Palestine Perspectives

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THE REBIRTH OF PALESTINE

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DIALOGUE WITH THE PLO IS NOT A FAVOR TO THE PALESTINIANS

A promising start for an authentic peace process is threatened once again. The much heralded U.S.-PLO dialogue is under pressure to corrupt it into a new source of American-Palestinian tension and a new impediment to peace in the Middle East.

First, let us clarify that talking to the PLO is neither a favor to the Palestinians nor an end in itself. The Palestinians—the primary victim of the Arab-Israeli conflict—do need to plead their case and to have an input in the peace process. But the U.S. government also needs access to all of the parties to the conflict, including the Palestinians, if its claims as a peacemaker are to have validity and efficacy.

In other words, it is the peace process that needs the U.S.-PLO dialogue. If the dialogue is a favor, it is a favor to all who stand to gain by the advent of peace in the Middle East, which means everyone. To undermine the dialogue, or to corrupt it into a new instrument of pressure on the Palestinians, would be dangerous and irresponsible in the extreme.

It is clear that disrupting the U.S.-PLO dialogue has been Israel's first priority since the dialogue was announced last December. That is not surprising. Israel is trying to avoid peace talks like the plague, because once peace talks begin, Israel has to debate its occupation of Arab lands, which is the last thing it wants to do.

What is disturbing, is that Secretary of State Baker exhibits signs of responding to Israel's pressures on the question of dialogue with the PLO. The view, which he expressed during his tour of NATO countries in February, that military engagements with Israeli occupation forces in the south of Lebanon conflict with the PLO's pledge on terrorism is a very serious symptom that the Secretary buys Israel's outrageous claim that any resistance to its arrogance is an act of terrorism. The idea that resistance to Israel inside or outside occupied Palestine is an act of terrorism, whether it is directed against civilians or soldiers is an attempt to legitimize Israel's continued military occupation of Arab territory.

The Arabs, least of all the Palestinians, do not owe it to Israel to be its meek subjects or guardians of its aggression against them.

The U.S. government needs to make up its mind: does it want to use its influence to work for a just peace or to be an advocate for Israel's ambitions? Using its newly-acquired leverage with the PLO to ensure that Israel's occupation of Palestinian, Lebanese and Syrian territory goes on undisturbed and unchallenged is the surest way to undo any progress achieved towards peace in the Middle East.

If Washington, to appease Israel and to promote its schemes, wants to use dialogue with the PLO to ensure tranquility in Israel's empire, the Palestinians would be better off without it. The PLO sought a dialogue with Washington—and made unilateral concessions for it—in order to give peace a chance, not to perpetuate Israel's occupation. □

M. Hallaj

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ISRAEL, THE U.S. AND PALESTINIAN HUMAN RIGHTS

By Dr. Shaw J. Dallal

In its *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1988,* released in February of this year, the Department of State asserts that "Political killing is not condoned by Israel and is not practiced by the Israeli Government in the occupied territories." This assertion, however, is belied by the body of the Department's own report.

The State Department says that political killing is neither condoned nor practiced in Israel, but it admits that "regulations" pertaining to such killings "were not rigorously enforced." It draws attention to the fact that "punishments were usually lenient," and acknowledges that "there were many cases of unjustifiable killing which did not result in disciplinary actions or prosecutions." It is obviously difficult to reconcile the Department's judgment with the facts in its own report. If unjustifiable murder is committed by Israeli soldiers, how can it be concluded that they are "not condoned" by Israel?

The above contradiction notwithstanding, it must be said that this year's *Report* is an improvement over the previous routine justifications for the annual aid congress grants Israel, justifications embodied in State Department reports of previous years.

Conspicuously absent from this year's report is the untenable assertion that "Israel...guarantees by law and respects in practice, the civil, political and religious rights of its citizens," which tainted previous reports. Instead, and for the first time, the new report acknowledges that "Arab citizens of Israel, who constitute approximately 17 percent of the population, do not share fully in the rights granted to, or the duties levied on, Jewish Israeli citizens. They are clustered at the lower end of the socioeconomic scale."

The report also recognizes the discriminatory nature of some of Israel's fundamental laws, such as the Law of Return of 1950 and the Israeli Citizenship Law of 1952. The State Department's report points out that the "law of return of 1950, which abolished restrictions on Jewish immigration, and the citizenship law of 1952, which granted every Jew the right of citizenship on arrival in Israel, confer advantages to Jews in matters of immigration, residence, and citizenship," which are denied to "non-Jews."

The report recognizes that the Law of Return, which applies only to Jews, denies equal rights to the Palestinians "who left the area that became Israel in 1948." Those Palestinians, says the State Department's report, "have no guaranteed right to return," even though "United Nations General Assembly Resolution 194," which the U.S. government had always supported, "called on Israel to permit the return" of the Palestinians "or to compensate them for their losses if they choose not to return." Israel has never agreed to abide by this resolution.

This year's State Department report makes more explicit than ever the case against legalized discrimination in Israel. Yet, in violation of American domestic laws and in disregard of international covenants, the U.S. government continues massive grants to Israel, and continues to veto Security Council resolutions against Israeli human rights violations. By providing Israel with financial and political support, the U.S. government becomes an accomplice to Israel's violations.

Palestinian father places a flag on the grave of his 13-year-old son

The U.S. government contradicts itself. It reports gross human rights violations by Israel and acknowledges that they contravene the Geneva Convention, then it proceeds to certify to congress that Israel is not guilty of human rights violations and that it is, therefore, eligible for the massive aid that it receives from the government of the United States. This behavior neither deters future Israeli violations of human rights, nor do they serve the cause of peace in the Middle East. □

Dr. Dallal is Adjunct Professor of International Business and Relations at Utica College of Syracuse University

ARE WE STILL HUMAN?

I wish to speak more about the Jews and less about the Arabs. My whole question is: What have we been doing in the [occupied] territories all this endless time?

The main question isn't the territories, nor the political talks nor international conferences, but: Are we still human beings? We, who sit on the heads of 1.5 million people, sealing them in and holding them hostage to our ideas about peace settlements; we who occupy them, press on them, and embitter their lives...and our own; we who will not set them free until they have paid us a national, physical and political ransom and until our own human form is bent past recognition, until we reach the point of total callousness, indifferent to pain and impervious to injustice, until an entire nation has been confined to its homes without electricity and water and had been forbidden to express joy without any of us being disturbed by this incredible bit of business.

This is the matter: Our occupation and our having become accustomed to being occupiers. That is the matter. Not the land, not the territories, not politics, but our becoming beasts; that is the issue. And the general consensus that "It's not so terrible," that it is feasible, that we must act as we do. That is the issue. □

Yizhar Smilansky, *Davar,* 25 November 1988

WHAT IS A JEW?

By Yossi Sarid

[The following originally appeared in ***The Jerusalem Post*** *of 1 December 1988 under the title "Only yourselves to blame." It is a critique of the behavior of the American Jewish establishment by a member of the Israeli parliament]:*

I'd really love to provoke American Jewry's Reform and Conservative leadership into learning their lesson once and for all; but in matters of principle which strike at the heart of Jewish existence, it seems to be disallowed.

I shall vote against the "Who is a Jew" amendment and shall fight against it... But the angry and emotional protests by the leaders of the various streams, appeals, federations, communities, organizations and clubs leave me cold. Sorry, but they make no impression on me. If I were to allow my evil inclination to speak up, it would say: They deserve it, those pillars of the Jewish community across the sea—that dastardly law is exactly what they have coming to them....

It has always been the case, and most especially during the 21 years of the occupation, that they have automatically and completely backed every Israeli government, every prime minister, every policy. They humbly served all the masters from the Labor Party and from the Likud with equal enthusiasm and subservience....

