

a firmly established state and the Israelis will have to admit that Palestinians have a right through centuries of residence to a part of historic Palestine, namely the West Bank and Gaza. But both sides are making the commencement of negotiations more difficult.

The Committee suggests to the Canadian government that it urge the two sides to set aside these ultimate objectives of mutual simultaneous recognition and to see what practical arrangements can be worked out. If both sides were able to find mutual benefit through a series of smaller agreements, the formalization of their undertakings could eventually bring with it the mutual recognition that each considers important.

g) Israel's security and the West Bank

Israelis have a special and understandable concern for their security. The Camp David Accords provide for the withdrawal of Israeli armed forces, a redeployment of some Israeli forces to specified security locations and "arrangements for assuring internal and external security and public order".

If the principle of demilitarization of the West Bank were to be accepted by the Palestinians and the Arab states and endorsed by the international community, it should be easier for Israel to agree to withdraw its forces. Such an arrangement should be for the longer term and it would be important that it could not be modified by any of the parties directly concerned without international agreement.

h) An international peace conference on the Middle East

President Mubarak of Egypt has suggested that once an agreement has been tentatively worked out between those directly concerned, an international conference might then be called including the United States, the Soviet Union and the three other permanent members of the UN Security Council. Such a second stage conference could confirm the arrangements made at the earlier negotiations among those primarily concerned. It would recognize the fact that the Soviet Union has influence and interests in the Middle East, an acknowledgement which would be important in encouraging a wide Arab acceptance of any peace settlement. Moreover, the Soviet Union is in a position to help improve the atmosphere in the Middle East by exerting a moderating influence on the Syrians and on some elements of the PLO.

3. Jerusalem

Jerusalem is undoubtedly the largest of many obstacles to some kind of settlement in Palestine. While the issue cannot be avoided, it should not be taken up unless progress has been made in finding accommodation on other less intractable problems.

With regard to Jerusalem, the Committee considers that Canada should continue with its present stance. This should include not recognizing Israel's