

palestine perspectives

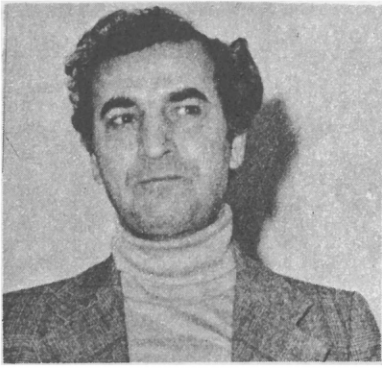
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Photo credit: Lynne Barbee/MERIP

Palestinian school children in Damour, Lebanon.



In Memoriam

Palestine has lost one of its most dedicated sons, Izedin Kalak, head of the P.L.O. office in Paris. Izedin has given his life for his country and dispossessed people. Now the memory of his work, his activism and his words remain. In May 1978, he sponsored a successful festival for the Palestine Red Crescent Society attended by thousands of French, Belgium, Italian and Dutch supporters. Izedin said at that festival that: "The Palestinian people do not fight only with guns, but with a great culture and artistic talents. That is why the Palestinian people will continue their armed struggle and regain their lost homeland, Palestine."

Izedin Kalak dedicated his life to the cause of freedom. On August 3, 1978, the Zionist terrorists who expelled him from his village near Safad in 1948 riddled his body with bullets in Paris.

Izedin is now free, and has returned to his village near Safad, Palestine, where his spirit lives forever.

editorial

Behind the Politics of Standstill : Diplomacy in the Mideast Conflict

Peace conferences, especially those dealing with the complex issues of the Mideast conflict, are by their nature elaborate affairs. Certainly, the recent conference in London, bringing together the foreign ministers of Egypt and the Zionist regime in Palestine, chaired by the American Secretary of State, was both elaborate and well-scripted in advance to elicit the most spectacular kind of media exposure. Yet never before, since the inception of the Arab-Israeli dispute, has there been a more predictable and vacuous "peace conference" than this one with its assured sense of pomposity — a pomposity derived not merely from its locale at a heavily-guarded castle outside the British capital but from the fact that little was destined to be accomplished beyond the agreement to keep "meeting" and a contemplated visit by Secretary of State Cyrus Vance to the Middle East for "another round of talks."

Yet so long as the deep-rooted differences between the two sides persist, stemming from Israel's well-stated commitment not to withdraw from the Palestine territories of the West Bank/Gaza, not to recognize the rights of the Palestinian people to freedom in Palestine, and not to remove its foreign occupation forces from the national territories of the Arab states, there is very little indeed to "talk" about and to "meet" for.

It was clear from the outset of the conference that both Egypt and Israel were far apart, and the gap was not likely to be narrowed, let alone bridged, unless a major breakthrough occurred in Israel's policy on expansionism in Arab land and exclusivism in Palestine.

What lies behind this impasse? Can it, will it, ever be overcome?

The answer is yes — if it is recognized, once and for all, that the issue is Palestine.

This is the core of conflict in the Middle East today, as it stands in the wake of Sadat's initiative close to a year ago, in the wake of four wars between the Arab states and Israel in three decades, and in the wake of sixty years of conflict between Zionism and Palestinian nationalism.

Certainly a great many myths that have punctuated this conflict over the years, have had their timely death. The central fable, fashionable up until 1967, that Israel was a "tiny state" struggling for "survival" against hostile enemies, has had its mocking epitaph in Israel's brutal occupation practices in Arab lands. The miracle that Israel enacted between 1948 and 1967, where through a cunning reshuffle of the history of Palestine, Zionists convinced themselves and the rest of the world, that the Palestinians "did not exist," was shattered with the reemergence of the Palestinians in 1967 after two decades of quiescence. None of the solemn gibberish by Israeli

leaders (especially Menachem Begin), that passes for an Israeli "peace plan," with its language of hysterical denial that the Palestinians exist ("they can choose between becoming Israeli or Jordanian citizens") has been taken seriously by anyone.

The one final myth that remains intact today is Israel's litany about security. The living core of this black fairy tale is that Israel needs security from its neighbors — when all evidence is that the neighbors certainly stand in more need of it. This security, the fable has it, is threatened by no other than the defenceless people of Palestine. Israel, with its doomsday weapons and awesome arsenal of tanks, planes and concussion bombs, is "in mortal danger" from a projected Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza, a mere 21% remnant of Palestine. Consequently, Israel will not withdraw from "one inch" of these territories, will not "accept" a Palestinian state, will not negotiate with the PLO, and will not recognize the national rights of the Palestinians, those in exile and under occupation, beyond their right to "self-rule" — in other words, the right to run their post offices, schools and telephone system. Meanwhile, Palestinians will continue to be ruled by the gun and Israel will continue to establish colonies and "facts" in that part of Palestine.

This abrasive fantasy about security has been, over the last few years and more specifically since Begin's ascendancy to power of the Zionist regime in Palestine, explained in teeth-gnashing language, poured out with a parlance of hellish words, slogans, clichés, puns, and biblical references.

This obsession with security, this obsession by it, and above all, this obsession with translating "security" into goals that deny another people their rights, has undermined the shape and reality both of historical fact and the search for a settlement.

Only when this myth, and Israel's obsession with it, are dispelled, can the reason for the current impasse between the Arabs and Israel be understood and broken.

There are two levels of conflict in the Mideast at the moment, both cocentrically related. The one is a national conflict between the Palestinians and Israel, with the former struggling to regain their national rights which have been denied by, and since the existence of, Israel. And there is a regional conflict between the Arab states and Israel, with the former struggling to remove Israeli occupation forces from their national territories where they have been entrenched for eleven years.

The two conflicts are interrelated to the extent that the one

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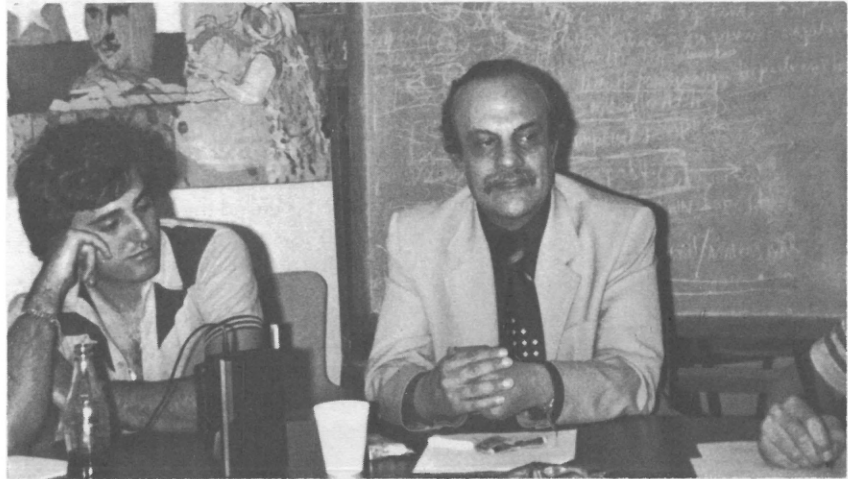
A Voice From Lebanon: Inam Ra'ad Speaks in the U.S.