These leaders from Manhattan insisted that their unquestioning support of Israeli governments derived from concern and responsibility for the State of Israel. Bullshit. I am a citizen of Israel and I feel betrayed and abandoned. Gentlemen, you have behaved totally irresponsibly, and if there was any concern here it was for your own status and prestige....

So when do you speak up? Only when it is you who are threatened, more so than we are as in the case of Jonathan Pollard, for example, who put your dual loyalty to an unpleasant test. This speaking up becomes strident when halachic conversion threatens the integrity of your households and families. How selfish of you. You didn't speak up and you certainly didn't protest when a hundred settlements were established in the occupied territories, a hundred large obstacles on the way of peace. You had nothing to say about the manifestations of rampant nationalism and extreme religious fanaticism and xenophobia. You did not come here on urgent missions to put an end to a war that should never have started. You did not take out full-page ads against Gush Emunim or the Jewish underground.

You did not protest against the hundreds killed in the intifada, the 8,000 wounded and the 17,000 placed under arrest (about 3,000 without due process). You did not press for the softening of a harsh policy of aggression and repression, nor did you dissociate yourselves from the high priests of the Greater Israel Movement. On the contrary, you treated them in your communities as honored and welcome guests....

Israel's leadership became accustomed to your servile obedience and obsequiousness; it was enough to strike the opening chords of the national anthem and you sprang to attention. So it's no wonder that even now the establishment is not taking you seriously, convinced that soon enough the storm will pass and the "Who is a Jew" legislation too will be dutifully swallowed and digested....

I hear your plea for help now, hurt and angry, and to a great extent justified—but there's one thing it lacks: moral force. That was lost through your long silences over the spilling of blood and injustice. To paraphrase the Prophet Isaiah, Zion cannot be redeemed through your justifications alone, nor Jerusalem through your righteousness.

People who for a generation or more took no interest in the question of What is a Jew—of what, if anything, is special about being a Jew that differentiates us from everybody else—can't expect to generate interest in the question of Who is a Jew, because the two questions are inextricably linked: if it isn't clear what a Jew is, then it makes no difference who he is. □

Reprinted from "Israel Press Briefs," No. 62 (January 1989), published by International Center for Peace in the Middle East, Tel Aviv.

In Brief

"MR. BIG" OF BRITISH ORGANIZED CRIME

British police called an Israeli "businessman" arrested in London last summer on charges of heading a multi-million pound cocaine racket the "Mr. Big" of British organized crime. The man, Aaron (Ronnie) Bosme from Ramat Gan (Israel), goes to trial in March on charges of conspiracy to supply 100 kilograms of cocaine with an estimated street value of 25 million English pounds. A police source told *The Jerusalem Post* that these charges were "only the tip of the iceberg."

SWASTIKAS ON BEN-GURION'S GRAVE

The grave of Israel's first prime minister, David Ben-Gurion, was found covered with spray-painted red swastikas early in February. The graffiti was signed "Keshet," the name of a Jewish religious group. Israeli police sources say they have not ruled out Palestinian nationalists or Israeli secularists trying to implicate ultra-Orthodox Jews, but "Keshet" remains their prime suspect.

THEY HAVE NO PROBLEM

The Jerusalem Post (int'l. ed., week ending 25 February) reported that Israel's Justice Minister Dan Meridor visited Israeli paratroopers in the Palestinian city of Nablus, who assured him that "they have no problem in carrying out open-fire orders." The paper did not say if the Justice Minister himself had any problems with that assurance.

STAY AWAY FROM ABBA EBAN

Abba Eban, once the pride of Zionist diplomacy and public relations, is rapidly becoming an Israeli outcast. His recent "unreliability" on the Palestinian issue is the reason.

In early February, according to *The Jerusalem Post* (week ending 11 February 1989), Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Binyamin Netanyahu instructed the Israeli ambassador to Holland not to host Abba Eban at a dinner in his home, because he had attended a conference in which PLO representatives had participated.

ISRAEL STILL TRYING TO RECONQUER THE WEST BANK AND GAZA

Casualties Continue to Mount As Intifada Goes Into Second Year

The Palestinian national revolt against the Israeli occupation, which Israel's generals and politicians predicted a year ago was about to end, continues. So does Israel's attempt to repress it, and the casualties it is inflicting on the civilian population in occupied Palestine.

Although strict Israeli censorship of news coverage of the occupied territories has greatly diminished the availability of information, resistance and repression both continue unabated. The following news release by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), dated 16 February, about the situation in occupied Palestine during the first half of February gives an idea of conditions there:

Beatings Increase

As the uprising entered its 15th month, at least 10 Palestinians were killed in the first half of February and there was an increase in the number of Palestinians beaten by Israeli soldiers.

In the Gaza Strip, UNRWA began providing emergency night medical services, between 8 P.M. and 7:30 A.M., at its health centers in Jabalia and Nuseirat refugee camps. Starting 12 February, a doctor and a nurse were available at those clinics at night.

A total of 531 casualties were reported by UNRWA's Gaza Field Office from 1-13 February, of which 74 were wounded by live ammunition, 289 were beaten, 31 hit by rubber bullets and 86 by plastic-covered metal bullets and 51 treated for the effects of tear gas.

Four people were shot dead in Gaza during the fortnight. Two teenagers from Khan Yunis camp were killed in confrontations with the army on 4 February; 17 others were hospitalized with wounds, including a 12-year-old refugee with a serious head injury and a Swiss delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross who was shot in the leg.

On 5 February, a 17-year-old refugee from Beach camp was shot dead and 36 persons wounded by live rounds in clashes that took place in all eight Gaza camps. Curfews were imposed on all but three camps during a two-day general strike on 8-9 February; UNRWA school attendance was nil and the emergency distribution of food parcels donated by the European Community was disrupted.

In the West Bank, all schools remained closed by military order, although UNRWA schools in Jerusalem municipality were functioning.

At least six Palestinians were killed in the West Bank in the first half of the month, including an 8-year-old boy who died in the Nablus area from injuries sustained in an explosion; his brother was seriously injured, and a number of children were hurt by unidentified explosive devices. A refugee from the Qaddoura district near Ramalla was shot dead during a disturbance at Megiddo prison in Israel. Curfews hampered UNRWA operations throughout the West Bank, particularly at Nur Shams camp, Nablus area, which was under curfew for nearly two weeks.

UNRWA Work Obstructed

In Amman, Jordan, UNRWA Commissioner-General Giorgio Giacomelli expressed concern over Israeli interference in the organization's humanitarian work in the occupied territories. Speaking to a press conference on 2 February, he said: "Our clinics are interfered with, our ambulances are stopped and our freedom of circulation is not assured."

Mr. Giacomelli said that he expected pressure of UNRWA services in occupied Palestine to increase. "We will have to see," he said, "what will happen to schools, hospitals and services." He announced that since the uprising began in December 1987, UNRWA had received about $20 million of special contributions from Arab countries for emergency assistance to refugees in occupied Palestine, bringing to $54 million total world special contributions to UNRWA. □

PRISONER MURDERED

A Palestinian political prisoner was killed by his Israeli jailers and 14 others were wounded on 8 February. The incident happened when the inmates at Megiddo prison, north of Jenin, where about 1,700 political prisoners are incarcerated, protested the cancellation of family visits.

News from the occupied territories say that the families of the prisoners protested by chanting nationalist slogans, provoking a similar protest inside the prison. The guards fired at the protesting inmates, killing 24-year-old Nidal Zuhdi al-Tirawi and wounding 14 other prisoners. Eyewitnesses also said that Israeli soldiers followed a bus carrying prisoners families on their way back to Qalqilya and fired tear gas canisters inside the bus, causing injuries to some of the passengers.

