

*North-South Relations*

What I look for, then, is not the weary observation that arms control measures will be unfashionable for the next four years, but rather some greater commitment of resources and interest by the Canadian government which will focus attention on this politically catastrophic situation. It is not an issue which can be ignored. If the superpowers want to ignore it, then our task may well be to insist, through the strength of our ideas, that they return to it.

Let me now turn to the related problem of regional instability. At the recent NATO council meeting it was agreed that the NATO members would co-operate and consult in regard to matters of regional instability outside the NATO area, but there would not be a formal extension of NATO's area of responsibility. This leaves us squarely with the decision as to how we Canadians intend to respond to problems of regional instability. Canadians should be aware how directly important to Canada is this question.

We are now seen by others as a country with an energy exporting potential—that is, if the National Energy Program does not fritter away our potential. Since crucial problems of regional instability involve the disruption of energy supplies, it is clearly the case that no serious international conflict will be without repercussions in the country.

The prospect of such international conflicts are great. It goes without saying that they exist in the Persian Gulf and the Middle East; they exist in Africa, where there could be increased military intervention by regional and outside powers. As recent experience has indicated, we know that they exist in the Caribbean and Central America, where the issues come a good deal closer to home for Canadians. How are we to contribute to the stability of such regions? In regard to the Middle East, it is surely important that we do not follow the American lead without carefully considering alternative strategies.

What is the government's position—and it has not been spelled out—in regard to the American-sponsored force in the Sinai? It is time to recognize that our distinguished long service with United Nations peacekeeping missions earned us enormous good will around the world. Before we ignore that tradition and participate in an American selected force for the Sinai, we should ensure that every means to bring the force under the auspices of the United Nations has been exhausted. Has the government done that? If so, let it explain what it has done and what is the present position. And let us in the process reaffirm a fundamental commitment to the peace and security responsibilities of the United Nations.

In other regions we must recognize that there may be a serious conflict between the security interests of the United States and the economic and social development of the region.

For example, in the Caribbean, in Central America and in Africa, the United States has served notice that it sees the Soviet Union as an interventionist power and intends to oppose populist movements on the grounds that they are sponsored by the Soviet Union or other outside powers. Here is yet another case where it will be vital for Canada to determine its own interests and its own interpretation of events. If we have the

capabilities to help stabilize a region or a friendly country, then on what grounds will we choose to exercise those capabilities? We have not even begun to debate that question in Canada.

At a recent meeting with President Reagan, President Lopez Portillo of Mexico indicated that on a range of issues Mexico was anxious to co-operate with the United States, but that in respect to other matters, particularly those involving the interpretation of political and social developments in Central America, Mexico disagreed with Washington and intended to pursue its own policies. Canada should be no less determined to pursue its own foreign policy in that region.

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Why is it so difficult for us to indicate our areas of disagreement and to take appropriate action in pursuit of our own views and interests? The recent and continuing case of El Salvador is surely to the point. We see an ongoing story of violence, assassination, and the all too familiar flow of political refugees into neighbouring states.

Are we really without the means to judge the causes of this problem? When this question was debated in the House earlier this year, members on this side impressed on the government that the basic problem was not one of intervention by the Soviet Union, but rather a class conflict rooted in the extreme inequalities of the El Salvadorean society, inequalities which the military junta is only too willing to accept and protect. In the past we have been involved in helping to absorb and relocate large numbers of refugees from societies fraught with conflict similar to that found in Central America today. Can we really then say that the situation in El Salvador is irrelevant to us? I regret to say that the response of this government to the plight of the El Salvadoreans, and to the situation in Central America, has been timid and grossly inadequate.

Regional instability has yet another aspect which has been brought home to us in the last week in a truly historic and startling manner. The Israeli attack upon the nuclear reactor in Iraq is the clearest evidence yet that nuclear proliferation is a potentially catastrophic development on this planet. We do not need to determine the rights and wrongs of that particular situation to understand that, for the first time, one state has judged that its security requires a military attack upon the nuclear installations of another. Other states will now surely follow suit. Without a doubt, we have crossed a threshold in nuclear proliferation. The spectre that the spread of nuclear technology hastens the incidence of nuclear war is clear for all to see. I want to repeat and underline that the spectre that the spread of nuclear technology hastens the incidence of nuclear war is now clear for all to see.

As a nuclear exporting state, Canada has an overwhelming responsibility to take whatever steps are necessary and possible to control the spread of nuclear weapons technology. For many years I have been a strong advocate of stringent safeguards on the sale of nuclear technology. Nothing short of a dramatic effort by the United States involved in the sale of nuclear processes will now bring this problem under control.