

The Canadian Government views with the utmost seriousness the breakdown in Geneva of negotiations designed to reach agreement on an equitable settlement for the problems in Cyprus and the subsequent resumption of hostilities on the Island.

We were encouraged by the fact that Britain, Turkey and Greece, in Geneva on July 30th, were able to agree on a declaration which seemed to provide an effective framework for a negotiated settlement. We were therefore hopeful that the phase of the talks which began in Geneva on August 8th under the energetic and able chairmanship of the British Foreign Secretary, Mr. Callaghan, would result in further progress towards a settlement.

Canada agreed on July 25th to respond positively to a request by the U. N. Secretary General to nearly double the size of our U. N. military contingent on the Island. This action on Canada's part was a reflection of the importance we attach to preventing open conflict in an area of special sensitivity to the maintenance of world peace and of our desire to contribute to the resolution of hostility between countries which have for a long time been friends and allies of Canada. It also reaffirmed Canada's willingness to participate in international peace-keeping efforts under U. N. auspices when we are in a position to make an effective contribution.

Recent events in the Middle East and Cyprus, and in particular the death of ten Canadians while serving with the U. N. peacekeeping forces there, have demonstrated that this role can involve a high price. However, I remain convinced that Canada's peacekeeping efforts have helped to prevent further loss of life and to minimize human suffering. They have also contributed to creating conditions which enabled the parties directly involved to begin their efforts in reaching negotiated settlements. It was for these purposes that the Canadian Government agreed to increase substantially the size of its military contingent on the Island.

I understand that the Department of National Defence has been in direct communication with the Canadian contingent in Cyprus and I understand that to date there have been no casualties to Canadian servicemen in the current fighting. In accordance with U. N. instructions all United Nations forces on the Island have withdrawn to their main camps until an effective ceasefire has been implemented. The Canadian contingent Commander met yesterday, August 13th, with a representative of the Turkish forces on Cyprus and received assurances that Turkey would respect the neutrality and security of all U. N. positions on the Island. Evidence suggests that the disputants on Cyprus have abided by this understanding.