THE DANGEROUS KID

The Israeli police, doing their duty to protect Israeli security, arrested an 11-year-old Palestinian student for drawing the colors of the Palestinian flag on his ruler. *Al-Fajr* (13 February) reported that the Israeli police broke into an elementary school in Nazareth to arrest the child. The school's assistant principal was also briefly detained and interrogated for "obstructing police work" when he tried to protect the small threat to Israel. □

ANALYSIS . . .
ISRAEL'S BLIND SPOT

Abba Eban once wrote that "the Israeli government has not learned to take yes for an answer." His observation was proven to be valid many times before, and it has shown to be valid again. In February, the PLO broke new grounds, again, in its search for peace when Arafat's Fateh deputy, Salah Khalaf (Abu Iyad) sent a videotaped message to an Israeli conference in Jerusalem inviting the Israeli government to "immediate and direct" negotiations to settle the conflict by peaceful means on the basis of a two-state solution. The Israeli government not only snubbed the offer, but it refused to send a representative to attend the conference which in its view violated its Anti-Terrorism Act by hearing a PLO official make a peace offer.

A few days later, the Israeli Broadcasting Authority, an Israeli government agency, prohibited reporters from Israel Radio and Television services from attending an Arafat press conference in Cairo for Israeli journalists who were there covering the visits of Soviet and Israeli foreign ministers to the Egyptian capital. Attending a press conference by Yasser Arafat, in the view of the Israeli government, would also violate its Anti-Terrorism Act by coming in contact with "a terrorist organization." It did not matter that Arafat held a press conference for Israeli journalists to reassure the Israeli public of the authenticity and sincerity of the Palestinian desire to settle the conflict with Israel by peaceful means.

Israel not only rejects the Palestinian peace offer that the PLO has been making since last November, and which has been judged by the entire world community to be an important breakthrough on the way to peace in the Middle East. The Israeli government does not even want to hear it, and it forbids its citizens to hear it.

The events of the last few months lead to one possible conclusion: that Israel prefers conquests to peace with the Arabs. It has benefited territorially and otherwise from previous wars, and it sees no reason why it should make peace with the Palestinians. The only way left is to drag Israel screaming to peace negotiations. To continue to say that Israel must not or cannot be pressured to make peace is to say that Arab-Israeli peace is not attainable by peaceful means.

If that is the case, the Arabs should be told that all the lectures they had to endure about the virtues of a political settlement were a part of a great deception, and that they are free to find whatever means they can to cope with the Israeli problem.

Israel obviously has a blind spot which makes it unable to see the Palestinians. That is an Israeli problem, not a Palestinian problem. The U.S. Department of State seems to think that having satisfied America's definition of reasonableness, the Palestinians must now try to address themselves to Israel. But Israel is determined not to see the Palestinians or hear them. If an unprecedented opportunity to make peace is lost as a consequence, this time it will not be only the loss of the Palestinians, but also the Israelis and everyone else. □

THEY LACK CONFIDENCE

The Zionists are afraid that their youth will hear another view. The University of Tel Aviv ordered four Palestinian women students moved to another dormitory to protect visiting Jewish students from hearing their views, and the Tel Aviv District Court upheld the decision.

The University said that its action was based on an agreement with the Jewish Agency that Jewish students who go to Israeli universities not be housed with Arabs "for fear of being brainwashed against Zionism." □

BZU SUMMER PROGRAM

Birzeit University announced its 1989 international summer program, scheduled for the period 10 July-25 August 1989. The program includes courses in the Arabic language for non-native speakers, and several social science courses dealing with the Palestinians. They include Palestinian Society, The Palestine Question, and Palestine in the Context of the Arab World.

If interested, contact: The International Summer Program, Office of the Registrar, Birzeit University, Birzeit, West Bank, via Israel. □

"EVERY BASTARD IS A KING"

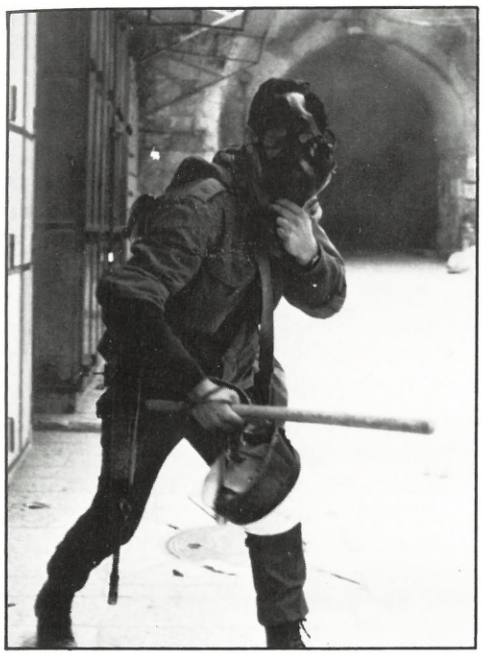
By Meir Amir and Miki Gur

[When the U.S. State Department issued its annual human rights report in February, Israel and its friends complained that it was unfair to Israel. Deputy Foreign Minister Benjamin Netanyahu claimed that "Israeli soldiers maintain, as best they can, apart from a few exceptions, standards of proper conduct that no country in the world could maintain." Perhaps he has low standards of proper conduct. Many Israeli soldiers have testified to the fact that brutality is routine in the occupied territories. The following account by two Israeli reserve officers describes a daily pattern of human rights abuses. It appeared in *The Other Front,* 26 January 1989]:

Testimony

We argue on the basis of our personal experience in reserve service in the territories for two months last year, and from conversations with friends who have returned from reserve service, that this incident [in which a fleeing Palestinian demonstrator was shot dead after the demonstration was over], which the whole Israeli public had the rare opportunity to watch, is typical of dozens of incidents which take place daily in the territories, far from the eyes of the media, and go unreported.

We refer not to the exceptions, like the lethal brutality that brought death to an old man at the hands of the Givati soldiers, the Wallerstein and Levinger cases, or the killing of an Arab child by throwing him out of a [speeding] jeep in Shchem [Nablus] three weeks ago. Such incidents are usually investigated thoroughly by the IDF [Israeli army]. We are referring to incidents such as: humiliations of Arab drivers at checkpoints, unjustified beatings, unjustified shooting of plastic bullets or live ammunition in reaction to stone throwing, beating of children in front of their parents, humiliating fathers and mothers in front of their children, intentionally damaging civilian property, using people who happen near the site of an incident to clear roadblocks and tires in a humiliating and arbitrary way, and gathering dozens or hundreds of men in a village where there were disturbances and making them stand long hours in the cold and rain without letting them move, as collective punishment.



There is no point in continuing with more details. There are dozens of examples much more severe than those we described. They are well known to every soldier who serves in the territories, and they happen every day. Their sources are usually the local initiatives of individual soldiers or officers, and they result from sadism and impulsiveness. We have to emphasize that we are talking about a small percentage of those who serve in the territories, but even this percentage leads to dozens of cases every day.

People with low reaction thresholds, who do not give in to their impulses within the Green Line [Israel] because of fear or respect for the law, can—while serving in the territories—lose control and express themselves with impunity, in many cases without anyone knowing it. In the territories, every bastard is a king, and any slave—if he wants—can rule, and some cannot withstand the temptations. No less important is the fact that alongside this "active" minority there is a large majority, passive and apathetic, which generally prefers to be silent, to ignore and thus cooperate with the minority.

The things described here are not directed from above, and are not ordered in the field. The official policy in the field is, of course, to maintain control, not behave like this. However, the fact is that these incidents do happen, and that the military system, which definitely knows about them, ignores them and thus allows them to go on.... □

PLO LEADER ADDRESSES ISRAELI CONFERENCE

Smuggled Videotaped Speech Challenges Israel to Make Peace

A videotaped speech by Palestinian leader Salah Khalaf (Abu Iyad) challenged Israel to make peace with the Palestinians by agreeing to immediate and direct negotiations with the PLO about a two-state solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. The videotaped message, recorded in Tunis, was addressed to a symposium in Jerusalem convened on 22 February by the Israeli Center for Peace in the Middle East, and it was reportedly smuggled into Israel by one of the members of the Center. Under Israeli law, such an act is illegal and is considered as dealing with a "terrorist organization."

