

WE SHALL ALSO CONTINUE TO OPPOSE BARREN EXERCISES IN PROPAGANDA OR RESOLUTIONS FULL OF EXAGGERATED AND INTEMPERATE CRITICISM OF ISRAEL WITH UNSUBSTANTIATED ALLEGATIONS AND UNREASONABLE RECOMMENDATIONS THAT DO NOT IN ANY WAY SERVE THE CAUSE OF PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST. CANADA AND TWO OTHER MEMBERS OF THE UN COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS VOTED AGAINST A RESOLUTION OF THIS KIND LAST MONTH. HAD WE BEEN THE ONLY COUNTRY TO OPPOSE SUCH A RESOLUTION WE WOULD STILL HAVE VOTED THE SAME WAY.

WHILE WE MAY BE ABLE TO PLAY A CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE IN THE SEARCH FOR PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST IT WILL OBVIOUSLY NOT BE A MAJOR ONE. I DO PLAN HOWEVER TO ADD A PERSONAL DIMENSION TO THE CANADIAN ROLE BY VISITING ISRAEL AND PERHAPS A FEW OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE AREA LATER THIS YEAR - PROBABLY IN THE FALL. I LOOK FORWARD TO MEETING PRIME MINISTER RABIN AND TO RENEWING ACQUAINTANCE WITH FOREIGN MINISTER ALLON, WHO WAS ONE OF MY FIRST DISTINGUISHED COLLEAGUES TO VISIT CANADA LAST FALL AFTER I TOOK OVER THE EXTERNAL AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO. I REMEMBER THE VERY FRANK AND CORDIAL EXCHANGES WE HAD ON THAT OCCASION WHICH HELPED ME A GREAT DEAL IN ACQUIRING A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF ISRAEL'S POLICY. A BASIC PREMISE OF CANADIAN POLICY IS THAT IT IS THE PARTIES THEMSELVES WHO MUST WORK OUT A PEACE SETTLEMENT. NATIONS OUTSIDE THE AREA CAN HELP. IN SOME CASES (AND I AM THINKING OF THE ROLE OF THE UNITED STATES IN PARTICULAR) THEIR HELP MAY BE CRUCIAL. BUT ONLY THE BELLIGERENTS CAN MAKE PEACE.

DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS TO MAKE THIS POSSIBLE ARE INTENSIFYING. WE HAVE HAD VISITS TO THE MIDDLE EAST BY UN SECRETARY-GENERAL WALDHEIM AND THE AMERICAN SECRETARY OF STATE. I SAW MR. VANCE TWO OR THREE WEEKS AGO AND HIS ASSESSMENT WAS ONE OF CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM. NOW ISRAEL'S PRIME MINISTER HAS VISITED WASHINGTON AND PRESIDENT SADAT OF EGYPT IS SOON TO DO SO. THE DIALOGUE IS GETTING STARTED AGAIN, IF ONLY INDIRECTLY SO FAR.

PERHAPS IT IS TOO EARLY TO BE AS OPTIMISTIC AS THAT. THE POSITIONS OF ISRAEL AND THE ARAB STATES ARE STILL VERY FAR APART -- NOTABLY ON THE QUESTION OF FRONTIERS AND THE POLITICAL FUTURE OF THE PALESTINIANS. THERE DOES HOWEVER SEEM TO BE A CONSENSUS THAT THE GENEVA TALKS SHOULD BE RESUMED LATER THIS YEAR, WITHOUT CONDITIONS IN TERMS OF WHAT COULD BE DISCUSSED. THE PARTIES ARE ALSO ANXIOUS FOR A PERMANENT AND COMPREHENSIVE SOLUTION, NOT MERELY INTERIM MEASURES.

GIVEN THIS CONSENSUS, A SHARED SENSE OF URGENCY AND A FELT NEED FOR PEACE, I THINK THE OPPORTUNITY IS WITHIN OUR REACH. THIS IS SOMETHING NEW AND IMPORTANT. WE MUST HOPE THAT THE OPPORTUNITY CAN BE SEIZED, FOR IT MAY NOT COME SOON AGAIN. MAY THOSE WHO CARRY THE GREATEST RESPONSIBILITY FOR PEACE BE EQUAL TO THE CHALLENGE THAT 1977 HOLDS UP TO THEM. THIS MUST BE THE HOPE OF ALL OF US IN THIS ROOM, AS FRIENDS OF PEACE AND FRIENDS OF ISRAEL.