

In addition to our support for the right of existence of Israel, we underline the necessity of a just and fair solution to the problem of Palestinian refugees.

Third, we appeal to all countries concerned so that they settle their conflicts through negotiation. Experience should prove to everyone that war will only generate a new war. More particularly, we appeal once more to all countries concerned so that they can conform to resolution 242 of the Security Council.

Fourth, we use all the good offices we have in the other countries as well as in the United Nations to bring the belligerent parties to a negotiated solution.

Finally, we state we are ready to give our contribution to a United Nations brigade which would have a guarantee of efficiency.

Mr. Speaker, on November 19, 1969, in this House, the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Sharp), after a tour he had just made in the Middle East, made a statement which, in many respects, was prophetic. I should like to read parts of it. The Secretary of State for External Affairs declared and I quote:

The situation in the Middle East today is tragic. There is so much to be done in that part of the world and the will and technology are there. The tragedy is that in so many of the countries the resources needed for development are tied up in an arid confrontation which threatens to burst into violent conflict.

I left the Middle East with a profound sense of disquiet. Effective negotiation is not an immediate prospect. Escalation of the conflict is an immediate danger. In these circumstances, perhaps the best role for Canada to play in the foreseeable future is that of an understanding, compassionate, and objective observer, ready to assist if and when there is a specific task for us to undertake at the instance of both sides.

Unfortunately, the tragedy foreseen or felt by the Secretary of State for External Affairs has happened now. The part Canada may have to play is likely to be very humble but however it is encouraging to notice the unanimity of the political parties represented in this House in giving their support to everything the Canadian government can do to bring a negotiated solution to this tragic situation.

[English]

Mr. Heath Macquarrie (Hillsborough): Mr. Speaker, I join with many members who have spoken in extending to the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Sharp) my earnest good wishes and my commitment to assist him in any way he may find to work for good in this situation. I was somewhat appalled yesterday to hear him say that he would welcome a debate on this issue if it could be arranged at a time when it did not interfere with vital business going on in this House.

The Middle-East is aflame. Death and destruction are the order of the day, every day. Animosity deep and dangerous have been given warlike expression. Possible major involvement of the super powers is fearsomely threatening. In short, Sir, I cannot think of any matter, any issue, any human situation much more vital than the matter which, through the leadership of my colleague from Saint-Hyacinthe (Mr. Wagner), we are discussing tonight.

We would be less than human if we did not regard the Middle-East conflict with feelings of great dread and deep anxiety. The minister who preceded me, the Minister of

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National Health and Welfare (Mr. Lalonde), quoted a philosopher. To my mind come the words of the great poet, John Keats, who in his *Hyperion* referred to "one to whom the miseries of the world are misery". I think tonight of the many young people on both sides in the Middle East, many of the young military men whom I have met and by whom I was well treated in my visits to those parts of the world, and I wonder how many of them are casualties in the warfare that is gripping their lands.

We would be naïve, of course, to believe that the solution is easy or that Canada alone can pluck the flower safety from out the nettle danger. The ingredients comprising the present ominous situation are multitudinous and varied. History, religion, geography, natural resources, competition, great power intrusions—all of these, alas, are eternally present.

The Middle East, the cradle of mankind, has all through the ages, it seems, also been its battlefield. The bodies of those who fought for empires long since gone have mouldered to make the dust over which the modern, sophisticated machines of war move today. Indeed, sometimes I wonder whether the accuracy of the dreary final prophecy of Armageddon, which was in the Middle East, might not be tempted today as the world plays with fire in the most explosive part of our planet. The horrendous possibilities of today's tragedy cry out for the very best thought of the most thoughtful of men, and the wisest actions of the most activist of world citizens. We must cast aside easy prejudice or automatic passion. Canada, its government, its people, can and should be ready to nurture and nourish any glimmer of hope for a solution. We should be prepared to place real sacrifices upon the altar of peace. We begin this, I believe, by making an earnest effort toward objectivity founded on a concern for the aspirations, needs, values and anxieties of both contending groups.

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The interpretations of yesterday's statement or, rather, replies to questions by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, were not helpful. In such a long chapter of conflict and assault, how can one say with much value who started a war? Indeed, a careful look at the situation would lead one to ask when the war had ever ceased. Certainly in the Hobbesian sense it had never ceased. We hear of violations, we hear of wholesale intrusions and raids. Was there ever a long period since 1948 when we did not hear of these? I wonder if there is a potent vitality to the allocating of blame as to who started the war this time and who started it last time.

A comparison of the terrorist activities of one group, and the shooting down from the skies of an innocent passenger plane by the other, are equally horrendous, equally reprehensible. None of us would want the war to go on a single minute. Such a potentially explosive situation in fact cannot long endure without grave risk to mankind's future in a world of thermonuclear realities.

One sentence in the minister's speech commends itself to all of us. He said that there are only losers on all sides. If the roar of artillery ceases—and it must—I would like to see Canada play a part in helping to bring a better era to this troubled part of the world. Canada's capacity for meaningful leadership or assistance will not be furthered