Abu Iyad, who is deputy leader of Fateh, Arafat's group in the PLO, said "we believe in direct meetings, and we say it publicly, on any level. Let the Israelis come and meet us secretly, openly or in any other way." He assured his Israeli audience that even though the PLO has some "extremists," the vast majority accept Israel's existence and are ready to settle for a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza.

The message was taped in Arabic, apparently to refute Israel's usual claims that PLO leaders take a moderate position only when they are addressing a foreign audience in a foreign language. Israeli officials, whose minds are made up and refuse to be confused by facts, were not impressed. A spokesman for the Israeli Foreign Ministry said that there was "nothing new" in Khalaf's message. The Israeli government had turned down an invitation from the conference to send a representative. □

APPEAL FROM PALESTINIAN WOMEN

Palestinian women in the occupied West Bank and Gaza addressed an appeal to Arab heads of states describing the ordeal of the Palestinian people under Israel's occupation and asking for mobilization and utilization of Arab resources to achieve Palestinian freedom.

The appeal said that the people of occupied Palestine are being terrorized and made to live in what have become a large prison. It spoke of those who lost their lives, the wives and mothers of the thousands of detainees, those whose homes have been demolished, and unborn babies who died of tear gas poisoning.

The message also spoke of Israeli violations of places of worship, its violations of human rights, and the closure of schools and universities. "We appeal to our Arab brethren," the women's message said, "to help us put an end to such oppressive injustices by mobilizing and using all of their capabilities—political, economic, and human—to influence the great powers to work for Israel's withdrawal from our land."

The Palestinian women's appeal identified the following objectives of the struggle in occupied Palestine:

- Palestinian self-determination and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state under PLO leadership.
- Recognition of Palestinian independence by all states which have not yet recognized it.
- The convening of an effective international peace conference in which the PLO participates on an equal footing.
- The establishment of a United Nations Trusteeship in occupied Palestine until a just solution is achieved.

New Books

Anti-Zionism: Analytical Reflections, edited by Roselle Tekiner, Samir Abed-Rabbo and Norton Mezvinsky. Amana Books (P. O. Box 678, Brattleboro, VT 05301), 1988.

Living By the Sword: America and Israel in the Middle East, by Stephen Green. Amana Books, 1988.

Behind the Balfour Declaration: The Hidden History of Today's Mideast Crisis, by Robert John. Costa Mesa, Calif: Institute for Historical Review, 1988.

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SABOTAGE OF PALESTINIAN FARM PRODUCE

Shipments to France Damaged By Israeli Shipping Line

Palestinian farmers and their European customers believe that the Israelis are causing deliberate damage to Palestinian farm produce shipped to Europe in order to undermine Palestinian exports. The most recent incident involved a shipment of egg plants and green peppers to France. Forty-five tons of the shipment were damaged during storage at the facilities of Zim, the Israeli shipping company.

Khaled al-Quttob, who supervised the shipment to France, told *Al-Fajr* newspaper (13 February 1989) that one of the containers in which the produce was being shipped was kept at 7 degrees centigrade instead of eleven, causing damage to 45 tons of the produce. Quttob, who is the head of the Jericho Cooperative for Marketing Agricultural Products, learned about the damage during a visit to French importers. All three of them, he said, suspect that the shipment was deliberately sabotaged by the Israeli shipping company to undermine Palestinian exports to France.

The French importers said that nearly 50 percent of an earlier shipment was also damaged, and that they suspected sabotage when the crew of the Israeli ship, which arrived in France four days before Christmas, refused to allow unloading it until after Christmas. The Palestinian farmers had to sell their produce at a substantial discount.

Israel had resisted the right of Palestinian farmers to export directly to Europe for a long time. Until recently, they had to export through Israeli trade monopolies, but the European Community pressured Israel to allow Palestinian farmers to sell their produce directly to Europe.

The Palestinian farmers are now seeking damages from the Israeli shipping firm. □

DANGEROUS CANDY BARS

A number of children in occupied Palestine have been injured by incendiary devices, in the shape of candy bars, dropped by Israeli soldiers. The newsletter of the Palestine Red Crescent Society (January 1989) reported that five Palestinian children have been treated for severe burns caused by such devices.

Although an Israeli army spokesman denied the reports, Israeli Knesset member Dedi Zucker wrote Yitzhak Rabin in mid-February that eight Palestinian children, ages 8 to 15, had been injured or killed that month in West Bank villages by "something that blew up into tiny shrapnel unlike regular hand grenades." *The New York Times* (16 February 1989) said that several wounded Palestinian children testified that they had been injured by explosives "thrown at them by the soldiers."

The Palestinian weekly *Al-Fajr* reported on 20 February 1989 that in the village of Tayaseer, in the northern sector of the West Bank, 4-year-old Iktimal Abdalla and her 10-year-old brother, Issam, were injured on 13 February by an explosion while playing near their home. Iktimal, who had shrapnel embedded in her skull, died in Makassed Hospital in Jerusalem two days later. Relatives said they saw an Israeli helicopter flying over the village at the time of the incident.

SCHOOLS CLOSED... AGAIN

Losing Another School Year Likely

The Israeli occupation authorities ordered all West Bank schools closed indefinitely. The order, issued on 20 January 1989, also includes schools administered by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees, UNRWA, which serve about 40,000 refugee children.

In a news release dated 1 February, UNRWA said that the order would likely mean the loss of the entire 1988/89 school year. UNRWA Commissioner-General Giorgio Giacomelli said that would jeopardize the future of the Palestinian refugees. He also said that he had met with senior Israeli officials and "expressed great concern about school closures and about the high number of Palestinian casualties from army gunfire in recent weeks." Many of these casualties are sustained by refugees, and most of the victims are children aged 15 and less.

The UNRWA statement said that schools in the West Bank have been closed by the Israeli authorities for more than half of the past 14 months, not counting designated holiday breaks. The current school year began late, in December, and their first order of business had been to compensate for time lost in the previous year. The most recent closure order would make that impossible.

In addition, UNRWA's three teacher training centers, together with all Palestinian colleges and universities, have been closed for more than a year.

In September 1988, the Palestinian Higher Council for Education, Culture and Science had warned in an appeal on behalf of Palestinian educational institutions that repeated lengthy closures of Palestinian schools and universities in the occupied territories "is most alarming because it concerns the right to education for a whole nation." It called on individuals and institutions concerned with human rights and education raise their voices against this Israeli infringement of a basic human rights.

[Text of the statement in *Palestine Perspectives*, No. 38, November/December 1988, page 11]. □

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U.S. DOCUMENTS ISRAEL'S HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

The State Department's latest annual report on human rights violations in the world concludes that there had been a "substantial increase in human rights violations" by Israel in occupied Palestine in 1988. In its *Country Reports on Human Rights for 1988*, the State Department says that Israeli soldiers "frequently used gunfire in situations that did not present mortal danger to troops, causing many avoidable deaths and injuries." It put Palestinian casualties caused by Israeli soldiers and armed settlers during the first year of the Palestinian uprising, until 9 December 1988, at 366 people dead and more than 20,000 wounded. The report states that 13 fatalities were caused by beating and at least 4 by tear gas.

The State Department's report also points out that in several instances Palestinian deaths were caused "because of IDF [Israeli army] delays of ambulances or because, for whatever reason, there were delays in moving the wounded to a hospital." Five Palestinians were "clearly killed by the detaining officials" while in prison.

Although the report claims that Israel does not officially condone "political killings" and that it has guidelines for the use of lethal force, it concedes that these "regulations were not rigorously enforced; punishments were usually lenient; and there were more cases of unjustified killing which did not result in disciplinary actions or prosecutions."

