

The brutal killings of men, women and children in West Beirut leave the Government and people of Canada with a sense of shock and outrage. It is difficult to express the extent of our revulsion at the massacre that has been reported. We condemn these crimes first and foremost because of the human lives lost, but also because such acts will not lead to peace and stability in Lebanon. On the contrary, they only fuel bitterness and increase the risk of further bloodshed.

The events of the past few hours have shown why restraint on all sides is imperative in the highly charged atmosphere following President-elect Gemayel's death. The Prime Minister drew attention to the dangers on September 17 when he condemned the assassination of Mr. Gemayel as such, and as an act of violence particularly disastrous for the peaceful evolution of the country.

With this danger in mind, we deplore Israel's unjustified occupation of West Beirut. Upsetting the carefully worked-out ceasefire agreements could only have a destabilizing effect on an already tense situation. In light of the most recent tragic events, Israel should withdraw from West Beirut so that the task of restoring stability might begin under Lebanese government authority.

Although Canada is not a member of the United Nations Security Council, we endorse the Council's resolution which condemns the massacres and authorizes a number of important actions by the Secretary General.