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From a Speech by the Honourable Paul Martin,
Secretary of State for External Affairs, to the
Thirty-Seventh Biennial National Convention of
the Zionist Organization of Canada, Montreal,
October 26, 1964.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am deeply honoured by the invitation you have extended to me to speak to you on this occasion. As our preparations for the centenary of Canada's nationhood go forward, I have been reflecting on the fact that Canada's Jewish community has only recently passed a centenary of its own and will, within a year of the anniversary of Canadian Confederation, be celebrating another one. Indeed, these are not merely centenaries; they are bicentenaries. For it is just over 200 years ago that Aaron Hart settled permanently in Canada, the first Canadian of the Jewish faith to have done so. And it was only a few years later, in 1768, that the first Jewish congregation was established in Canada. In fact, as you know, it was established right here in the City of Montreal.

In these intervening two centuries, Canada's Jewish citizens have made a rich contribution to our national life and heritage. In business and industry, in the professions, in the academic sphere, in the arts and sciences, in the public service and in the realm of government, Canada's Jewish citizens have contributed out of all proportion to the size of their community. We look forward to the continuation of that contribution in the tasks that face us as a nation. We are determined to ensure in future, as we have in the past, that Canadian attitudes and the organization of Canadian life are such as to permit all segments of our people, irrespective of language, race or religion, to make their distinctive contribution to the greater Canadian community. We believe that this is the right approach for Canada. We also believe that it represents the right approach towards co-operation in an increasingly interdependent world.

I am also glad to have this opportunity of saying something to you about Israel, whose welfare and security are, I know, close to your hearts and at the centre of your deliberations at this convention. As many of you know, I had the privilege of visiting Israel in 1958. I have the warmest memories of that visit and of the generous reception and hospitality which were accorded to me on that occasion. I also continue to have deep admiration for the achievements of Israel, its amazing economic progress and vitality, its forward-looking social experiments and the imaginative way in which it has been able to absorb many diverse elements into its broad national life. These pioneer achievements