Prisons and Torture

The report confirms that "the number of Palestinian prisoners has risen from about 4,700 to about 10,000." These political prisoners are detained in makeshift overcrowded prisons, and the detainees are subjected to physical and psychological abuse. The report cites the Landau Commission report of 1987 which had found that "physical and psychological pressure" had been used for many years to extract confessions from Palestinian political prisoners. The State Department report affirms the continued use of beating and other forms of torture in Israeli prisons.

The report also points out that "administrative detentions," where people are imprisoned without charge or trial, have sharply increased. In September 1988, it says, there were 2,600 Palestinian administrative detainees in Israeli prisons. Furthermore, the report cites Israel for violating the Fourth Geneva Convention for holding Palestinian prisoners in Israel, outside their normal areas of residence. "Many security suspects are arrested without warrants...are usually not allowed bail and are usually denied access to counsel for 18 days." Their families are not notified of their whereabouts for up to 14 days.

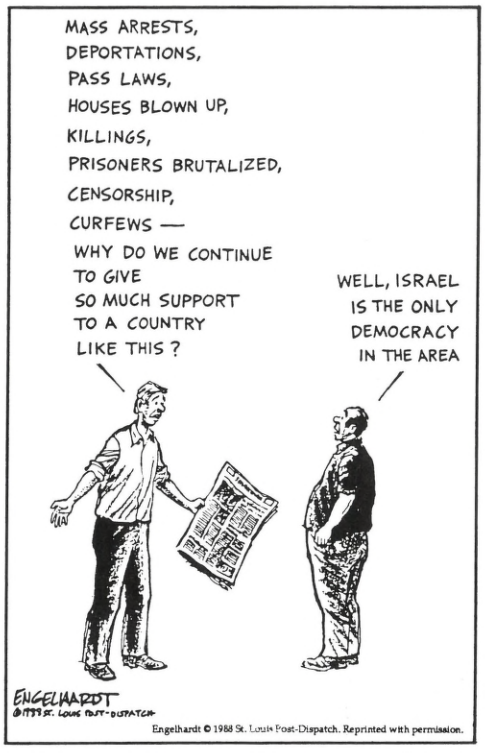
The State Department also says that Israel defines "security" too broadly, which results in the detention of Palestinians for legitimate political activities, which the Israelis define as security threats to their state. Many Palestinians, including academics, journalists, human rights workers, and attorneys have been imprisoned because of this loose definition of "security."

Discrimination

The State Department report criticizes Israel's discriminatory "dual system of governance applied to Palestinians and Israelis" in the occupied territories. It observes that "Palestinians are treated less favorably than Jewish settlers in the same areas on a broad range of issues, such as the right to legal process, rights of residency, freedom of movement, sale of crops and goods, land and water use, and access to health and social services."

The report also notes Israel's violations of Palestinian civil and political rights, including restrictions on the freedoms of speech, press, assembly and association, and the freedom of movement. It cites "increasing restrictions on freedom of expression and press in 1988," and describes them as "arbitrary and politically motivated." At least 39 Palestinian journalists and editors were placed under administrative detention, all Palestinian news services were shut down, and one magazine was closed indefinitely.

Palestinian political rights are also severely curtailed. "Palestinians are not permitted to participate in significant public policy decisions concerning land and resource use and planning, taxation, trade, and industry." The report also points out that "No Palestinian political parties or overtly political organizations are permitted."



Engelhardt © 1988 St. Louis Post-Dispatch. Reprinted with permission.

Commentary

Although the latest report on Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights goes farther than previous reports in documenting such violations, it errs on the side of timidity. Its figures on Palestinian casualties, for example, tend to give Israeli official accounts the benefit of the doubt and ignore higher estimates by Palestinian sources and a variety of international human rights organizations. The Database Project on Palestinian Human Rights, for example, has reported that the number of Palestinian deaths during the first year of the uprising was 433, of which 287 were caused by gunfire, 37 people were killed by beating, burning or by being stoned to death, 66 died of tear gas, and 43 of undetermined causes still being investigated. The number of

(continued on page 11)

ARAB-AMERICANS PROTEST B'NAI B'RITH RACISM

Repudiation of Anti-Arab Letter Demanded

The American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) has accused B'nai B'rith International (BBI) of mailing "hate literature" to its members using "language similar to that used by racist organizations against Jews, Blacks and other minorities."

The racist remarks were part of a BBI fund-raising letter seeking support from Jewish contributors for Hillel Foundations work on college campuses. The letter, signed by BBI president Seymour D. Reich, claimed that "Arab presence on college campuses is poisoning the minds of our [Jewish] young people." The letter also equated the Arabs with religious cults active on college campuses and suggested that the Arabs are part of an anti-Semitic conspiracy to "destroy Jewish life."

Although unnamed sources in the American Jewish community acknowledged that the letter was offensive and "makes it appear that we're paranoid, racist chauvinists," BBI officials tried to dodge responsibility by blaming the four-page letter on an "outside contractor" hired to draft, produce and mail the letter. Reich, who refused to identify the "contractor," admitted that the letter was not carefully reviewed and expressed "respect" for Arab-Americans. BBI's Executive Vice President, Thomas Neumann, wrote George Moses of the National Association of Arab Americans (NAAA) that BBI's "approval of the letter—in hindsight—was hasty, careless and regrettable."

Arab Americans, however, feel entitled to more than a private apology and insist that the Jewish advocacy organization dissociate itself from the racist tone of the letter by repudiating its contents in a mailing to the recipients of the original letter. Instead, BBI announced that it had destroyed the unmailed copies and changed its review procedures to prevent a similar incident in the future.

ADC president Abdeen Jabara consequently issued a statement saying that "B'nai B'rith's response to our request is woefully inadequate... We want and deserve a total repudiation of the anti-Arab thrust of the letter."

COMMENTARY...
THE LOBBY FIGHTS A LOSING BATTLE

The Near East Report, the newsletter of the Zionist lobby in Washington, editorialized in its 20 February issue about the ability of "Israel's friends" in America to defeat local referenda in support of Palestinian self-determination. Such resolutions, voted on in four American cities last fall, were "soundly defeated" in three of the four localities, the Zionist newsletter bragged. It concluded that Israel enjoys grassroots support in this country.

There are several things wrong with this Zionist interpretation of America. First, the fact that Palestinian statehood resolutions appeared on the ballot in this country is indicative of support for Palestinian national rights that had not existed before. Second, the fact that the resolution was approved in one of the four cities and made a strong showing in the other cities shows that support for Palestinian rights is more popular in this country than the Zionist lobby wants to admit. Third, in several communities around the country, Palestinian statehood resolutions were approved by party conventions only to be quashed by the partisan establishment in meetings behind closed doors. It happened in California and Virginia and other places.

Most important of all, the Zionist lobby's newsletter failed to explain, as it bragged about its ability to defeat resolutions in support of Palestinian self-determination, why it thinks that is in the interest of the United States, or the American people, or even the interests of the American Jewish community. It seems to take it for granted that frustrating Palestinian rights is a good thing.

The right of peoples to self-government was the birth certificate of this country. This country fought World War One to help the world universalize self-determination. And public opinion polls have repeatedly shown that a majority of the American people support the Palestinian people's right to self-determination. So what is the Israeli lobby in Washington bragging about? Its ability to frustrate this country's proclaimed ideals and the expressed will of its people? We do not think that such achievements merit bragging about.

We would like to assure the Israeli lobby that by defending an unjust cause it is fighting a losing battle. Massive American support for Palestinian rights is coming, and that there is nothing it can do to stop it. It continues to stand in the way at its own risk. Disinformation carries within it the seeds of its own destruction, and the American people—thanks to Israel's fading mask—are beginning to see reality without the Israeli filter. They are beginning to understand that the Americans and the Palestinians are not enemies, and that the Palestinian struggle for self-government flatters America's ideals and traditions and conforms to its true national interests. In the long run, these facts are bound to overpower the Israeli lobby, no matter how powerful it may be. □

ANERA REPORTS INCREASED SUPPORT

The American Near East Refugee Aid (ANERA) reported a 200% increase in individual donations for its humanitarian and development work in the West Bank, Gaza and Lebanon. The organization's president, Dr. Peter Gubser, explained this increased support by saying that the well-publicized violence associated with the intifada in the West Bank and Gaza has renewed interest in the Middle East peace process, and a growing number of "Americans believe that unmet economic and social welfare needs of Palestinian refugees exacerbate the heated political conflict in the region."

