

A useful contribution to peace which Canada can make, both on its own and with others, is to help the sides overcome the barriers to communication which have developed. For example, Arab governments and the Palestinians should be urged to remove ambiguities, where they exist, about the terms and conditions affecting their willingness to recognize and accept the State of Israel as part of an agreed settlement. On the other hand if Israel's policies in the occupied territories hinder the negotiating process by creating distrust among Arabs we should be prepared to say so. We also should encourage the two sides to talk directly to each other. We should discourage their placing undue emphasis on formal mechanisms for such discussions and on questions of formal representation and formal recognition before even talks can take place.

Progress towards a settlement requires that meaningful compromise by both sides be seen as attainable. Canada should encourage this. Perceptions that the basic aspirations of one or the other of the parties cannot be met through negotiations could weaken the position of moderates and encourage belief in the necessity of violence to achieve objectives. While no just solution which will meet the demands of extremists on either side is obtainable, compromise which will satisfy the requirements of the moderates is achievable, I believe, with goodwill and perseverance.

In Canada a dialogue between Jewish and Arab groups would be highly desirable. No Canadians are more anxious to see a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, but they like the peoples of the Middle East often seem far apart in their perceptions of the area's problems. Both Jewish and Arab Canadians share a strong emotional attachment to that region and a strong love of Canada. Any success they might have in enhancing understanding, trust and goodwill among themselves could have a number of significant consequences. It could have some effect in promoting understanding in the Middle East itself. It could lead to a greater understanding of the Middle East by Canadians generally. It could further strengthen our policy in the area, which could then be formulated on a broad base of consensus within Canada rather than against a background of contending and contradictory domestic attitudes. This would provide a sounder and healthier foundation for Canadian foreign policy. This kind of dialogue between Canadian Jewish and Arab groups would require patience and a willingness to persist in discussion even in the face of basic misunderstandings which could arise between the participants. Such a dialogue seems to me nevertheless to be an important contribution that these groups of Canadians can make to the Middle East and to Canada.