

trustworthiness of the PLO, the containability of any two-state solution, and the wider prospects for the acceptance of Israel by its numerous Arab neighbours. As mentioned elsewhere in this paper, the stakes have now been raised on both sides of this conflict (which has erupted into large-scale war four times in living memory) by Israel's presumed acquisition of nuclear weapons capability and the increasing accessibility of chemical weapons and delivery capability among its neighbours.

The *intifada*, the intensifying repression used against it by Israeli authorities, and the modified positions of the PLO have all seemed to weaken the tolerance for an inflexible Israeli government position among many Israelis and among many of Israel's firm supporters abroad. Such an effect is, of course, welcomed and encouraged by the PLO and its supporters. At root, nonetheless, the Israeli negotiating position will remain very strong, as will support from the United States and some other countries, when real negotiations for a secure settlement are finally launched. While shifts in the balance of outside sympathies do make some difference, it will only be a shift within Israel itself that will make serious negotiation possible.

The contributions of a country like Canada to progress are likely to be limited, since Canada's real influence on any of the protagonists is small and the creative debate about possibilities for resolution has been severely circumscribed in Canada. Some organizations of the Canadian Jewish community seem to fear that open debate of alternatives to official Israeli policy will lead inevitably to erosion of Canadian support for Israel. There is now, however, a significant counter-lobby which has been able to insist that the Palestinian case and/or the need for basic change be heard by Canadians.

Canada, with a good track record in contributing to peacemaking and peacekeeping around the world and with strong instinctive sympathy for Israel and its concerns and a growing commitment to the rights and needs of Palestinians, would be well-placed to make a useful contribution in the eventual resolution of this conflict. It seems likely, however, that the explosive polarization of the domestic debate will render this extremely difficult. Efforts will continue to be made by this Institute, and presumably others, to promote knowledge and understanding of the evolving situation and awareness of the emerging options for international action.

Another Middle East crisis which seized Canadian attention in 1989 was the further slide of Lebanon into anarchic, multi-factional