ANERA was founded in 1968 as a non-profit and non-political charitable organization to provide emergency assistance to refugees of the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. In its second decade, its program expanded to include development projects in the West Bank and Gaza to promote long-term economic self-sufficiency. It is currently involved in over 65 projects ranging from funding irrigation systems for farms, providing scholarships to needy students, supplying essential medicines to health institutions, and funding vocational training programs.

HUMAN RIGHTS

(continued from page 9)

injuries is estimated to be 46,000 of whom 23,000 received treatment in hospitals while the rest were treated in private clinics or homes mainly to avoid being arrested.

The report is inadequate on two other points. One, it continues to designate Israel as a democratic country in spite of all the information that the report contains to the contrary. Discrimination, severe limitations on civil and political rights, and the absence of due process of law are not characteristics of democratic societies.

Some parts of the report are simply a whitewash. Although it mentions, in the section on "Worker Rights," that Israel "actively discouraged union activities in the West Bank," the report fails to portray the well-documented discriminatory system of labor exploitation in Israel. No mention is made of the consistent pattern of harassment of trade unions including the closure of their offices, the banning of their activities and meetings, and the arrest and deportation of their officials.

The ultimate test of the report, of course, is its impact on U.S. policy toward countries found to be guilty of violating human rights. The Foreign Assistance Act stipulates that no American aid should be made available "to the government of any country which engages in a consistent pattern of gross violation of internationally recognized human rights," an offense of which Israel is found to be guilty by the State Department's report. The crucial question is whether the U.S. government would honor its own laws by reconsidering the massive aid it gives Israel as it had done more than once with other countries found to be in violation of the Act.

The signs are not encouraging that the law would be applied to Israel. The United States, in February, vetoed a United Nations Security Council resolution condemning Israel for the violation of Palestinian human rights, violations documented by the U.S. government itself. If the U.S. government will not permit the international community to censor Israel for such violations, it is not likely to punish Israel for them. As long as Israel knows that it is immune to congressional action against it, reports of its human rights violations will have no deterrent purpose, a fact which mocks the law that required them in the first place.

More Palestinians were killed by Israel in the West Bank and Gaza during the first year of the uprising, in proportion to their populations, than all fatalities suffered by U.S. forces in ten years of war in Vietnam. This is true even when the lower figures cited by the State Department are used to calculate such casualties, as the following numbers show:

366 killed = 59,750 U.S. equivalent
20,000 wounded= 3,250,000 U.S. equivalent
10,000 jailed= 1,625,000 U.S. equivalent

Israel's Reaction

The Israeli reaction to the State Department's *Country Reports* was swift and predictable. Although Israel did not contest the factual nature of the report, it characterized it as "unbalanced" and "out of context." In other words, the report should have also condemned Palestinian resistance to its occupation.

Israel's President Chaim Herzog outdid all others in his protests by invoking the specter of anti-Semitism. *Newsweek* magazine (20 February 1989) quoted him saying that "The imbalance in reporting is terrifying in its implications...because it arouses for us, the Jewish people, specters of our past." He pronounced the State Department's report to be "obsessive prejudice." □

DEAR READERS

To ensure that you will continue to receive your copy of ***Palestine Perspectives*** on time, please let us know promptly if you change your address.

GENTLER AND KINDER WORLD

Does it Include the Palestinians?

Richard Schifter, the outgoing U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, wrote the following in the Department of State's *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1985:*

"The reports unashamedly reflect the American view that the right of self-government is the basic political right, that government is legitimate only when grounded on the consent of the governed, and that government thus grounded should not be used to deny people life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Individuals in a society have the inalienable right to be free from governmental violations of the integrity of the person; to enjoy civil liberties such as freedom of expression, assembly, religion, and movement, without discrimination based on race or sex; and to change their government by peaceful means." □

NONSENSE FOR THE MILLIONS

Syndicated columnists Jack Anderson and Dale Van Atta, in a column published in *The Washington Post* of 12 February, wrote that Israel could have helped reduce America's trade deficit but Washington was not smart enough to seize the opportunity. Here is how their column began:

"Imagine that George Bush, with the stroke of a pen, could reduce the U.S. trade deficit, provide thousands of jobs and mend hurt feelings with two American allies. It sounds like the kind of solution on a silver platter that the new administration is looking for.

"But Washington is a town that turns its back on the practical if people in high places have an absurd solution.

"Bush's golden opportunity comes in the form of requests from Israel and South Korea. They are begging the United States to build diesel-electric submarines for them to buy. But so far, the United States has said no thanks. Picture the Japanese government coming to Lee Iacocca and asking him to build its fleet cars. Then picture Iacocca saying no and closing his plant for lack of work." Enough Anderson-Van Atta wisdom.

First, we are not aware of the media pundits complaining about lost American jobs when Congress, under pressure from the Israeli lobby, caused this country to lose a $50 billion Saudi contract for American weapons, compared to which the Israeli contract is minuscule.

Second, Israel does not "buy" American weapons. It gets them for free. How would building submarines for Israel reduce the deficit when all military hardware Israel gets from this country is paid for with American non-repayable grants to Israel?

Third, if the columnists see no difference between building cars for the Japanese and building submarines for Israel, they need to read before they start writing.

Finally, do the syndicated columnists object to the administration's efforts to keep the European allies from building plants with military potential in the Third World, because that too helps the Europeans improve their balance of trade and reduce unemployment? Or is Israel, again, a case above logic and its wishes above scrutiny? □

ALL IN THE FAMILY

American Jews are admonished not to voice public criticism of Israeli policy by an American Zionist leader, Joseph P. Sternstein, in an article called "Diaspora Interventionism," published in *The Jerusalem Post*'s international edition, week ending 25 February 1989. Mr. Sternstein, whose Zionist credentials include the presidency of the Jewish National Fund of America and the past presidency of the Zionist Organization of America and the American Zionist Federation, rehashes the reasons why American Jews should keep any complaints they have about Israel "in the family."

"Political injury may be visited upon Israel's diplomatic capacities and strategies," he warns, if Jews "go public" with their criticism of Israeli policy. If Jews must complain about what Israel is doing, they should not do it within hearing distance of non-Jews. It should be done "within the arena of the family," such as local Jewish publications rather than the mass media.

The writer is obviously a member of the keep-your-pockets-open-and-mouths-shut school of thought. He calls Jews who criticize Israel "self-righteous Diaspora Jews," whose opinions "would resound in the camps of our enemies." He describes the meeting of some American Jews with PLO officials in Sweden to convince Yasser Arafat to recognize Israel "the scandalous episode."

"Uniquely injurious," Sternstein writes, "to responsible and judicious discussion—and, we may say, cowardly—is the sordid debate about what we Jews must see as internal, carried to all the platforms of the general media."

The writer does not make it clear what he thinks of Israeli policy, although one gathers from the general drift of his article that he adores the Israeli right. His principal concern is that "non-Jews" remain ignorant of what he thinks, a loss that many—we suspect—would not mind. □

RED BASS MAGAZINE PUNISHED FOR ISSUE ON PALESTINE

Magazine Loses Grant As NEA Succumbs to ADL Pressure

The National Endowment for the Arts, bowing to protests from the Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith, has decided to withdraw a grant to *Red Bass* magazine for publishing an issue on the Palestinians. Following is the text of a statement by *Red Bass* editor Jay Murphy on the subject:

Red Bass Statement

We are not surprised the Anti-Defamation League did not enjoy our special issue "For Palestine," or cite it, as have other readers, for reason and balance. For the ADL, the state of Israel cannot ever make a mistake. What is disturbing is that a federal arts agency would bow to such pressure, and on such grounds.