Last month's speaking tour of Inam Ra'ad, Vice-President of the Central Political Council of the Lebanese National Movement and Chairman of the Syrian Socialist Nationalist Party, came as Lebanon exploded once again into civil strife that led quickly to major clashes between the Lebanese rightists and the Arab peace-keeping force. In the midst of renewed bloodshed in Lebanon, Ra'ad's voice sounded a particularly appropriate note. For Ra'ad, and the movement he represents, stand for a Lebanon that is yet to emerge: a Lebanon free of sectarianism and civil conflict — a peaceful, secular and democratic Lebanon.

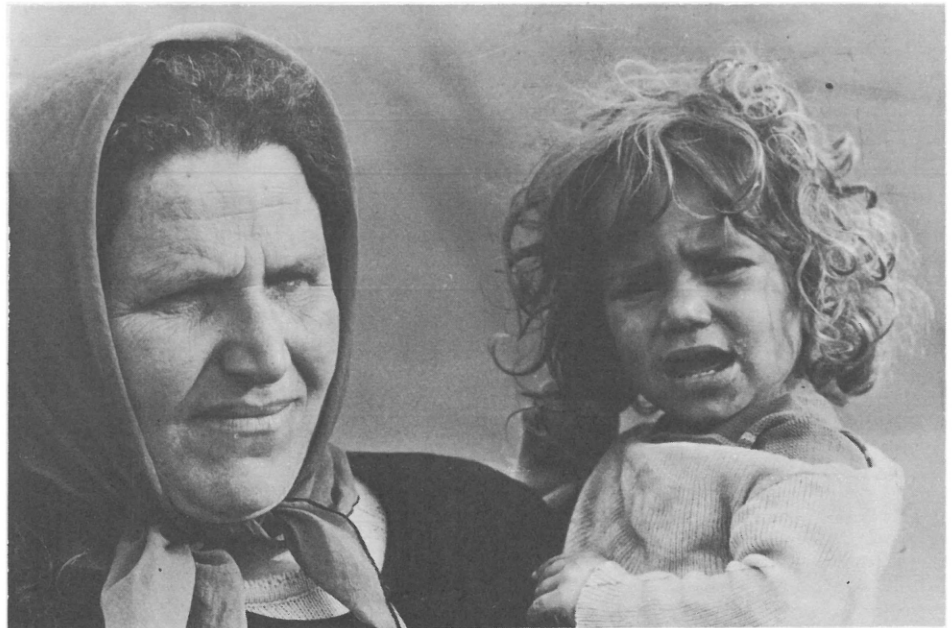
Ra'ad stressed in his meetings with the American media, the Arab and Lebanese communities, and progressive Americans, that the Lebanese National Movement believes in "democratic struggle, rather than civil war" to resolve the pressing questions facing Lebanon. He emphatically stated: "We are not willing to reach the execution of our program through bloodshed and civil war."

Ra'ad, himself a Christian Catholic, felt that the conflict in Lebanon has been distorted in the American press and portrayed as a religious struggle, when in fact the issue at hand, Ra'ad said, is "patriotism versus Zionism." Ra'ad analyzed Lebanon's most pressing problem as the "Zionizing of Lebanon." In other words, Israel and the Israeli-supplied rightist parties and militias (predominantly the Phalangists and the National Liberal Party headed by Camille Chamoun) were intent on dominating Lebanon and establishing what Ra'ad called "a new form of colonialism." A clear example is Israel's withdrawal from South Lebanon where, in violation of U.N. Resolution 425, Israel turned over command posts to the Lebanese fascists, rather than to U.N. troops. Ra'ad demonstrated the irony of the Israeli rationale for these actions in "helping the poor Lebanese Christians" by pointing out Israel's treatment of Palestinian Christians under its control. As part of this pattern, Tony Franjeh was assassinated when the Franjeh forces became wary of the increasing ties of the right with Israel.

Ra'ad stressed that the Lebanese National Movement and the Lebanese people continue in their undiminished support for the Palestinian presence in Lebanon, despite the sacrifices incurred in standing with the Palestinians. Ra'ad defined the Palestinian issue as "one of a people and their national rights" and stated



Inam Ra'ad speaks at Institute for Policy Studies, Washington, D.C.



Refugees from South Lebanon

strongly: "Israel has been coercing the Palestinians since Israel's emergence, but it is not in Lebanon or elsewhere that the matter is settled, since Palestinian children remain to defy the occupation of their land with demonstrations, armed only with stones and the will to reject the Israeli occupation."

Ra'ad characterized the program of the Lebanese National Movement as a "transitory program for reform," stressing that this program concentrates on basic democratic demands like an end to sectarianism, equality of all citizens in opportunity, reform of the army and legalizing civil marriage. The movement

gives its full support to the Lebanese legal authority and supports the unity of Lebanese society. Ra'ad noted that the movement has repeatedly called for a democratic forum with the Lebanese right, but to no avail. Today in Beirut, he said, the rightist section (Ashrafiyeh) is still closed while rightists freely come to Western Beirut (a stronghold of the progressive movement) to shop and visit. The rightist "ghettos" contribute greatly to the climate of destabilization, distrust and fear in Lebanon.

Ra'ad also presented a thoughtful analysis of the roots of the Lebanese problem in the

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U.S. Policy: Why is it Hostile to the PLO and the Palestinians?

Who determines American policy toward the Palestinians and the PLO, the U.S. government or the Israeli government and its Zionist supporters in the U.S.? Recently, the Israeli government and its agents in this country, the Anti-Defamation League and the American Zionist Organization, have called the tune, and high U.S. officials have responded.

The Begin government and its Zionist supporters have denied the Palestinians their inalienable rights: the right to national independence, self-determination and return to their homeland. In the last months, they have said: no to a Palestinian independent state, no to Palestinian

Members of Congress such as Derwinski, Livingston, Collins, Stockman, Schroeder, and Dornan have repeated anti-Palestinian positions: no to a Palestinian independent state, no to an end to Israeli military rule and no to Palestinian self-determination. Derwinski presented legislation to expel the PLO delegation from the United Nations, and Dornan called the PLO "terrorist" and sought to close its offices in New York and Washington, D.C., thus denying the Palestinian right to free speech and the right to present their views in the U.S.

A number of Senators pressured State Department officials during Committee hearings to say that the PLO is "terrorist."

and denied, in statements before the Congress, to the Palestinians the right to self-determination, national independence and freedom. By advocating a five-year transition period, they condoned continued Israeli military occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, and kept silent about continued Israeli violation of civil and human rights in the occupied territories, the confiscation of Palestinian lands and the illegal building of new Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Gaza.

