

CANADIAN

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STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

Canada in the World

Extracts of statements by
The Right Honourable Joe Clark,
Secretary of State for External Affairs,
to the House of Commons Standing
Committee on External Affairs
and International Trade

Canada

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CANADA IN THE WORLD

" Some countries say things, other countries do things. Canada is a country that tries to do things. That is why we have a good reputation. We do not seek the opportunity of every crisis to make a speech or an inflammatory statement. We try to solve problems."

Joe Clark
Secretary of State
for External Affairs

MIDDLE EAST

- There are two elements to this issue that we have to be seized of. One is its complexity in the Middle East, and the other is the acute interest of Canadians, both those whose religious or personal roots are in the region and those generally who want us to play a constructive role.
- Our policy has been evolving step-by-step under governments of the Liberal and Progressive Conservative parties for some time.
- There is a particular concern about the PLO, and I made clear in my statement the apprehension that many of us feel about the extremist elements that continue to be associated with the PLO.
- Certainly the covenant and the language of the covenant are very offensive.
- I want to see the PLO disavow the covenant. I was pleased at the progress that was apparently made in the conversation between Mr. Mitterrand and Mr. Arafat in Paris, but that is not enough. That is Mr. Arafat's position, but we have to see that followed by the PLO as a body.
- My view is that we have more influence - and I do not want to exaggerate it - upon the PLO on this and other questions, having improved the level of our relations with them, than we had when it was at a lower level.
- There is a requirement on all of us to continue to keep up the pressure on I suppose what we can call the Arafat elements in the PLO. It is also very important that we contemplate what would happen within the PLO if the elements Mr. Arafat represents were failing and were unable to indicate any kind of progress in the world and the balance within that organization went to more extreme elements. I do not think that we want that to happen.

- It happened that the declaration of a Palestinian state, which we do not accept, provided us with an opportunity to make a distinction between the concept of self-determination and an actual state. We do not accept that state, nor do we accept that the result of negotiations would inevitably lead to an independent state. It might, but it might also lead to some kind of confederation with Jordan. It might lead to something that we have not contemplated. So we have not tried to define the specific content of self-determination, either in terms of territory or anything else. What we have done is try to make clear our position on the principle that the Palestinian people have a right to participate in the determination of their future.
- We are favourably disposed toward an international conference but we do not want to impose that upon the partners.

SOUTH AFRICA

- I have changed our policies very substantially with respect to exports and imports ... We have tried to tighten it up very substantially.
- Are we prepared now to introduce mandatory sanctions? Now, no, we are not.
- What we have been trying to do on sanctions is recognize that there are a lot of countries that can call for sanctions and yet there is a relatively smaller number of countries that can apply them with influence. What we have been trying to do is build some kind of critical mass on the sanctions. We have had some success in that. We have implemented all of the Commonwealth sanctions.
- There are two areas that are most worth pursuing now because they are practical and achievable. One is to try to encourage other countries -- Japan, the Community, others -- to move up to our level. The other, and it is very important, is this question of debt rescheduling ... I believe sanctions work generally, but I think that the sanction that works best is a financial sanction. We are trying to encourage more countries whose banks have more influence on these questions than ours do to limit rescheduling to an annual basis, and not to have multi-year rescheduling.
- On the ANC ... I do not think there is a country in the world that has a more productive relationship with the African National Congress than Canada does; and that is a relation that we have put in place. It is productive because we have been able to help give them status, to be in touch with them

to ensure some of the concerns they have are fitted into activities that work in the context of the Commonwealth process and others; and we have been able, I think, to help them overcome what was their major problem, which was that they were being defined for a period by "necklacing" and by an alleged association with Marxism. I think that is now part of the past.

- The ANC are not a government. They are a very important part of the solution in southern Africa. I have met with them. The Prime Minister has met with them. I continue to meet with them. I am in regular touch with them.
- We are prepared to look at ways to work with the African National Congress in a way that is consistent with Canadian policy.
- Our policy has to do with humanitarian assistance and we will certainly take a look at the requests as they relate to humanitarian assistance.
- The Commonwealth is probably the most effective instrument to keep the focus on South Africa over time ... The Commonwealth Committee of Foreign Ministers was designed to try to keep attention up. It was designed to try to do two things: honour the mandate that was given us, and I think we have been quite successful in doing that, and prepare some other recommendations that can be adopted by heads of government when they meet in Kuala Lumpur for the next meeting of the Commonwealth. We are making some progress on that.
- We are stretching our presence and diplomatic practices to the limits to be very supportive to the victims of apartheid and the opponents of apartheid in South Africa.
- We have focused on encouraging black opponents of apartheid in South Africa and that is very important, particularly coming from us, because we are not predominantly a black country ... We have introduced a number of policies - the ARMEX matter could fall in that category - that reduce contacts with white South Africans. I am going to stick to those policies until I see something better, and I am going to enlarge them.
- I have to confess to you that there are some questions in my mind. Perhaps we should be looking more actively at ways in which we can address those white South Africans who might have been complacent about apartheid. In the past they might have acquiesced in it, but now, for various reasons - their kids get conscripted, etc. - they might be starting to question that system ... I think we should be looking for ways in which to try to encourage all of the forces of opposition to apartheid in South Africa.

