

Arab-Israeli Conflict

Finally, I believe that we must continue to ask Israel and her many friends in Canada why Israel continues to deny to the Palestinians the same right to a national identity and national homeland which are the very goals which Israel has fought to achieve for itself. This is taking place at a time in Israeli and world history when the Arab world has, for the first time, offered the olive branch to Israel. It is an offer which includes mutual recognition between the PLO and Israel, secure boundaries for Israel which are no more and no less than its pre-1967 boundaries, acceptance of guarantees for the security of all the states in the region, including Israel, by the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Russia and China. This is all documented in the Arab Fez Summit Declaration. A real and lasting peace—not the present militarily imposed lull—is possible if Israel grasps the opportunity and moves now to seize the one moment in her history when there is a real possibility that she can get almost everyone in the Middle East moving in the same direction.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin): Order. I regret to inform the Hon. Member that his time has expired.

I see the Hon. Parliamentary Secretary rising, presumably to put a question to the Hon. Member for Châteauguay (Mr. Watson). However, the Hon. Member's time has expired and this could only be done with the unanimous consent of the House. Is there unanimous consent?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Peterson: Mr. Speaker, my question is premised by the fact that we all want to see peace in the Middle East. We want to see security for all of those people. But, my goodness, I have never seen more unbalanced approach to going about this.

Is the Hon. Member aware of the fact that the covenant of the PLO, that group which he has been lauding so magnificently today without even looking at the other side of the issue, calls for the annihilation and wiping out of the State of Israel?

Mr. Watson: Mr. Speaker, if the Hon. Member talks of unbalance, I am afraid that he has indicated where the unbalance lies. The covenant to which he refers is, without any argument, an albatross around the neck of the Palestinians from a public relations point of view. There is no question there.

The facts are that since 1975 the PLO has moved in its actions well beyond what that particular covenant says and means. In particular, the Fez Summit was held at the initiative of the PLO. They participated as a full partner in the Fez Summit. I do not know if the Hon. Member has taken the trouble to look at the details of the Fez Summit, but I think he should be reminded of some of the main points of the Fez Agreement.

Mr. Blaikie: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I would ask the Hon. Member not to abuse the House by going on at great length in answer to the question. The question has been asked. Answer the question and let us get on with the debate.

Mr. Watson: Mr. Speaker, in all fairness, there has been an assertion before the House that I have somehow not been factual in my presentation. I am simply backing up what I am saying with facts. The PLO has moved well beyond this covenant that the Hon. Member has referred to and which, read by itself, is clearly unsettling to any Israeli who is interested in Israel's future.

The proof is shown by what has happened as far as PLO actions and positions are concerned. They have moved well beyond that covenant. As a result of this Fez Agreement, they have indicated that they are prepared to accept the pre-1967 boundaries in Israel. They have agreed to accept UN Security Council guarantees of Israel's boundaries. They have agreed, in effect, to recognize Israel.

If the Hon. Member needs further proof, the Speaker of the parliament-in-exile of the Palestinians, Mr. Fahoum, is quoted in the February 17 *Globe and Mail* as saying:

'We do not want to destroy any state in the region,'—

If this is not sufficient detail, then I frankly think that the Hon. Member should go back to his sources of information, that well known instrument of Israeli policy in Canada, that arm of the Israeli government in Canada, the Canada-Israel Committee, and ask it for further details on the facts concerning the real situation in the Middle East. However, I do not think he will get them.

Mr. Donald W. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): Mr. Speaker, I think that the discussion which we have just heard highlights the importance of the theme that I propose to adopt in speaking to this motion. I make a plea for even-handedness and fairness to all concerned. I am aware of the delicacy of the matter that is now before us. It is not my intention, and I am sure not the intention of the Member for Châteauguay (Mr. Watson), to be provocative in the comments that are made. His plea, as I understood it, is similarly for even-handedness and fairness to all concerned. Part of this even-handedness must inevitably rest on dissemination of the relevant and pertinent information on both sides of this matter.

I think you would agree, Mr. Speaker, that there has been a flood of information on one side and a lack of receptivity to much of the information on the other. I implore and plea for the cause of even-handedness in this issue.

For example, resolution 242 of November 22, 1967, had been referred to already. I wonder if the full significance of Resolution 242 is understood. This goes back to an earlier matter, but it is part of the Middle East mosaic. It is not directly related to the invasion of Lebanon by Israel, but the invasion of Lebanon was in defiance of this particular resolution. I would encourage all Hon. Members who have an interest in stability in the Middle East, in stability in the world for that matter, to listen.

• (1730)

The Middle East is a very key area in the world today.

Mr. Prud'homme: Absolutely.