Moreover, the State Department has responded to Israeli pressures and said it does not encourage the opening of Palestine information offices in the U.S., and



Palestinian children: Education and freedom for their future.

self-determination and no to the end of the oppressive Israeli military government imposed on the occupied West Bank and Gaza for the last eleven years. Moreover, the Zionists said no to the PLO, no to Palestinian participation in negotiations and no to any independent Palestinian voice at international and United Nations conferences.

Prominent members of Congress have simply repeated these reprehensible positions, without any attempt at showing independent judgement or simple human concern for the Palestinian people. Chairman and members of the Foreign Relations Committee such as Senators Church, Javits, Ribicoff and Stone, and

Senator Stone confronted Under Secretary Atherton and pressed him to label the PLO "terrorist." Senator Church released false information about the PLO given to him by the Israeli Embassy, and Senator Javits called for shelving the Palestinian question and securing an Egyptian-Israeli separate agreement.

The U.S. government succumbed to Zionist pressure and on June 30 State Department spokesman Hodding Carter called the Chairman of the PLO, Yasser Arafat, "terrorist" and said "major organizations within the PLO" advocated terrorism. On the other hand, Secretary of State Vance, Undersecretary Saunders and Atherton went along with the Israeli view

investigated the possibility of closing the PLO information office in New York earlier this spring. Thus, the U.S. government stands against its own principles of freedom of speech, seeking to prevent the American public from hearing the Palestinian voice, at a time when Israeli leaders, officials and supporters of all shades and colors have full freedom in the U.S.

In whose interest is this anti-Palestinian policy? And why continue to deny the Palestinians their inalienable rights to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness?" It is about time for the American people to give an answer, one based on a sense of justice, objectivity and humane values.

The PLO: A Progressive, Democratic and Humanitarian Organization

What is the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)? A brief review of its functions in Palestinian society counters some prevailing myths.

— The PLO consists of a National Council that includes 290 representatives of different political parties, trade, labor and professional associations, women and student unions, as well as representatives from Palestinian refugee camps in different Arab states. The Council determines and reviews overall policies affecting the socio-economic, cultural, and political affairs of the Palestinian people.

— The National Council elects an Executive Committee of 17 members that head different Departments (like Cabinet) such as the Educational, Social, Medical, Welfare, Political and Military Departments. These deal with the day to day affairs of the Palestinian people in exile or under Israeli occupation.

— The Educational Department, headed by Ahmad Sedki Dajani, operates hundreds of schools and kindergartens in refugee camps and in Arab states such as Syria, Lebanon and Kuwait.

— The Information Department, headed by Yaser Abed Rabou, oversees hundreds of cultural and media projects, including the publication of books, newspapers, exhibits, and films all emphasizing Palestinian heritage and culture.

— The Financial Department, headed by Hamid Abu Sita, oversees the PLO budget which distributes millions of dollars to different schools, orphanages, factories, clinics, welfare and cultural institutions that deal with Palestinian affairs.

— The Political Department, headed by Farouk Kaddoumi, runs the affairs of more than a hundred political offices—official representatives of the PLO—in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe. These representatives help Palestinian communities in exile and represent the PLO in the host countries.

— The Palestine Red Crescent, headed by Dr. Fathi Arafat, operates over fifty hospitals and 120 clinics in different Arab states, including Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and the occupied West Bank and Gaza. In Lebanon alone, the Palestine Red Crescent operates 15 hospitals and 60 clinics that serve both Palestinian and Lebanese people. Mr. Arafat has said that



Worker at a SAMED factory.

after Palestinians return to their homeland, the hospitals and clinics in Lebanon will be their gift to the Lebanese people.

— The Palestine Sons of Martyrs Works Society (Samed) and the Sons of Martyrs Welfare Society both spent millions of dollars annually to rehabilitate and employ Palestinian youth. At Samed's factories, Palestinians manufacture clothes, furniture, handicrafts, artwork and toys and export it to Asian and African countries. The Martyrs Welfare Society financially assists families of martyrs and prisoners in the occupied territories and Lebanon.

Moreover, the Palestine Theatre and Folk Society operates a number of theatres and folk troupes that have participated in youth festivals in Europe, Africa and Asia.

— The Palestine Writers Union, represented in the Palestine National Council, includes hundreds of Palestinian writers and poets who have participated in international literary conferences. A number of these poets and writers such as Mahmoud Darweesh, Nabil Shaath and Whalid Khalidi head Palestinian research

and educational academies and publish important journals including the *Journal of Palestine Studies* and *Palestine Affairs Journal*.

— The PLO has units known as the "Armed Command" that have maintained law and order during the civil war in Lebanon (1975-1976), protected banks and hotels, prevented looting and even managed to get food and water supplies to the Jewish Lebanese community that was isolated during the civil war in Lebanon.

— The Palestinians are freedom fighters, and have a legitimate right to resist Israeli military occupation of their land. Palestinian military resistance is directed against the Israeli army and the military establishment. It is also in self-defense, to protect Palestinian refugee camps and towns against massive Israeli air raids and military invasions. Those who are concerned about violence must call for the disarmament of Israel, and an end to supplying Israel with cluster bombs, napalm, F-15 warplanes and other instruments of death and destruction.

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American Officials on Status of PLO

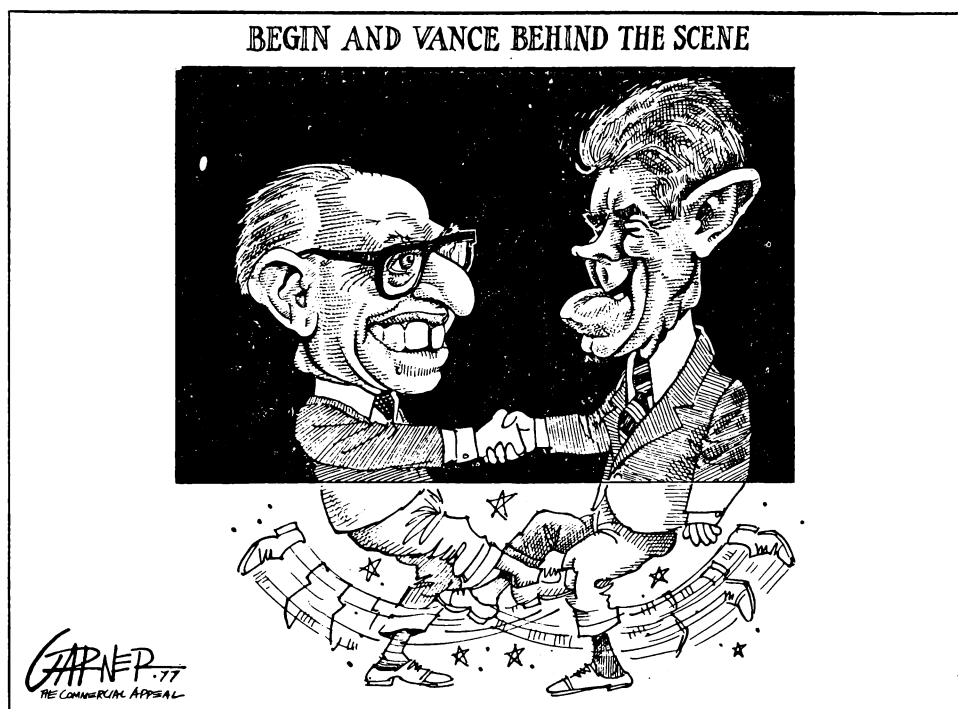
Ambassador Atherton and Undersecretary Saunders were called to the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on the Near East and South Asian Affairs on June 22nd in order to answer questions regarding United States policy in the Middle East. Members attending the hearings were: Senator Richard Stone, a Democrat from Florida and Chairman of the Subcommittee, Senators Jacob Javits, Republican from New York, Clifford Case, Republican from New Jersey, and Paul Sarbanes, Democrat from Maryland. The questions to the two Administration officials centered around United States policy towards the Palestinians and the PLO.