USSR/EAST-WEST

- It is my view that the changes taking place in the Soviet Union are the result of an idea put forward by Mr. Gorbachev, to the effect that their economic system does not work and needs an in-depth overhaul.
- I find that highly interesting, not only with regard to the Soviet Union but also concerning Vietnam, Mozambique and other countries with a Marxist economy. If that is the base for their reform, then we must encourage the development of another approach in the Soviet Union.
- There are many ways of doing this. We must encourage Canadian business to become involved. As a matter of fact, Canadians are already very much involved in the Soviet economy, especially in certain fields such as oil and certain other fields concerning the development of natural resources and forests, as well as some areas of technology. This must be encouraged.
- We must encourage Canadian expertise in the areas of management and business methods. We could promote more exchanges along these lines.
- It is urgent that we take action of this type, because I think Mr. Gorbachev is facing two challenges. One is the issue of the various nationalities in the USSR. The second is that the people of the Soviet Union are demanding to be shown that reform can work. He has said that their system does not work and he has promised a better system. The holding of elections was a profound development, but the economy is still not functioning, and Mr. Gorbachev needs some success in this area. I think we must help the Soviet leaders achieve economic success.
- There is no inconsistency at all, I think, between being very strong in our support of the NATO system that defends western political values and making an aggressive attempt to ensure that western economic values, which Mr. Gorbachev now wants to adopt, are understood and made effective in the Soviet Union. The profound change has been a recognition that their economic system does not work and that our does.
- I think that there is an opportunity for us to instruct them in an economic system that they now recognize is superior to what they have been doing and maintain our strength and vigilance in defence of a political system that we think is profoundly superior.

- I should also say that there have been some important changes in the Soviet Union on the political side, certainly on the question of human rights. Indeed, how many of you would like to run in an election in which, simply by failing to vote, 50% of the people could say that the only name on the ballot did not get elected? That is a very profound political change and those kinds of things are happening in the Soviet Union.

FREE TRADE

- I think the free trade agreement with the United States can not only broaden Canada's capacity to trade with the rest of the world, but also help us to contribute to its economic development.

LATIN AMERICA

- The question of Latin America is urgent in our opinion, because democracy and economic stability are closely linked. There are democratic regimes in Latin America, at least for the time being. That was not customary in the past, and we cannot be sure that things will remain the same. There are some profound problems there at the moment. The problem facing these countries is exacerbated to some extent by their debt and by the need to adjust their domestic policy so as to pay off their debt.
- This is an extremely difficult issue for Latin American countries. Some Latin American leaders may try to hide behind their debt problem and use it to avoid making some essential adjustments.

UN SECURITY COUNCIL

- You do not make it work by asking it to do impossible things ... We have to regard the Security Council as an executive body which can do things that need to be done, and we should resist temptations to simply make rhetorical presentations there.
- We are not there to occupy a seat, we are not there simply to wave a flag. We are there to try to continue our work to make the United Nations more effective ... We are going to be playing an active initiative role, but I will not respond positively to every suggestion that comes, however well meaning, however much I respect the member who makes it, if I think it will lead to nothing.

ODA *

- On ODA, this country has a massive debt ... and one of the things that imposes upon us is that when we make budgetary decisions, we can choose how much we spend on ODA and we can choose how much we spend on other things.
- We cannot choose how much we spend on paying the interest on our debt. We have to spend now 32¢ of every dollar a year. It is going to be 35¢. We have to stop that because if we do not stop that then there will be nothing left to spend on ODA. Let us dwell in a real world, not some kind of a dream world. We have to deal with that problem.
- If the economy succeeds, ODA grows ... Therefore, while all Canadians have an interest in a strong economy, people who are interested in official development assistance have a particular interest in a strong economy because as the Canadian economy grows, the amount of money we are able to spend on official development assistance also grows.

CSCE *

- There have been some very important changes in the Soviet Union's attitude to human rights; there is still room for improvement, but the changes are nevertheless very important. We decided it would be better for us if the conference were held in Moscow, because this would allow us to continue applying pressure for reform. That is why we announced Canada's support. I believe Canada was the last country to accept Moscow as the place for the meeting, and we did request some changes.

* ODA: Official Development Assistance

* CSCE: Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe