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FIVE YEARS OF FULFILMENT

An address by the Minister of National Health and Welfare, Mr. Paul Martin, to commemorate the Fifth Anniversary of the establishment of the State of Israel, delivered before the United Zionist Council of Ottawa, April 19, 1953.

...One of the great strengths of Canada is our national unity. We are a country of many diverse elements, each contributing in its own unique way to the richness of our national life. Our nation is a tapestry in which, finely woven, we glimpse the memories and traditions of many peoples -- peoples who speak different languages, who worship at different alters, who engage in various vocations -- but who all honour their mutual kinship as Canadians.

In Canada we make no cry against minority groups. We have no place for racial and religious discrimination of any kind. Here we take a man for what he is -- whether he be Protestant, or Jew, or Catholic. We are all Canadians, equal under the law, regardless of what our origins, traditions or cultures may be. In my public life, nothing has been of more lasting satisfaction than to have had the honour of putting into legislation, the Canadian Citizenship Act, this broad delineation of our citizenship.

I am sure that all Canadians felt the same pride that I did when in Canada's Parliament last Monday, my colleague, the Minister of Labour, introduced a Bill to provide equality of employment opportunity without discrimination on account of race, national origin, colour or religion. In so doing, Mr. Gregg paid high tribute to my good friend and former fellow-townsmen, David Croll, M.P., who for so many years has fought racial and religious discrimination in all its forms.

In Mr. Croll's own words: "intolerance and discrimination are the two sides of the coin of infamy which has been current far too long". It was particularly appropriate that, in urging respect for these fundamental human rights, Mr. Croll should conclude his remarks by quoting a great Canadian churchman, Cardinal McGuigan.

Tomorrow the State of Israel will celebrate its fifth anniversary. For the courageous men and women who are rebuilding the newest republic on the Mediterranean, the past five years have been difficult but rewarding. But these years of hardship and austerity have also been years of remarkable growth and development.

After marking time for centuries, Israel is once more on the march -- socially, politically, economically. Since April, 1948, more than 800,000 Jews from all parts of the world have made the long pilgrimage home to the land that was promised to Abraham. Across the land of Moab where Moses, faithful servant of his Lord, came to die, his people today are, at last, finding a place of refuge.