The hearings were opened by the Chairman, Senator Stone, who read an article published in the *Christian Science Monitor* of June 28 quoting Yassir Arafat as saying that he would agree to superpower guarantees. Chairman Arafat said: "No doubt I need these guarantees. The Israelis can do without them." The question raised however, was "what is the United States Government position on an independent Palestinian State in the West Bank and Gaza?" The answer was that the United States Government still would prefer a "Palestinian entity" tied to Jordan rather than an independent Palestinian State.

The Administration officials' views regarding Jerusalem are that the city should remain united rather than divided as it was before 1967. If there is to be an Arab role in Jerusalem, the Administration has not yet defined it, although the future of the city should be negotiated between the parties. In reply to a question whether the United States was pushing for a PLO-dominated Palestinian State, the answer was: "We are not pushing for the creation of a PLO-dominated Palestinian State."

The questions became a little tougher when the Senators thought Mr. Saunders and Mr. Atherton were avoiding responding to whether the United States still based its position on the three options suggested by President Carter in earlier comments, i.e., an entity affiliated with Jordan with Jordanian citizenship accorded to Palestinians in that entity, or, citizenship status in Israel, or, a continuation of the status quo in some way or another.

Senator Sarbanes, who is the new star in



the Zionist skies, then asked Mr. Saunders to issue a strong statement on the part of the United States Government reflecting "our" disappointment in the Arafat position. Mr. Saunders replied that he in fact had made that statement. Senator Sarbanes then loudly interjected: "That's not good enough! I'd like you to state that an Arab position is not helpful to the process, not forthcoming, not making a contribution." Mr. Saunders then responded by saying that he had also responded to that particular question before a House Subcommittee, then stating that the "position of the PLO does not make it an acceptable partner in the negotiations". Mr. Saunders was referring to the PLO's position concerning the acceptance of United Nations Resolution 242 of 1967 which has been promoted by the United States as a basis for a settlement in the Middle East.

Senator Sarbanes of Maryland was first elected to the United States Senate in 1976. According to his office in Washington, he has been a strong supporter of "the Israeli Lobby" and the "Israeli Nation" as well. A spokeswoman in the office, who refused to be identified, said that the Senator had voted for the Administration proposal of the package jet sale to the Middle East. After checking, it was learned that the Senator

had in fact voted against the package sale because of Israeli opposition to it. Sarbanes's outright support of Israel, however, is interpreted to have a link to the Administration proposal to lift the arms embargo against Turkey. Political analysts suggest that the Senator, who is of Greek extraction, hopes to have the support of the pro-Israeli Lobby against lifting the embargo against Turkey. Greece, of course, is trying hard to mobilize a winning majority of supporters on the Hill which will defeat the Administration proposal.

The position of the Carter Administration concerning the PLO was very thoroughly reviewed by Ambassador Atherton in response to questioning by the Chairman of the Subcommittee, Senator Stone. The questions went as follows: Is the PLO considered to be a "terrorist organization" by the United States? Mr. Atherton replied that "there are no ways in which we have been called upon to describe the PLO in this kind of term." Such terms as "terrorist" and "terrorism", said Atherton, are not found in the Immigration and Nationality Act. Since 1974 that law has been the basis upon which known members of the PLO were barred from the United States. Allowing such members to enter the country, however,

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could be done by granting special waivers by the State Department, Atherton confirmed.

Following the above clarification in which Atherton described how the United States does not view the PLO, the dialogue continued as follows:

Atherton: "Could I go on to say how we do view the PLO?"

Senator Stone: "Please do."

Atherton: "Because I think it is important, I will try to define this in some detail. First of all the PLO is in fact an umbrella organization which consists of a great many factions within it. Constituent organizations under the umbrella of the PLO as an overarching kind of organization and within it these factions are often themselves divided by dissent and disagreement. As I think we all know, it is (PLO) considered in the Arab world and by the United Nations General Assembly and throughout much of the world as the principal spokesman for the Palestinian National Movement.

"The PLO," Atherton continued, "embraces not only the well known so called fedayeen organizations and groups, but also many individual Palestinians living in other countries, associations of students, workers, writers, women, and many independents who are not affiliated with any of these constituent groups. One of the major areas of disagreement within the PLO," Atherton went on saying, "has been over the appropriate tactics for pursuing Palestinian aspirations. There are those within the organization, such as the PFLP, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, who have regarded acts of international terrorism as legitimate political tools."

Stone: "So we do regard the PFLP as being within the PLO umbrella?"

Atherton: "That's correct."

Stone: "Thank you, go ahead."

Atherton: "There are other organizations such as Al-Fatah, who take the position that para-military operations are legitimate. The position of this Government on the PLO is clear and unequivocal and I would like to restate it so that there will be no reason to think that there has been any change in our position with respect to the PLO. First of all, we accept as a reality, as a fact, that the PLO speaks for a substantial number of Palestinians. We ourselves will not, however, recognize or deal with the PLO so long as it has not accepted Security Council Resolution 242 and the right of all states in the area to exist in peace; this clearly would include Israel.

"It goes without saying," Atherton continued, "that the use of international terrorist tactics, however they may be described by those perpetrating them, is inconsistent with that resolution."

Stone: "Thank you for that extensive and clear answer, and obviously one that was

anticipated and carefully prepared, and I appreciate that."

