

Mr. MacEachen: The PLO would be eligible for attendance at the conference and it may be that a similar outcry would develop at that time. I have no way of being sure. What I hope and will work for is that in the meantime, there will be changes in the political, international atmosphere so that the same outcry will not occur and that these conferences will settle down into technical conferences to help mankind rather than become really forums for important political discussions. There is no question about that; but they have their place in other forums.

Reporter: What if the PLO didn't want to come to Toronto, would your views still be the same?

Mr. MacEachen: No. I don't see that the PLO is the sole factor in this situation at all. We are placing this in the broad international context and I believe that it is about time that a country like Canada, and I hope others, will make it perfectly clear how they feel about these technical conferences.

--Transcript of press conference, July 21, 1975.

Mr. Gérard Laprise, Member of Parliament for Abitibi:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. MacEachen) has indicated in his statement that he will travel to the Middle East, to invite the countries of the area, including Israel, to discuss this problem. Could the minister advise the House whether he will take this opportunity to raise the Palestinian refugee issue and try to solve the problem?

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned in my statement, Canada has contributed very substantially through the years to assistance for the Palestinian refugees. We supported resolution 242 which refers directly to the Palestinians, and recently in my address at the United Nations I developed Canadian policy further with regard to the Palestinian people. We believe that the Palestinian people must