. It was invented to pick up the pieces once conflict had concluded, conflict the UN could neither deter nor counter.

Canadians helped invent peacekeeping. Its architect, Lester Pearson, won the Nobel Prize. And its participants -- 43,000 of whom have been Canadians -- won another Nobel Prize two years ago. Peacekeeping is exploding. Last year saw more peacekeeping missions mounted than in the entire history of the United Nations. And, if the UN remains credible, this activity will expand in the future to the Western Sahara, Cambodia and elsewhere.

Peacekeeping is precious. Its role in separating former combatants allows peace to be built and stability to

settle in. And its new and affiliated roles in monitoring elections, operating police forces, helping refugees and combatants resettle, and managing transition governments is an important and valuable asset for the United Nations.

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 would exist in the Gulf if Iraq's aggression against Kuwait had been allowed to go unchecked? What peacekeeping role now exists while fighting is under way and there is no truce to supervise, no armistice to audit? There can only be peacekeeping when there is peace. There was no peace after Saddam Hussein declared war on Kuwait. There is no peace now that the world is acting to evict Saddam Hussein from Kuwait.

Peacekeeping follows peacemaking. It is no substitute.

Some worry that our participation in peacemaking in the Gulf rules us out of future peacekeeping there, or elsewhere. I don't believe that. The Secretary-General of the United Nations, whom I talked to just a few days ago, does not believe that. Foreign Ministers in the region with whom I have spoken do not believe that. Canada's efforts in Korea did not preclude 43,000 Canadians from serving the UN abroad. Canada will continue as a peacekeeper and we will continue as a peacemaker.

Just as the architects of the United Nations equipped that organization with the ability to go to war to reverse aggression, they also intended that the Members of the United Nations use diplomacy and other means to secure compliance with the international will. War was not meant to be automatic.

In the Gulf, war was not automatic. It was the last resort after diplomacy and sanctions failed. Some Canadians have disagreed. While they do not dispute the principle of acting with the UN -- or indeed with the proposition that force might be necessary in the end -- they do declare that peace was not given a chance.

This is a serious debate. War must always be the last, most reluctant choice. Would sanctions have forced withdrawal from Kuwait if we had waited longer? Perhaps, but probably not. It is our view that the risks of waiting were unacceptable. What could those risks have been?

Risk Number 1

The plunder of Kuwait would have continued. We know now the terror Saddam's army brought to Kuwait. Amnesty International has documented that terror. We know that half of

Kuwait's population has fled in terror. If we had waited, what sort of liberation would we be bringing to Kuwaiti society? Would there have been a Kuwaiti society to liberate?

Risk Number 2

Saddam Hussein would have continued to prepare for war and to plan for terror. While the world thought it was pausing for peace, Saddam Hussein was preparing for war. He was preparing the despicable tactic of launching missiles at innocent civilians in Israel, a country not at war with Iraq, as well as at civilians in countries which are part of the Coalition. He was preparing a pipeline to pollute the Persian Gulf. He was not getting out, he was digging in.

Risk Number 3

Those preparations probably helped Hussein ensure that casualties might be higher than if force was used earlier. Continuing with sanctions would have increased casualties if war, in the end, were necessary.

Risk Number 4

There is the incendiary nature of that region, a region that sits on a hair trigger, a ticking time bomb. A continuation of sanctions would have allowed Saddam Hussein to sow discord and to trigger terror.

Risk Number 5

The developing world and Eastern Europe would have continued their tailspin. Unstable oil prices crimp lifestyles in the developed world. Unstable oil prices threaten lives in the developing world.

Risk Number 6

There is our experience with the last five-and-a-half months of sanctions. Despite the near universality of sanctions and adherence to them, important materials were still getting through, strategic materials which help sustain Saddam's ability to wage war. On small planes and small boats and small trucks -- even on pack animals -- spare parts, chemical additions, lubricants and other strategic imports as well as foodstuffs were getting through. If a continuation of sanctions had been accompanied by a crumbling of the Coalition, that material would have multiplied.

Certainly, the civilian economy of Iraq was suffering from sanctions. Trade was down. Inflation was up. Shelves were less full. Factories were closing. But Kuwait is not occupied

by factories or civilians, it is occupied by an army. We know now that during the pause for peace Saddam increased the food for his troops and reduced the food for his people. That proves his priorities. It makes clear that his Iraqi people would have suffered horribly and Saddam's army would still not suffer.

These, then, would have been the risks involved in giving Saddam Hussein yet another pause for peace: a Kuwait further pillaged; an Iraqi army further strengthened; a potential casualty list lengthened; a developing world and an Eastern Europe impoverished; and an incendiary region made even less stable. Those would have been terrible risks.

This is a man who gassed his own people, a man who took hundreds of hostages, a man who sends rockets to kill innocent civilians, a man who now threatens to use prisoners-of-war as human shields. This is the man who did not move for 168 days. Would more time have made this outlaw a man of reason, a man of peace?

This Government -- indeed no government -- saw any information which would convince us that those risks of delay were worth bearing. I believe that Canadians, now confronting the costs of conflict, should have confidence that peace was indeed given a chance.