The other Senators who took part in the questioning were Senators Javits and Case. Actually, Senator Case did not ask questions, but rather lectured the Administration officials and the audience on his pro-Israeli and anti-Arab views. The Senator from New Jersey brought back the issue of the jet sale to the Middle East and again attacked the Administration for, what he calls, "favoritism towards the Arab standpoint". Senator Case will, no doubt, be missed by the Israeli Lobby, as he lost his bid to be the nominee of his party for the seat he has filled since 1954. Senator Javits asked a few questions and reaffirmed his support for Israel, which is also faithful and strong. Both Senators Case and Javits are not members of the Subcommittee but have the right to attend its meetings and ask questions as members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

It becomes clear when reading the proceeds of the above hearing that there is a lack of understanding, to say the least, by



Palestinians and supporters demonstrate at 30th anniversary of Israel celebration in Columbus, Ohio, May 1978. Ex-President Gerald Ford was the keynote speaker at the Israeli celebration.

Administration officials and members of Congress towards Palestinians and their problem. When former President Nixon introduced the term "evenhandedness" to United States policy in the Middle East, a term which has supposedly been adopted by succeeding administrations, his intention was to make the United States an acceptable mediator to both sides of the conflict. The definition of who are the components on each side of the conflict, however, was not complete. The most important party on the Arab side, representatives of the Palestinian people, was and still continues to be missing.

If the United States really means to bring about a settlement in the Middle East, the Palestinians must be represented. One argument which is usually presented against Palestinian representation in negotiations is the problem in finding the answer to the question "who will speak for the Palestinians?" The Undersecretary of State, Mr. Saunders, indirectly answered this question himself while presenting the "Annual Review of United States Policy in the Middle East" before the House Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East, on June 12, 1978. When answering a question by a member of the subcommittee regarding the loyalty of the Palestinians on the West Bank, Mr. Saunders said that out of 22 municipal elections on the West Bank, 20 ran on the PLO program and were elected. The support for the PLO, then, is unshakeable. Since the Palestinian issue is the core of the problem, and since many governments have admitted that the Palestinians could veto any settlement in which they are not a party to, it is logical then that they should be represented by the PLO and, therefore, the PLO should be recognized by the United States government as the major component to any settlement.

Continued United States denial of the right of the Palestinians self-determination, as well as it's denial of the PLO as their legitimate representative, will obviously not lead to a solution. The Palestinians' ability to fight for their national rights and to successfully oppose a "peace" which is not in their interest, is real and has been proven before.



The Generation Of Exile Will Be The Generation Of Peace

Commentators on the Middle East are often of the pessimistic opinion that the antagonisms in the area will take generations to eradicate, even if peace is established. A look at the next generation—Palestinian children—is hopeful in this regard. For these children, who in fact have suffered the most from the ongoing conflicts in the area, are a true test of the possibilities for genuine peace.

Born in exile, living in camps that have been almost constantly under military or political attack, suffering from the poor health that often accompanies camp life, separated from family members or tragically often, with family members dead in clashes or war, Palestinian children in Lebanon today have had to rely on the institutions of Palestinian society to sustain them and give them self-definition and education. The needs of these children have created great demands on all Palestinian organizations and institutions, and have been a catalyst for developing a new educational philosophy geared to the special needs and hopes of the children.

No where is this more evident than in the children who survived the siege of Tal al Zaatar, a Palestinian camp on the outskirts of Beirut that endured a brutal 53 day siege by the Lebanese right in the summer of 1976. In the town of Damour, where many families from Tal al Zaatar have temporarily resettled, volunteers from *Filastin al Thawra* (the official newspaper of the PLO) began a school in October of 1976 in an abandoned building. The school grew rapidly to accommodate 1200 students, at which point UNWRA (the United Nations Welfare and Relief Agency) stepped in to administer it. A teacher of 8-12 year old children who also survived Tal al Zaatar, described the initial problems of the children: "The children were scarred by their memories and many were very ill. Many had seen parents and relatives die; some had stayed by the corpse of a parent for several days. We had to help them live with these memories. At first, we used stories, songs, paintings and plays to explore their memories of Tal al Zaatar. When you can express your feelings about something, then it is not so painful."

In a visit to Damour in the spring of 1977, it was evident that the patient and loving work of the teachers had succeeded. One student, 11 year old Ahmed, who had lived in Tal al Zaatar all his life, bent over an interviewer's notebook with his pencil painstakingly recreating the camp of Tal al

Zaatar as it was before the siege, even returning a little later to erase a building that did not meet his satisfaction. He said: "Next to Palestine, I love Tal al Zaatar." Most children, in fact, expressed a desire to return to Tal al Zaatar and rebuild their homes.

In the classrooms of Damour, students were eager to learn and quick to answer questions, proud to demonstrate their command of English. Although none had seen Palestine, they identified themselves as being from villages and towns in Palestine, and displayed considerable knowledge about their country, which is an ability typical of children of the camps. When asked what city is the capital of Palestine, a 2½ year old in Sabra camp near Beirut replied "Al-Quds" (Jerusalem).

Two other schools which accommodate survivors of Tal al Zaatar illuminate the new philosophy of education derived from the goals of the Palestinian movement and the special conditions of the Palestinians. Unfortunately, one of these special conditions is the presence of large numbers of orphans, unusual in the Middle East because the Arab extended family means that there is usually someone to take responsibility for a child who has lost his or her parents. The devastation of the war in Lebanon, however, created numbers of children who have no surviving relatives who can care for them. Responding to this problem, the General Union of Palestinian Women

established an orphanage in Beirut last year called the "Home for the Children of the Resistance," which houses orphans from Tal al Zaatar and other locations. The GUPW's goal is to keep brothers and sisters together, so the home has what is called "adopted mothers," often women from Tal al Zaatar who have had special training, who live with family groups. The home provides education for children up to 6 years of age, at which point children began attending schools in the camps. Significantly, and this is true of other Palestinian institutions, Lebanese orphans also find a place in the home.

One of the oldest Palestinian orphanages, the School for Children's Happiness, established in 1958 by the Women's Union and now administered by Fateh in a location in the mountains above Beirut, rapidly expanded in the months after the war to accommodate 420 children in a school designed for 300. 70 of these are Lebanese children. In an interview with the director of the school, Abu Whalid, he stressed a philosophy of education that respected each child and tried to build his or her "self-pride" and develop "self-reliance," while also emphasizing cooperation. Unlike many orphans, Palestinian orphans, Abu Whalid said are treated as "children of the revolution" instead of "social problems." A child's problems are always discussed until the child can see for him or herself the

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solution. Bodily punishment is forbidden. Entering the office during the interview, a Moslem religious man from the nearby Lebanese village remarked: "Where else can you find such a human atmosphere? The big powers, with their destructive factories and their arms, have abandoned humanity."

In the classroom, the presence of American visitors was the catalyst for an excited political discussion. A class of 12 year olds fired a set of questions that demonstrated a sophisticated grasp of the world: "Will the U.S. get involved in another Viet Nam? Will America ever change its policy towards weaker nations? Will the American public remain sympathetic to Zionism?"

