

LATHAN, M.P.

PRIME MINISTER

MICHAEL LATHAN

SENT ME A COPY OF
THIS EXCELLENT SPEECH.

Tom.

19/5/1980.

ms.

PRESS RELEASE

EXTRACT FROM A SPEECH BY MR. MICHAEL LATHAM M.P. (MELTON)
TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF AREA 4 OF THE MELTON
CONSERVATIVE ASSOCIATION IN ROTHLEY VILLAGE HALL, LEICS.
ON FRIDAY 16th MAY at 8 p.m.

Release Time: 2000 hours
on 16th May.

ISRAEL

There are a considerable number of M.Ps of all parties in the House of Commons to whom the existence and security of the State of Israel is a very important issue. To us, it is an inspiring cause. We remember with horror the millions of Jews whom Hitler murdered. We remember with shame the niggling, restrictionist attitude towards Jewish emigration to Palestine taken by Conservative and Labour Governments in the 1930s and 1940s. And we view with admiration the courage of the pioneers who have built and sustained a viable country. We support the only democratic nation in the Middle East, strongly pro-Western and fiercely proud of its independence.

And now, once again, Israel is in grave danger. This time, though, the danger is not primarily a military one. The Peace Treaty with Egypt has ended the threat of all out war against her. The new danger is that the Western nations will seek to nag and bully Israel into accepting a PLO dominated State on the West Bank and in Gaza without adequate security guarantees. Some Western leaders believe that such a step would make a general reduction of tension in the Middle East easier to achieve.

Already, newspapers and media in the West are full of accusations that Israel is unhelpful, intransigent and an obstacle to peace. Much of this criticism is inspired by Western leaders or diplomats.

Speaking as a friend of Israel, I must say that some of it is justified. The present Israeli Government's attitude towards new West Bank Settlements has been unwise and regrettable. Whatever the international legalities of the issue of Settlements, it would do no harm for Mr. Begin to recall what Saul of Tarsus once wrote " All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient". (1. Corinthians, Ch.6, Verse 12).

Israel's friends have no quarrel with the Arab nations. And we accept that the Palestinian problem must be settled by negotiation, as the Camp David Agreements indicate. But we can have no truck with recognition of the P.L.O. for any purpose, unless that body takes three steps. It must recognise Israel's right to exist within secure and internationally accepted frontiers. It must abandon its National Covenant, which calls explicitly for the destruction of Israel. And it must eschew terrorism.

If Yasir Arafat and his associates were to make such promises publicly, this would represent real progress. But it must be in public, and be seen to be P.L.O. official policy. Nods and winks at diplomatic cocktail receptions are no use. And the West cannot expect Israel to abandon her security to her sworn enemies - who include violent men, responsible for atrocious murders of children, some of them in 1980 itself - so long as they remain committed to her physical destruction.

20th May, 1980

Thank you very much for having handed to me a copy of the excellent speech which you made in the Rothley Village Hall on Friday.

I have shown your speech to the Prime Minister.

IAN GOW

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