We could not imagine publishing an issue on Palestinian literature and art without examining the larger political situation there, just as we cannot imagine a special number on Haiti, a specific project the National Endowment did approve, that does not relate the cultural work there to the ongoing struggle for social-political transformation that continues in that country, despite all odds. If we were doing an issue on German literature in 1940, we doubt that we could do so without any reference to the ruler of that country, or his actions. We would like to ask the Endowment what is the real difference between an issue on Haiti, and one on Palestine, that one is approved, and the other isn't?

Red Bass is a literary-arts publication, and almost half the contributors to "For Palestine" were poets. Another, Edward Said, is an internationally-renowned literary critic. Jean Genet, whose writings on the Palestinians many consider among his finest work, is one of the great writers of this century. The rest were distinguished members of the international Palestinian community, including Palestine's ambassador to the United Nations, and a former U.S. Senator. We believe their contributions would meet the literary expectations of any unbiased reader.

The National Endowment's response to the Anti-Defamation League was no less a political act than the publishing of "For Palestine." We will let posterity decide which action contained the better literature.

For Red Bass
Jay Murphy, Editor
2425 Burgundy Street
New Orleans, LA 70117
Tel: (504)949-5256

NEW POLLS ON THE PALESTINIANS

Public Supports Basic Palestinian Rights

A new poll of American public opinion on the Palestinians shows that seventy percent of the American public support the U.S.-PLO dialogue and sixty percent believe that Israel should also talk to the PLO. The poll, conducted by Media General and the Associated Press in January also shows that sixty-two percent of the American people believe that the Palestinians should have their own country. Only eleven percent oppose a Palestinian state, and twenty-seven percent hold no opinion on the subject.

Although the poll also shows that Americans generally are still suspicious of the PLO, better educated Americans are more likely than the less educated to support dealing with the PLO.

The poll indicates widespread American public support for the two primary concerns of the Palestinians: their right to designate their own representatives, and their right to their own state.

Israel No Friend

Another public opinion poll showed that for the first time most Americans do not see Israel as a trusted ally of the United States. The Washington Post-ABC poll showed that fifty-six percent of the public do not consider Israel "a reliable ally of the United States," and fifty-two percent said that they had "an unfavorable impression of Israel."

The Washington Post, which published a brief summary of the results on 21 February, attributed Israel's poor image to its behavior in occupied Palestine. □

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PLO DELEGATION TO VISIT WASHINGTON

"High Level" Representation at ADC Convention

PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat assured the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) that the Palestine Liberation Organization intends to send a "high level" delegation to its next annual convention, scheduled to meet in Washington 13-16 April 1989. The ADC had invited Arafat to its convention.

In a letter to ADC, Arafat thanked the human rights organization for the invitation and hoped that "under the right time and circumstances, and if the struggle of our people and other international conditions permit, I will be able to make it."

Arafat said that he valued the work of ADC which is "forming a bridge of growing friendship between the peoples of our Arab nation and the friendly people of the United States." For the coming convention, he wrote, "I assigned a special high level delegation to attend your respected convention." He did not name the members of the delegation, and it is not known how the State Department would respond to their requests for visas to come to the United States. □

The Double Standard

Two years ago, in February 1987, the Reagan administration was considering the sale of American weapons requested by Jordan and Saudi Arabia. The intended transaction, described by *The Wall Street Journal* (10 February 1987) as "relatively modest," caused an uproar by Israel's friends in Congress. The deal was torpedoed after 64 senators wrote President Reagan that they would oppose arms sales to Jordan and Saudi Arabia unless they made "substantial efforts to achieve progress in the Middle East peace process."

Today, no voices are heard in the U.S. congress demanding reduction of aid to Israel unless it shows interest in the peace process. On the contrary, Israel is hearing assurances that support for it is irrelevant to its behavior. The Israeli lobby's newsletter, *Near East Report* (20 February 1989), quoted Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT), Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, saying that he "would strongly oppose any efforts to link assistance levels to Israel to the development of any specific peace plan or initiative."

Is it surprising that Israel takes American support for granted? □

BILADI: PALESTINE COMPUTER DATABASE

After two years of labor, Hanania Enterprises has produced a computerized database on Palestine. The database includes historic documents, biographies, geographic information, chronology of events, a bibliography, and maps.

The documents section includes historic documents from the late nineteenth century, when the Zionist movement was founded, until recent times, such as PLO Chairman Arafat's speech to the U.N. General Assembly in December 1988. The database contains Palestinian and Israeli population and immigration statistics, before and since the establishment of Israel in 1948.

The system comes with a well-written manual which facilitates its use. In fact, the system is so easy to use it is like painting by numbers.

Biladi is not without problems, however. The bibliography is very skimpy, and the statistics sometimes give a source and sometimes they do not. Such problems, however, can be overcome because it is possible to go into the data for editing. Some segments cannot be edited, such as the historic documents, but that is a positive feature. It is possible, however, to update by adding new documents, statistics or bibliographic references.

The Palestine database, if enhanced by the user and kept up to date, can be a most valuable source of information on the Palestinians. It is worth the price, and Hanania Enterprises are to be commended for making it available to researchers.

Biladi comes in a package of 8 disks, including the system disk, and sells for $125.00 It can be ordered from **Hanania Enterprises,** Ltd., P. O. Box 356, Tinley Park, Illinois 60477.

IN SUPPORT OF PALESTINIAN WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Women's International Federation Calls For End of Occupation

Life is reduced to memories and rubble

Women and children have been the principal victims of Israeli repression in occupied Palestine. In the Gaza Strip, for example, a majority of casualties since the start of the rebellion against Israeli occupation have been among children fifteen years and younger.

This fact has drawn the attention of the Women's International Democratic Federation, a worldwide women's organization based in the Democratic Republic of Germany. Last year, the group sent a fact-finding mission to the occupied territories and published an account of the visit in its journal, *Women of the Whole World,* No. 3/1988. The article describes the role of Palestinian women in the resistance to Israeli occupation and the hardships they and their children face.

The journal also published the text of an appeal on behalf of Palestinian women adopted at an emergency meeting in Vienna in March 1988.

Appeal

We urgently call on the international community to press for:

- An immediate withdrawal of the Israeli troops from the Palestinian Arab territories, including Jerusalem, and from the Syrian Golan Heights which have been illegally occupied since 1967;
- An immediate end to the brutal Israeli military repression and atrocities against the population;
- Release of all detainees, among whom there are hundreds of women and children;
- Implementation of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people, struggling under the leadership of the PLO, their sole and legitimate representative, to return, to self-determination and to establish their own independent state on the national soil;
- The convening without delay of an international Middle East conference with full mandatory power under the auspices of the United Nations and with the participation of all permanent members of the UN Security Council and all parties concerned, including the PLO, on an equal footing. Such a conference would help to promote a stable peace in the Middle East and all over the world;
- Intensification of the moral and material solidarity with the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab territories and other Arab peoples under Israeli occupation and terror.