As is common in other Palestinian schools, students strongly expressed that their struggle was with Zionism, and not the Jewish people, with whom they expect to coexist in a democratic secular state. One teacher remarked that he has seen children correct their elders when they use the word "Jews" instead of "Zionists." Racism of any kind is opposed at the school. Different areas of the school are named after towns and villages in Palestine but when one visitor asked if children from the same town in Palestine were grouped together, a teacher replied strongly: "Of course not. That would be racism...and we've had quite enough of that." Children from the school have visited abroad, including visits to the Isle of Pines, a youth camp in Cuba. Posters of Fidel with Palestinian children are popular room decorations.

Concern for the children is not only the province of educators, but extends to Palestinian leadership as well. The PLO's Planning Center, in fact, a major center for developing strategy for the PLO, was responsible for the plan for kindergartens in Palestinian camps and for outlining the educational philosophy behind them. 10 kindergartens were established under this plan in 1976. As there are about 8000 Palestinian children in Lebanon between the ages of 4-6, there is a high priority on establishing more schools. Since most children attend UNWRA schools after the age of 6, schools that are limited both in resources and in their ability to cope with the special problems and needs of Palestinians, kindergartens are seen as especially important.

The Planning Center also started Dar al Fata al Arabi, the only specialized publishing house for children in the Arab world. Terming education "a dimension of life and not merely a preparation for it," Dar al Fata al Arabi, has published over a hundred colorful children's books that "aim at producing a revolutionary human being both in the national and social sphere." Books range from fables and folklore to history and a series of scientific books aimed

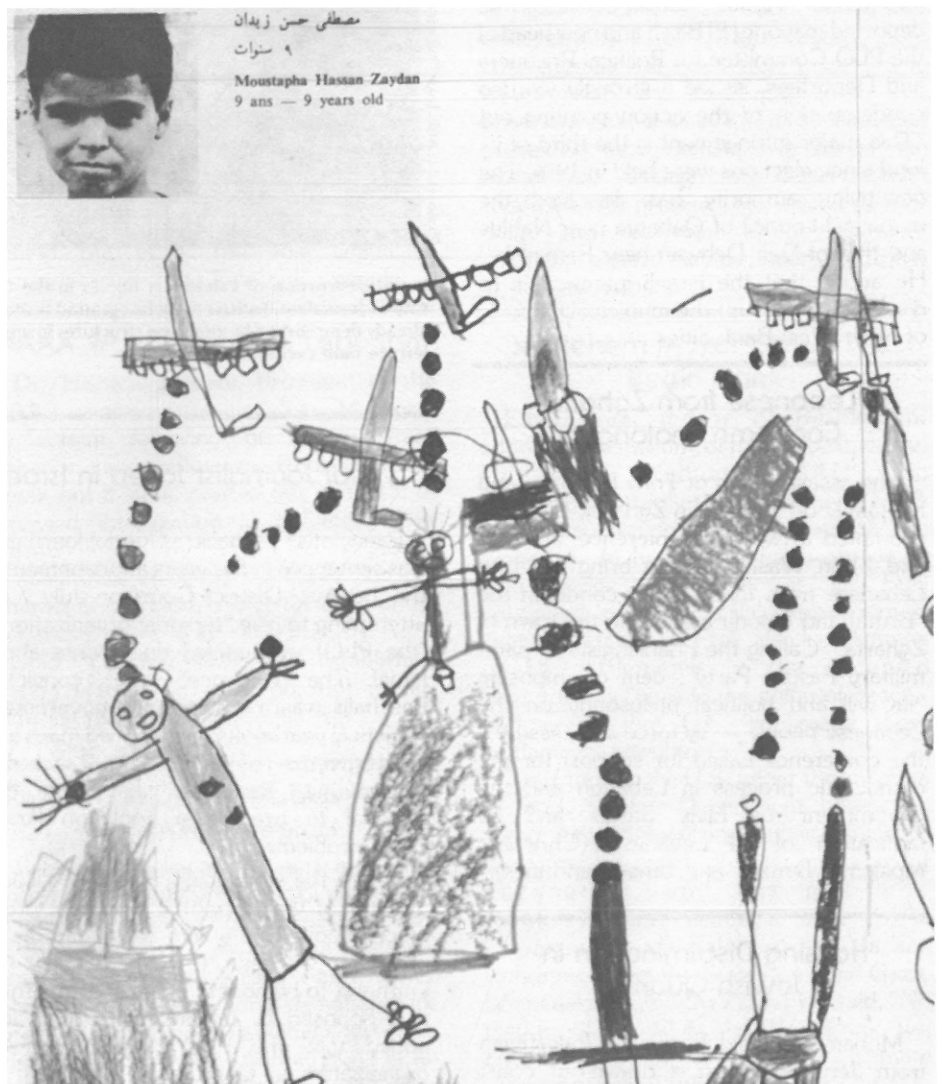
at the 11-15 year old group on the ecology of Arab countries. Books frequently feature children as heroes and stress cooperative values. One animal story, for example, written by a Palestinian poet, relates how a bird fell off his branch after a bad storm because all of his feathers had fallen out. A bird of prey was poised to attack the defenseless bird, but his friends came quickly to the rescue, each plucking out a feather from his own wing and enabling the bird to fly away.

25% of the books are distributed free, often to libraries and schools, with the rest designed to be inexpensive. In 1977, Dar al Fata al Arabi began producing monthly "wallpaper," lively posters with stories, mathematical puzzles, history and poems, that can be distributed to children who cannot afford books. Another new project is to allow children to design their own books.

Dar al Fata al Arabi began its work during the height of the civil war, a reminder that the progressive and humane values of the new Palestinian education are being pursued in the midst of a struggle for survival. Kindergartens, for example, must remain small, so children can be led quickly

into a shelter. Older students may have already participated in the defense of their homes and some have carried arms. In the afterschool and summer training camps run by the resistance groups, children combine lessons in folklore and music with elementary lessons of defense, and older children become familiar with small arms. For the reality for Palestinian children, is while they are being educated to build a peaceful future, their present is continually threatened. Most children interviewed will choose a service profession like teacher or nurse, but also add quickly: "And of course, I will be a fighter." Fighting to defend their people and return to Palestine is the highest expression of service.

Thus, the foundations of peace—opposition to racism and religious discrimination, willingness to coexist with the Jewish people, commitment to a peaceful Palestine—are found in the new generation, but it remains for all those concerned about the future of the Middle East to work for the conditions which can bring the possibility of peace nearer for a generation which has already suffered enough.



