



CANADA

STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

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COMMON PURPOSE AND COMMON ACTION

The Canadian Statement in the General Debate of the United Nations General Assembly by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Mitchell Sharp, New York, September 24, 1970.

...Only a few short weeks ago, Mr. President, the ceasefire in the Middle East and the proposals for negotiations to settle the conflict there gave cause for some cautious optimism. Today we are faced with a deadly serious situation in the Kingdom of Jordan, a situation which has already manifested itself in new violence and bloodshed. The struggle between forces within Jordan threatens to involve neighbouring countries, and there is a constant risk of widening conflict involving more distant powers. In the course of these events, we have seen new dimensions added to what is already a growing threat to world order. I refer to acts of air piracy. In the Middle East a significant new dimension is the holding of innocent people hostage for ransom for political and other purposes, one of these being to disrupt the already difficult circumstances surrounding the ceasefire.

No government in the world today can fail to be concerned about the far-reaching implications of this kind of international lawlessness. It is my strong conviction that legal and technical arrangements such as those being discussed in ICAO, necessary as they are, cannot produce the whole solution. Air hijacking must come to be regarded as abhorrent, never to be condoned or justified regardless of the motives of the hijackers.

Even without these new complications, the peace talks in the Middle East are stalled because of substantial charges and countercharges of ceasefire violations. The parties and the sponsoring powers that brought about the ceasefire must be aware of the dangers implicit in this situation of deadlock and deterioration.

The United Nations is on trial in the face of an obvious threat to the peace in the Middle East. This means that all of us, the member nations, are on trial. If we are to meet this challenge, we must stand behind the efforts Ambassador Gunnar Jarring and others are making to bring peace to that troubled area.