Recommendations

We call upon all women of the world to:

1. Establish an international committee for solidarity and assistance to the Palestinian women and children in the occupied Palestinian territories;

2. Send fact-finding missions to the occupied territories in order to investigate Israeli atrocities and violations of the Palestinians' human rights;

3. Host women's delegations from occupied Palestinian territories in order to broaden the understanding and knowledge of the international community and to disseminate correct information on the situation of Palestinian women and children under occupation;

4. Contact members of parliament, government officials and other bodies and pressure them to impose economic sanctions against the government of Israel;

5. Send material and financial aid to assist Palestinian women and children;

6. Promote political and moral solidarity and material contributions, such as sending specialized medical teams to work in the occupied territories and receiving some injured people for better medical treatment;

7. Convene an international meeting on the conditions of Palestinian women and children;

8. Boycott Israeli products.

We pay tribute to all the Palestinian martyrs who have fallen in the struggle for the liberation of their country, for the dignity of their people and all peoples of the world. □

U.N. "ACKNOWLEDGES" THE STATE OF PALESTINE

The United Nations General Assembly passed the following resolution on Palestine during its Forty-third Session, held in Geneva in December 1988:

The General Assembly,

Having considered the item entitled "Question of Palestine,"

Recalling its resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947, in which, inter alia, it called for the establishment of an Arab State and a Jewish State in Palestine,

Mindful of the special responsibility of the United Nations to achieve a just solution to the question of Palestine,

Aware of the proclamation of the State of Palestine by the Palestine National Council in line with General Assembly resolution 181 (II) and in exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people,

Affirming the urgent need to achieve a just and comprehensive settlement in the Middle East which, inter alia, provides for peaceful coexistence for all States in the region,

Recalling its resolution 3237 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974, on the observer status of the Palestine Liberation Organization and subsequent relevant resolutions,

1. ***Acknowledges*** the proclamation of the State of Palestine by the Palestine National Council on 15 November 1988;

2. ***Affirms*** the need to enable the Palestinian people to exercise their sovereignty over their territory occupied since 1967;

3. ***Decides*** that, effective as of 15 December 1988, the designation "Palestine" should be used in place of the designation "Palestine Liberation Organization" in the United Nations system, without prejudice to the observer status and functions of the Palestine Liberation Organization within the United Nations system, in conformity with relevant United Nations resolutions and practice;

4. ***Requests*** the Secretary-General to take necessary action to implement the present resolution. □

82nd plenary meeting
15 December 1988

PALESTINIAN MEDIATION OF CYPRUS DISPUTE

Cypriot Government Reported Agreeable to Arafat's Mediation

Falestine Althawra, the weekly Arabic-language magazine of the Palestine Liberation Organization, reported in its 5 February 1989 issue that the government of Cyprus has accepted any mediation effort by PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat to settle the dispute which resulted in the partition of the country in 1974. The PLO publication quoted an official spokesman of the Cypriot government saying that his country welcomes any efforts to resolve the conflict, particularly the efforts of friends.

Press reports from the area indicate that Arafat had been talking to Greek and Turkish leaders, as well as Cypriot leaders, and that his efforts have been encouraged. Cyprus had invited Arafat to visit the country, an invitation which he had accepted, although no date for it has yet been set. It is believed that Cyprus will use that occasion to announce the elevation of Palestinian diplomatic representation in Cyprus to embassy level. Cyprus and the PLO have had good relations for many years, and Cyprus hosts a number of Palestinian institutions. □

"QUOTE UNQUOTE"

"Rabin is making an offer to the Palestinians living here [in the occupied West Bank and Gaza], as if we are a group of tourists living in a hotel."

Faisal Husseini
The Jerusalem Post
Week ending 11 February 1989

"The idea that an organization [PLO] which gets 160 countries to vote for its representative status can be totally excluded from a diplomatic process is attractive, but not credible. The harsh fact is that the struggle against the legitimization of the PLO has been effectively lost."

Abba Eban
The Jerusalem Post
Week ending 18 February 1989

"I think they [Israelis] are losing support, and I see it in my own part of the country... People are opposed to violence... I understand the Israelis have been provoked many times, but it just doesn't wash anymore. And I think it's going to have an impact on Congress."

Senator Robert Dole
Philadelphia Inquirer
21 February 1989

BRITISH PARLIAMENTARIANS VISIT OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

Israeli Practices Called "Affront to Human Dignity"

A group of British members of parliament visited occupied Palestine early in February "to learn about the situation firsthand." The group, which included three Conservative and three Labour members, visited refugee camps in the West Bank and Gaza, talked to Palestinians injured by Israeli troops and met with local Palestinian leaders. Israeli officials refused to meet with the visiting British delegation.

A member of the group, on his first visit to the occupied territories, said "For a people like the Israelis who suffered for centuries from repression, for them to do the same to other people is quite unforgivable." He described Israel's acts in the occupied territories as an "affront to human dignity and human and civil rights."

The group held a press conference in London at the end of their visit, on 8 February. One of its members told reporters that he had seen an 8-year-old Palestinian boy "who was disfigured by an Israeli bomb." The boy died at a Nablus hospital on the day of the press conference. □

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Slightly Satirical...

SETTLER COMPLAINS ABOUT THE INTIFADA

The Israeli Ombudsman released his latest annual report in February. *The Jerusalem Post* (int'l. ed., week ending 18 February) said that the report included only the forty percent of the complaints against the Israeli bureaucracy that the Ombudsman found to be justified. Matt Nesvisky, however, peeked at the "unpublished" part of the report and found the following complaint about the Palestinian uprising:

"Settler Rights"

Shortly after the beginning of the intifada, a West Bank settler lodged a complaint with the Ombudsman against the Defense Ministry. The settler claimed that the deteriorating security situation was interfering with his God-given right to shop in downtown Nablus. The settler added that he could no longer lead youth groups on marches through Palestinian living rooms without rousing the ire of the natives, which he found both disrespectful and offensive.

In addition, he said, every time he fired his IDF-issued weapon at trespassing children, he came under a life-threatening hail of stones. The trespassers, he added, often left dead sheep near his orchards, which was both unsightly and a health hazard. The complainant demanded to know why the IDF had failed to eliminate all threats to his security.

Upon inquiry, the Ombudsman found that the Defense Ministry was doing all in its power to restore law and order in the territories. New measures, said the ministry, included confiscation of all stones in the territories, deportation of all hostile flocks, and the introduction of rubber artillery shells and medium-range ballistic missiles with plastic warheads.

The ministry said it sympathized with the settler, and agreed that the bargains in the Nablus casbah were not to be sneezed at. It added that the intifada was expected to end shortly, as the Palestinians were coming around to the view that violence is pointless and that it was better to hold elections for representatives democratically chosen for them by Israel. □

SOUTH AFRICA TO BUY KOOR?

Business circles in South Africa told *The Jerusalem Post* (27 January 1989) that Israel's largest industrial conglomerate, Koor, is negotiating to sell its assets to South African investors. Koor is a holding company owned by the Israeli Federation of Labor, the Histadrut, and owns many manufacturing firms including Tadiran, one of Israel's major military electronics manufacturers.

Israeli Foreign Affairs (February 1989) said that the financially troubled Israeli conglomerate has been fighting to stave off a lawsuit by Bankers Trust of New York, its main creditor, which would force it into liquidation. The publication also quoted *The Jerusalem Post* saying that Israel's airline, El Al, has confirmed that it is negotiating a lease-back deal with a big South African company, Grinaker Holdings, under which El Al would sell a Boeing 707 to Grinaker for $30 million and then rent the plane for 20 years.

The Jerusalem Post (int'l ed., week ending 18 February) reported that Koor, however, had reached an agreement with its creditors which will lead to the withdrawal of the liquidation lawsuit against it. The deal includes giving foreign creditors the right to oversee Koor's "recovery program."

South Africa already has interests in some Israeli companies, including Iskoor, an Israeli company which makes armor plating for Israeli and South African tanks. □

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TUTU SPEAKS OUT

South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu, during visit to New York in February, said that Israel's treatment of the Palestinians was reminiscent of the South African government's treatment of blacks. The 1984 Nobel Peace Prize winner said that African and American blacks will continue to be alienated from Israel and Jews until the Palestinian issue is equitably settled.

Archbishop Tutu criticized Jews who are "too quick to call critics of Israel anti-Semites." Addressing a primarily Jewish audience in New York he said: "We blacks in South Africa cannot understand how a people with your kind of history could allow the government of Israel to have the kind of relationship that it has with the government of South Africa." □

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