

be consulted about a settlement in the Middle East and they must be involved in that settlement. With regard to the specific question of assistance, if the hon. member is referring to financial assistance, we have been contributing financial assistance to the relief of the refugees.

Mr. Stuart Leggatt, Member of Parliament for New Westminster: Mr. Speaker, the minister stated that he is looking for a change in conditions or climate for the holding of the conference. Will he specify what he wishes to see changed, in terms of the PLO attitude toward Israel, which would perhaps create that kind of climate? Second, will he indicate whether we can expect a definitive decision with regard to Habitat in Vancouver, in terms of the holding of that conference and where exactly the same conditions will apparently prevail unless there is a change in the so-called climate to which the minister refers?

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, there are two broad conditions which would indicate an easing of the situation that caused us to seek a postponement of this conference. One is the extreme intrusion of unrelated political discussions into what ought to be technical conferences. Mind you, certain of the developing countries feel that these political matters ought to be discussed. It is our view that they ought not to intrude into what are technical conferences. We had a recent example at the conference in Mexico, which in my opinion was damaged because of unrelated political issues entering the discussion. We hope to make some progress in establishing ground rules against the politicization of these conferences. That is one situation.

The other is the expectation that in the meantime there will be a reduction in tensions in the Middle East and that the present unfavourable climate will, if not disappear, be reduced. For example, successful partial negotiations which