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PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The following are excerpts from a recent address by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. Paul Martin, at the "Sam Lax Negev Dinner" in Hamilton:

...Canada provides the largest number of observers to the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization and has, in the past years, maintained close to 900 soldiers and officers with the United Nations Emergency Force stationed in the Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula. The long duration of these peace-keeping operations has obviously led to a significant commitment of Canadian funds and manpower and has involved us in a self-denying role. Canada considers itself precluded by reason of the impartiality called for by its UN role, from becoming a provider of significant arms or military equipment to the countries of the area. I am sure that you would understand how any action we might take towards supplying arms in that area could immediately prejudice our ability to work effectively towards peace and stability there.

CANADA'S ROLE IN PALESTINE

This arduous and self-denying role Canada has, nonetheless, been willing to play since we have thereby made, we think, a substantial contribution to the containment of a dangerous situation and the prevention of escalation. We are prepared to continue to help in peace keeping as long as it is deemed essential for the maintenance of stability and the deterrence of conflict. Canada believes that by assisting in the maintenance of stability, both in the areas I have indicated and in the nearby island

of Cyprus, it is making a major contribution to the creation of conditions which enable the countries of the area to pursue their own development. They will also contribute indirectly to the betterment of less endowed areas. Amongst other examples, I am thinking here of Israel's assistance to certain African countries.

Canada has, I think, developed a sympathetic approach to and interest in Middle Eastern problems because of its experience there in recent years and its 18 years of service as a participant in Middle East peace-keeping operations. You can understand, therefore, why I should feel the regret which I know you share that the basic difficulties of the Middle East have not been resolved. They still show little sign of being resolved. I am particularly aware of the tragic fact that conditions have not improved to an extent which would enable a greater proportion of the resources of the area to be supplied to peaceful pursuits, more especially economic development. I am thinking for example, as you are, of the pressing problems of placing people in economically secure activities in newly reclaimed land.

I do not, of course, expect suspicion and hostility of such long standing as exist in the Middle East to be wiped out at one stroke. The countries of the area owe it to themselves, if not to the rest of the world to which the Middle East has given so much in the past, to reach over a period of time a mutual understanding, tacit if need be, that solutions lie not in the recourse to force or in the use of threats. They lie rather in the deliberate avoidance of words or actions incompatible with UN Charter obligations and with peaceful intentions and stability — in the