

*Adjournment Debate*EXTERNAL AFFAIRS—REPRESENTATION OF PALESTINE  
LIBERATION ORGANIZATION AT GENEVA CONFERENCE—  
CANADIAN POSITION

**Mr. Heath Macquarrie (Hillsborough):** Mr. Speaker, I am always overwhelmed by the multitude of my colleagues who listen to my voice at this hour. On the other hand, to those who are not staying I feel like Lady MacBeth who said: "Stand not on the order of your going".

Last Tuesday's question to the minister, the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. MacEachen), concerning the Geneva Conference and the role of the Palestine Liberation Organization at that gathering was prompted by my continued interest and profound concern for the future of the Palestinian people.

There are many blunders, many failures, many moral wrongs in our age as in all preceding ages, but I believe nothing is a greater affront to our conscience than the Palestinian refugee question which has been a blight upon our record for the past quarter century. One and one-half million people driven from their homes or fleeing them in fear have languished in tents and shacks for 28 years. Discouragement, disillusionment is their lot. Children have grown to manhood knowing no home, knowing no hope. Not surprisingly in this life so degrading to the human personality disillusionment has turned to despair, and frustration to desperation. Not surprisingly the refugees ask: does any one care; will no one take up our cause?

The Arab inhabitants of Palestine were not consulted and, I fear, not considered when others decided that a new state of Israel should be set up in Palestine. I cannot here tonight discuss the violence and terror which went on in Palestine over the years prior to the carving out of the Republic of Israel—violence not by any means confined to the Arabs, or shall we say, the Palestinians.

But suffice to say there has been a painful, cruel lack of concern for the host of huddled refugees in the far-flung camps of the Middle East. UNRA has dispensed funds, but nothing like a decent lifestyle has been established, even if we set aside the vital question of the right of these people to a home of their own rather than a half-way hostel on a road which seems never to open up. Only in recent years has there been some recognition of the intensity and importance of the fate and status of the Palestinian refugees.

In this session of the General Assembly of the United Nations a recent decision was made to take up the general issue as a separate item for plenary discussion. The other day it was decided to hear a spokesman of the Palestine Liberation Organization at that great international organization in New York.

I regret that Canada found itself unwilling to join the vast majority of delegations prepared to hear a spokesman for the long suffering Palestinians. We took the familiar safety device of abstention. Of course there are problems, but there is a difference in this case. There is an interesting difference between our performance at ICAO or UNESCO. We know there are problems. All but one of the Arab states now seem prepared to look upon the PLO as

[Miss Bégin.]

the spokesman for the Palestinians and all present voted in favour.

The government of Jordan has a different point of view from the rest of the Arab states. Does Canada agree with the Jordanian position? Canada is in the Middle East in the UNEF. Canada is a charter member of the United Nations. I believe we are wisely establishing new diplomatic missions in Arab states. Having long recommended such a move, I expressed pleasure on the opening of an embassy in Saudi Arabia. I am glad that Yemen is strengthening its diplomatic contacts with us. The appointment of an ambassador from Canada, stationed in Baghdad, is long overdue.

But what I should like to know is the view of the government on the situation referred to in my question, and I hope that the distinguished parliamentary secretary, my long time friend from New Brunswick, will tell us tonight what is the view of the government of Canada. What are we doing to make our contribution toward peace in the troubled Middle East? Let us never forget that Armageddon is located in that part of the world. How are we demonstrating our awareness of the new prospects for advancing the cause and the lot of the long suffering Palestinians? Such a tragic situation, so egregious an affront to human dignity, cannot go on forever; indeed it should not go on longer.

**Mr. Herb Breau (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, in November of 1973, during his visit to the Soviet Union the then secretary of state for external affairs expressed the view, which he reconfirmed in the House on November 26, 1973, that the Canadian government believes the Palestinians should be represented in one way or another at the Geneva conference on the Middle East. This is obviously necessary since the whole question of the future status of the Palestinians is a major element in any future and permanent settlement eventually reached by the parties concerned.

Canada has not advocated the attendance at this conference of the Palestine Liberation Organization itself. We do not believe we can prejudge the question of whether the PLO is the only legitimate representative of the Palestinians since this is an issue which must be settled by the parties themselves.

TRANSPORT—SUGGESTION FEDERAL GOVERNMENT JOIN IN  
URBAN TRANSPORTATION DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

**Mr. Bob Kaplan (York Centre):** Mr. Speaker, although my question is in the area of industry, trade and commerce, allow me to just say that I could not believe my ears when I listened a moment ago to the hon. member for Hillsborough (Mr. Macquarrie) speak about the poor Arab refugees who have had no support from anyone in the world. Certainly they have had no support from the billionaire Arab interests in the Middle East except for finance propaganda. I think his was a disgraceful intervention.

I asked, in the House last Friday, a question about the Urban Transportation Development Corporation which is a corporation recently established by the government of Ontario. When I first learned of the Urban Transportation