Drawing by survivor of Tal al Zaatar

Mayor of Beit Jalla Sentenced

Daoud Bishara, mayor of Beit Jalla, a Palestinian village near Bethlehem on the West Bank, was sentenced by the Israeli military court on June 29 to six months in prison for "attacking policemen", as reported June 30 in the *Jerusalem Post*. Three members of the Beit Jalla town council were given three months for the same offense. All were fined 10,000 Israeli pounds. The charge resulted from an alleged attempt by council members to prevent police from harrasing and searching Palestinians in a Beit Jalla cafe.

After considerable pressure from West Bank mayors and religious figures, the sentences were suspended with the requirement to report daily to the police station.

Both sentences and the dismissals from office are the first of their kind to be handed down to West Bank political officials, and are believed to be part of a policy of repressing West Bank political leadership. Abdul Jawad Saleh, the deported mayor of El Bireh and now head of the PLO Committee for Political Prisoners and Deportees, issued a strongly worded condemnation of the action pointing out "This major infringement is the third of its kind since elections were held in 1976. The occupying authority has dissolved the municipal council of Qabatyia near Nablus and that of Deir Debwan near Ramallah." He added that the Israeli intention is to dissolve and disrupt the municipal councils of other West Bank cities.

Lebanese from Zgharta Condemn Phalangists

The assassination of Tony Franjeh and his family on June 13 in Zgharta, Lebanon prompted a two day conference, June 20 and 21 in Washington to bring together Lebanese from that area to condemn the "Brutal and bloody assault on the town of Zgharta." Calling the Phalangists a "paramilitary Fascist Party", bent on imposing "its will and political philosophy on the Lebanese people — by force if necessary," the conference called for support for the democratic process in Lebanon and the government of Elias Sarkis and "a unification of all Lebanese (Christian, Moslems, Druzes and other minorities)."

Housing Discrimination in Jewish Quarter

Mohammed Said Borkan, a Palestinian from Jerusalem, lost a drawn-out court battle to purchase an apartment in the

Jewish Quarter, when the High Court of Justice denied his suit in early July. Borkan had lived on the site of the apartment since 1947, until the Israeli government expropriated the land after 1967. The Court did not deny the expropriation, but said it was for "legitimate public purposes," according to the *Jerusalem Post* of July 11. Borkan also argued that housing regulations which permit only new Jewish immigrants and Israelis who have served in the Army to buy apartments in the Quarter constitute illegal discrimination.



Photocredit: Milt Taam/Palestine/LNS

Israeli destruction of Palestinian homes in the Old City of Jerusalem. Entire empty foreground is site of already demolished homes. New structures in upper left are built exclusively for Israelis.

Cypriot Journalist Jailed in Israel

Panayiotis Paschalis, a Cypriot journalist, was sentenced to five years imprisonment at the Tel Aviv District Court on July 7 for attempting to give "terrorist organizations" (the PLO) unclassified documents about Israel. The "evidence" which convicted Paschalis was a collection of government statistical yearbooks, unclassified maps and photographs of Israel in Paschalis' possessions. Paschalis was using this material to prepare a book on Israeli social problems.

Before the sentencing, Kypros Psylides, director of the Cypriot government press office, took the stand to testify as a character witness. He said he knew the journalist to be honest, of leftist sympathies and opposed to terrorism. Psylides also added that the PLO is a recognized organization in Cyprus and is invited to government press conferences.

Paschalis' conviction on flimsy evidence along with the 5 year sentence received by U.S. citizen Terre Fleener and the 15 month citizen of U.S. citizen Sami Esmail, seem to be part of a campaign by the Israeli government to crack down on visitors to Israel and punish any sign of sympathy with the Palestinian people.

Kareem Khalaf Addresses Ramallah Convention

The mayor of Ramallah Kareem Khalaf, appealed to the 2000 Palestinian Americans attending the Ramallah Convention July 6-9 to support Palestinians in the occupied territories and called on the Palestinian community to support the PLO, which Palestinians in the occupied territories consider to be their representative. In a press conference, Ramallah Federation President Mike Saah affirmed the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and urged Americans to stop sending weapons to Israel. The convention received the following telegram, signed by PLO Executive Chairman Yasir Arafat:

"On the occasion of the Annual Convention of the Ramallah Federation in the United States of America, we have the greatest pleasure to extend to the president and to the members of the federation our warmest personal greetings and the greetings of the Palestine Liberation Organization, wishing your conference all success and progress in achieving its objectives. We assure you that the masses of your Palestinian brothers inside and outside Palestine will always hold dear to their hearts the beautiful hill-town of Ramallah as a symbol of the beauty of our homeland Palestine, a symbol of love and tolerance which will ultimately overcome all claims of racism and Zionist exclusivism.

Your Palestinian revolution which stood fast against the barbaric Zionist aggression on the camps of our Palestinian people and on the civilians of our brothers the Lebanese people in south Lebanon, and which defied with will and insistence the Zionist army which is armed with the most sophisticated American arms and equipments. Your revolution views with interest the role of your conference in propagating the just cause of the Palestinian struggle for freedom, justice and peace. You have always been faithful and hardworkers for the objectives of your Palestinian people's struggle for self-determination and for the establishment of an independent democratic state in our homeland Palestine.

All progress to your struggle.

Best wishes of success to your conference.

We will remain hand in hand in our revolution until victory."

Arafat Attends Children's Graduation Ceremony

"These young determined Palestinian children are the proof that our people will continue to struggle for freedom. They are the future generation of victory, and of the return to our beloved Palestine." Thus spoke Yassir Arafat, Chairman of the PLO Executive Committee during the graduation ceremony at the Palestinian children's school in Sonq El-Gharb. He distributed the diplomas and prizes to the graduating students who were mostly sons and daughters of Palestinian martyrs. Arafat added in his brief talk to the students: "Begin thought that he could destroy the PLO and the Palestinian people with 30,000 troops and sophisticated weapons in South Lebanon. But our people won the confrontation, expressing the will of the Arab nation that has defeated colonialism in the past. Palestinian children represent our people's future, our hope for freedom and for peace in Palestine." The children presented cultural and revolutionary songs and folk dances to the cheering audience.



Lebanese Rightists Build Support in U.S.

The Lebanese right has launched a campaign to create a base of support in the United States. Beginning with the tours of rightist leaders Dany Chamoun and Bashir Gemayel in the U.S., the Lebanese right now stages demonstrations and rallies. On July 6, 150 demonstrators from the American Lebanese League, a support group for the Lebanese right, rallied at the White House and moved to the Syrian Embassy, where a small group entered the Embassy, confronted Ambassador Sabah Kabbani and broke furniture. They accused Syria of "slaughtering Christians" and called for the killing of Palestinians. Outside the Embassy, the demonstrators attacked two Palestinian by-standers with clubs and rocks, injured one and damaged their car. They shouted that Palestinians were "animals," a cry which echoes a recent statement of leader Dany Chamoun, as quoted in *The Nation*. "The Palestinians are like animals in a zoo. They breed like rabbits and should have no say in Lebanese affairs. They should go to Jordan; let King Hussein kill them off."