This war, then, is both a war of principle and a war of last resort. But our concerns must not stop there. It is not enough that we simply concentrate on the choreography of conflict. Wars are only worth fighting if the new peace they usher in is preferable to what went on before.

Wars have causes. Peace has prerequisites. That is true in the Gulf as it is true everywhere.

Saddam Hussein's aggression is without justification. But Saddam's aggression occurred in a region of the world more volatile than any other, a region of hatred and extremism and ideology and terror. It is those forces which helped bring Saddam Hussein into power. It is those forces which sustain him. It is those forces he now seeks to manipulate as he tries to make the Coalition crumble by spreading terror across the region.

No one can look at the Middle East or the Persian Gulf and be proud or sanguine. This is a region where the success of diplomacy has been known largely by its absence. This is a region where weapons of mass destruction are stockpiled, weapons developed because of insecurities and ambition, weapons which the West played a role in building.

Canadian arms exports to this area have been closely controlled. But this is a region which has been a boon to the

world arms bazaar, a bonanza for those with Swiss bank accounts. We know the old argument, that arms do not cause conflicts, that they are simply the result of conflicts. But arms cost billions, they distort economies, they make unstable regions more unstable, they ensure that conflict becomes more bloody when it occurs. In a region where allegiances and friendships shift like the sand, where what is one day considered a prudent defence is regarded the next day as a dangerous offence by countries there and outside, no one can look at the arms trade and shrug. In the Middle East, a free market in arms is a suicidal market.

If there is one priority -- one lesson -- which the world must learn from this war it is that an unrestricted arms trade in this region is no longer acceptable and constitutes a threat to the security of all Members of the United Nations.

The Middle East has a history of wars where ceasefires have become starting guns for the next conflict. Peace here has been nothing more than the absence of war. However long or difficult this conflict is, the United Nations must turn urgently to resolving the animosities and differences between the states and peoples of this region. If it does not, if an end to this war becomes another period of preparation for the next, we will have failed. We will have proven yet again that the Middle East is a region of war punctuated by peace.

And there are other priorities which will require urgent attention, priorities of economic and democratic development. Although the Middle East has oil, it is also, in many countries, characterized by deprivation on a massive scale. There are inequalities of wealth which feed the politics of hatred and intolerance. Development in this region will be as important a component of security in the future as any other measure.

What this region needs is a structure and an attitude of co-operative security. It needs that on the part of countries in the region and on the part of those who can influence those countries. Countries there and outside must accept that security has ceased to be something to be achieved unilaterally, or through military means alone. Security must be multidimensional and it must be co-operative.

That is true the world over. It is true particularly for the Middle East. For there, behind today's headlines, are the fault-lines. The fault-lines of wars unsettled, of economic underdevelopment, of interdependence shown by our reliance on oil, of proliferation, the fault-line of potential conflict between Arabs and between Arabs and non-Arabs which this conflict may exacerbate if care is not taken.

The events in the Gulf expose another type of gulf, the gulf which exists between our aspirations and our achievements. Closing that gulf will be a priority for Canadian foreign policy in the period ahead. We must address that priority with as much firmness, determination and unity as we bring to our current commitment purpose.

That task too is a task for the United Nations. If we fail to maintain the unity required today to get Saddam out of Kuwait, we will also fail in these other areas. For the UN would be discredited, and a UN discredited cannot confront the tremendous challenges that region poses to the world.

I have spoken of obligations abroad. I want to conclude by addressing obligations at home. It is said the truth is one of the first casualties of war. So too is tolerance. The emotions and prejudices and stereotypes which conflict conjures are insidious. As we face a dictator in the Gulf, we must remember the requirements of democracy and tolerance at home. If this war breeds animosity between Canadians, that too would be a victory for the peacebreakers.

Democracy is characterized by -- indeed dependent upon -- the articulation of different views. This war has prompted debate. To oppose this war does not mean to support Saddam Hussein. That is true with non-Arab Canadians. It is true of Arab Canadians. Reasonable people -- good Canadians all -- have differing views. That right is the right of every Canadian. That right is the essence of democracy. That is a right not enjoyed by those who must live under Saddam Hussein.

Among the people who fight most fiercely against Saddam Hussein are Arabs. The main Coalition partners in the region seeking to bring freedom to Kuwait are Arabs. This is not a fight between peoples. This is a fight with one man -- a fight between the rule of law and an outlaw.

This Government strongly condemns any and all acts of intolerance and racism displayed towards Canadians of Arab origin, or Canadian Jews, or Canadian Moslems or others.

Intolerance is alarming when it occurs between adults. It is especially tragic when Canadian children are subjected to mistreatment. It is the obligation of every parent to ensure that our children understand that this conflict in the Gulf has nothing to do with their neighbours, and that those neighbours are as Canadian as anyone else and that their rights as Canadians must be respected.

These are trying times for all Canadians. They are times of torment for those whose loved ones are at risk in the defence of principle. It is for their sake and for those who

will follow us that we redouble our efforts to ensure that out of the ashes of this conflict comes an order which works for that region and the world.

I assure you today that Canada will do what it can both to make peace and to build peace. For to pursue one without the other is to condemn the United Nations and all it stands for to failure. We must not fail.