



STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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CANADA'S POSITION IN MIDDLE EAST CRISIS

Excerpts from a speech by Mr. L.B. Pearson,
Secretary of State for External Affairs, in
the House of Commons, March 15, 1957.

...This Middle East problem has been almost continuously before the United Nations Assembly since I spoke to this House on external affairs last November and that consideration by the United Nations I think has helped not only to bring the fighting to an end in that area but to prevent the conflict breaking out again or even worse spreading... The United Nations Assembly of course has its limitations as I have already shown and will try to show again in this discussion. There is no use asking it to do things it cannot do or for which it has no mandate under the Charter. Therefore there is no use blaming it if it does not do the impossible. It is also wrong, as I have said before, to use the United Nations as an excuse for national shortcomings and hesitations or as an escape from national responsibilities even though these should be discussed and when possible discharged through the United Nations.

The United Nations is no substitute for wise national policy or for close co-operation between friends and allies. It supplements, and essentially supplements, but it cannot replace these necessities. There is no particular value therefore in saying, "Let the United Nations do it", unless we accept the obligation to do our best to make that possible by wise national decisions inside and outside the United Nations.

Background of the Crisis

Mr. Speaker, before dealing with some of the details of this problem I would like for a moment to endeavour to put it in perspective.

The problem we have been discussing and trying to solve in New York is merely one aspect of the whole problem of the Middle East. That general problem would be with us if there never had been any trouble over the Suez or over Palestine last October. It comes from the rise of nationalism in the Middle East