

Press:

Because right now the whole problem would appear to be one of securing the friendship of the Arabs because of the oil which is vital to Europe. Isn't that one of the main considerations?

Mr. Pearson:

That is one factor but we want to secure the friendship of the Arabs for other reasons than that. As far as Canada is concerned, we want the friendship of the states on both sides of this issue, but it will be difficult to secure that friendship as long as they are so bitterly hostile to each other.

Press:

Mr. Pearson, I cannot say that I am entirely convinced that Canada should be dribbling a few arms here to Egypt and Israel. To take it on a broader plan, isn't a lot of the trouble in the Middle East that the Arabs are fed up with Western colonialism and they would like us to get out?

Mr. Pearson:

On your first point, dribbling a few arms to Israel and Egypt; the only arms of any significance at all that we have shipped to any Arab state since World War II have been fifteen Harvard planes. On the other question, you are perfectly right. Israel, and the establishment of the state of Israel, has been an important factor in stirring up trouble there between the Arab states and the people in Palestine. But I am satisfied myself that, if there never had been a state of Israel, there would still be ferment and unrest in the Middle East because of the surge of Arab nationalism.

Colonial Territories

Press:

Could you say, Mr. Pearson, whether you share the view of certain countries that there are some colonial territories which are vital to the North Atlantic Organization?