

It seemed to us also, as it did to the majority of United Nations members, that the most logical and the simplest way of doing justice to both elements of the population of Palestine was to arrange a disposition of the territory which would give each element control over its own destinies. A plan to this end was recommended, and you know what happened. The Arab governments rejected it and took up arms to prevent it being carried out. But their appeal to arms failed.

The State of Israel came into being but, because of military operations, its boundaries were not the same as those of the partition plan. A truce was arranged by the Security Council. Later, on November 16, 1948, that Council called on the parties to the Palestine conflict to proceed from this imposed truce to the series of armistice agreements, which have helped, since 1949, to provide a framework within which, for seven and a half years, a return to open hostilities was at least avoided. The progress made by Israel in these seven and a half years, with your aid and with the aid of others like yourselves, has thus been made possible by this decision of the Security Council in an hour when prospects of a return to peace seemed dim indeed.

The next logical step, of an advance from the armistice regime to a peace settlement, has, as we know all too well, not yet been taken. There has been a fever of discontent in the area, attributable to the fears and dislocations caused by the sudden transition to new conditions, the effect of which may have been mitigated from time to time by external applications, but which has not so far been cured in any fundamental sense.

It was perhaps just as well that the United Nations was already familiar with the documentation in this case before the crisis came last autumn for, at the beginning of November, demands for United Nations action were presented without any opportunity for pulse-taking or the compilation of case-histories. Both remedial and preventive action seemed to be immediately necessary. We had to keep in mind that violence - however great the provocation - begets violence.

I know that you, as Canadians, look at the situation which has developed in the Middle East not only with a keen sympathy for the position in which Israel finds itself today, but also with a sense of responsibility for the maintenance of the peace of the world as a whole, which is the over-riding responsibility of our generation. Nothing, in the long run, can be satisfactory short of establishing peace and the rule of law, because in our day literally nothing less can assure the survival of the human race. It must be the main business of this generation to get on with that task, however discouraging, indeed however impossible it may seem to be.