

The board, in announcing its inquiries into these products on December 6, 1974, emphasized that briefs should be submitted as soon as possible and in any case not later than January 6, 1975. It also drew attention to section 17(2) of the Textile and Clothing Board Act permitting it to make a written report to the minister recommending that special measures of protection be implemented immediately on an interim basis. During recent weeks department officials have had intensive discussions with representatives of the industry and with officials of other departments and of the provincial governments most directly concerned. They have been gathering the information necessary to assist the board in conducting its inquiry and to support any recommendations made before the textiles surveillance body of the international textiles arrangement.

All of these steps are in accordance with the provisions of our textile policy and are necessary to meet our international obligations under GATT and, specifically, the ITA. They will, however, take time to carry out and, considering the depressed conditions facing the primary textile industry worldwide, it is unlikely that effective action can be in place to prevent lay-offs prior to Christmas.

CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION—ALLEGATION OF
BIAS IN REPORTING NEWS EVENTS IN MIDDLE EAST—
GOVERNMENT ACTION

Mr. Heath Macquarrie (Hillsborough): Mr. Speaker, on December 13 the Minister of Communications (Mr. Pelletier), with that haughty arrogance which is his trademark, indicated to me that I had addressed a question to the wrong minister. If he feels, under section 3(d) of the Broadcasting Act, that he is not responsible for the fair and impartial broadcasting of news, that is his confusion, not mine. In any case I am very happy to have the distinguished and learned Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretary of State (Mr. Blouin) answering my question tonight.

Surely the Middle East crisis, a continuing threat to the peace and security of the whole world, is "a matter of public concern" to Canadians. The Middle East conflict is difficult and dangerous enough, and Canada's role therein and attitude thereto sensitive enough to preclude any unhelpful contributions from the CBC or other media. The open letter to the CBC president from Ms. Donna McDuff was a thoughtful, carefully worded and obviously well-researched presentation. I do not know this lady but I, too, heard the programs to which she took exception.

The "Capital Report" program to which she referred was outrageously biased and the part which was supposed to capsule the editorial opinion of Canadian newspapers was grotesque in its distortion. This I say having made a very careful study of press comment on the very important issue of hearing the PLO representative at the United Nations. She also refers to the CBC's failure to carry Yasser Arafat's speech at the United Nations. No one expects the CBC or any other media to become an apologist for the PLO—although they have ridden many hobby-horses in times past—but I think whether we like it or not, his appearance was an important news event. I think the people of Canada might have been trusted to hear and see the PLO chief and make up their own minds.

Adjournment Debate

If, as Ms. McDuff alleges, her complaints were countered by the statement from a prominent CBC executive that she was "anti-Semitic", then we enter the area not only of the improper but of the reprehensible. There is no place for this kind of unworthy sneering on a matter of such importance. She does not engage in anti-Semitism if she urges that the Palestinians have rights and that one of these is the right to be heard. To say the least, anti-Semitism is a strange accusation against one who desires greater justice for the Palestinians or other Arabs since they, too, are Semitic peoples.

● (2220)

The CBC coverage of the Middle East situation has for a long time been characterized by lack of impartiality and refusal to allow the Palestinian case to be aired. When the members of the PLO were here recently, I listened in vain for CBC radio to give an in-depth story about or an interview with these three people—men, incidentally, of varied and interesting background—a poet, a lawyer and a mayor recently ousted from his municipal duties in the West Bank. But CBC radio was, in my view, most inadequate in its coverage.

Perhaps this media, especially the CBC, may be directly or indirectly influenced by the example of ministers of the government. How many times have I heard secretaries of state for external affairs in answer to questions state that Canada supports UN Security Council resolution 242, which calls for secure and recognized boundaries for Israel, and then sit down with an expression of sublime satisfaction. But what SC resolution 242 says in this connection is:

Termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for an acknowledgement of the sovereignty territorial independence and political independence of every state in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force.

It also calls for "withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories of recent conflict and the achievement of a just settlement of the refugee problem." Thus, a good deal more than the security of Israel is involved in the resolution to which we have long been committed. It is misleading to suggest that it is a commitment to only one side of the confrontation in the Middle East. We do less than justice to our own people, to our international friends and to the peace of the world when we deal in partial truths or concealed truths.

It is necessary that we bring objectivity and an even-handed approach to the Middle East crisis. This country has been a friend of Israel for a long time. Nor would I wish to see that friendship diminished. But that friendship cannot, and need not, be based on the assumption that never, on any issue at any time, can there be any right or justice in the cause of the Palestinians. There is no reason in the world why Canada should not maintain and strengthen its ties of commerce and friendship with the 20 states of the Arab world.

If we are, as we claim, unbiased in this crucial question, we should be objective in our news dissemination. The death of Israeli civilians at the hands of Palestinians is to be deplored, but the death of women and children in refugee camps as the result of Israeli armed attacks must also touch our conscience. There can be no discrimination