

We have differences with Israel over some of its policies and actions and we have been forthright in our criticism, both in public and in private. We strongly oppose such actions as the establishment of settlements in the occupied territories, the passage of the Jerusalem and Golan Heights laws and the bombing of the Iraqi nuclear reactor and of the city of Beirut.

However, since foreign policy is publicly made in Canada, you would not want me, I am sure, to say anything here tonight which I would not equally say to a Canadian Jewish audience. Similarly, I am sure you would expect me to make it clear that Canada has always been and will remain committed to the existence and security of Israel. It is only by frankly acknowledging the claims of both sides that we can be fair.

There has been a lot said about the role which the Palestine Liberation Organization should play in a Middle East settlement. While we acknowledge that the PLO represents an important element of Palestinian opinion, we do not regard the PLO as the Palestinians' "sole legitimate representative". We have had contacts with the organization over time on a number of topics, particularly in Beirut.

In conclusion, may I urge Canadian Arabs to help to bring an objective attitude to the Arab-Israeli problem. We are not a culturally authoritarian people. We welcomed you to this country as Arabs and encouraged you, like Abraham Bounadere to retain your name and your culture. But I also know that, as Canadians, you want to share in the general values of Canadian society. And among the highest of those values is the search for world peace.

Lester Pearson helped to bring peace to the Middle East in 1956. Paul Martin helped to bring peace to Cyprus in 1964. You can help your government to bring peace to Middle East again in 1982. I entreat your dedication and your objectivity.