This virulent racism demonstrates that the concern of the Lebanese right is not an end to bloodshed, but more massacres of Palestinians in Lebanon. Members of the American Lebanese League had earlier met with American Zionists, including the American Israeli Committee to discuss ways of cooperating together, especially in Congress, in an attempt to discredit the Palestinian people and the PLO.

Arafat Heads Delegation to GDR

A PLO delegation, headed by Yassir Arafat, visited the German Democratic Republic June 5 to June 7, a visit coinciding with a nation-wide week of "Solidarity with the Peoples of the Middle East who are Struggling against Imperialism and Colonialism." In a meeting with Arafat, Erich Honecker, President of the GDR, condemned Israeli aggression in Lebanon and affirmed that the GDR stands firmly behind the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

NAAA Warns of War in Lebanon

Dr. Hisham Sharabi, President of the NAAA, speaking at a July 14 press conference following his return from Lebanon, repeatedly warned that war would break out if Israel carried out its threat of renewed intervention in Lebanon. This would lead, he said, to regional conflagration involving the super powers. Sharabi also criticized U.S. handling of the Lebanese crisis and said that the U.S. should "concern itself with establishing lasting stability in Lebanon, not merely defusing the current political crisis."

Palestinian Dies in Nablus Prison of Medical Neglect

Palestinian political prisoners in Nablus prison have accused the Israeli authorities of maltreatment of prisoners. In a letter sent to the Nablus City Council, the prisoners accused Israeli of killing Farid Hafez Ghannan in Nablus prison. "He suffered for three years from hernia and did not receive any medical treatment. On May 28, 1978, he suffered extreme pain, but was given

ordinary pills at the prison's clinic. He died in the clinic and was left there for one hour, until one of the Palestinian prisoners, Ziyad al-Safadi, discovered his body. This is only one example of total neglect and maltreatment of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails," the letter explained. The prisoners held a sit-in for three days and presented their demands to the prison authorities, asking for better health treatment, the presence of a medical doctor daily, and the right to publish their complaint against Nablus prison authorities in the newspapers.

Bethlehem Mayor Condemns Begin Plan

Elias Freij, mayor of Bethlehem, addressing a meeting of the Arab-American University Graduates (AAUG) in Washington on July 14, condemned Begin's "autonomy" plan for the West Bank as "the biggest lie in history." "They want us to acknowledge the occupation as legal," Freij continued, in order that Palestinians remain "perpetual slaves." Freij also condemned Israeli settlements in the occupied territories as "nails in the coffin of peace," and noted that U.S. aid made these settlements possible.

Freij, touring the U.S. under the auspices of the U.S. State Department, believes in the strategy of mobilizing "public opinion" in the West on behalf of Palestinians under occupation, and has met with Congressional leaders and State Department officials, urging Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza. When asked about the PLO, Freij said, "No mayor, no official in the West Bank, will challenge the PLO, it is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinians." □

The Longest Walk: A Walk for Justice and Survival

In the nineteenth century, as immigrants from Europe poured into the American continent, the original inhabitants, the Native American peoples, suffered a continuing tragedy of massacre, dislocation and destruction of their way of life. One feature of this attack on Indian tribes, planned by the U.S. government and carried out by the U.S. Cavalry was the displacement of tribes from lands the government desired for settlement to "reservations," concentration camps on bleak land the government deemed undesirable. Native Americans were forced to walk, often at gunpoint, for hundreds of miles to relocation sites — without adequate food, water or shelter. The forced removal of tribes from the Eastern United States to Oklahoma alone resulted in 4,000 deaths.

On July 15, 1978, another kind of walk by Native Americans, the Longest Walk, arrived in Washington, D.C. Over 30 Native American organizations — including most surviving Indian tribes and nations — sponsored the walk, begun in San Francisco on February 11 both to commemorate past forced marches and to point out a new attack on Indian people and their way of life. "We walked," one marcher commented, "because we have no voice." At this time, 10 bills are before Congress which undermine Indian sovereignty by denying fishing, water and land rights and by breaking treaties, and undercutting tribal jurisdiction. Native Americans believe the reason for this legislation lies in the rich deposits of minerals and oil on Native American land. Just as U.S.

government in the 19th century seized rich farming land from Native Americans, so in this century, it covets these resources.

The Longest Walk — and five days of demonstrations and lobbying in Washington — was directed against this new attack, but also contained a broader meaning. One speaker remarked: "They marched all the way from California, not on behalf of themselves, but for the four colors of man — white, black, red and yellow." Participants saw their walk as a "march for survival" for humanity and for the Earth itself. The Indian way of life — called "the last unpolluted thing in America" — teaches respect for nature and sees humans as "caretakers" of their Mother, the Earth, a view diametrically opposed to the current American rapaciousness towards the environment. Phillip Deer, an Indian religious leader, warned the assembled crowd: "When your grandparents and children sicken from drinking the water, think what could have been done at this moment," and urged Americans to join hands with people around the world and affirm the "equality of life," so that "our grandchildren will see the green of the trees."

Participants in the Longest Walk also stressed that the Walk was a "spiritual walk," fulfilling Indian prophecies of a time when tribes gather from the four directions of the Earth. In this spirit, a sacred pipe was carried at the front of the Walk for the 3000 mile journey, and religious elders and chiefs

were prominent as spokespersons for the Walk. Over 70% of the walkers were women and children.

The Longest Walk welcomed support and participation from non-Indians. Scores of activists, legislators and city councils endorsed the Walk, including the cities of St. Louis, Missouri, Los Angeles, California and Minneapolis, Minnesota. Speakers at the rally gave special greetings and honor to Black people, who "suffer the same oppression" as Native Americans, and noted support from all groups of Americans. Dick Gregory ended his speech by saying "thank you for letting me come and address my real landlords." Gregory also added a note sounded by many speakers who pointed to the greed, waste and destructiveness of 20th century America saying: "This might be the last walk for America if this nation doesn't get hip."

The demonstration included a group of Palestinians carrying the Palestinian flag to show solidarity with the Native American cause. Later in the week, a group of Palestinians went to the site where the Longest Walk was encamped and shared Palestinian food with a group of Indian leaders and activists. Palestinians and Native Americans exchanged ideas and songs and several speeches by Native Americans affirmed the close ties between the two peoples — both pushed off their land, suffering from settler colonialism, living in camps under inhuman conditions, and now struggling for a peaceful and just future.

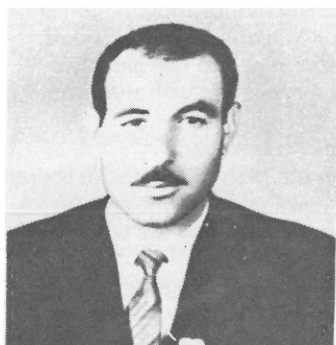
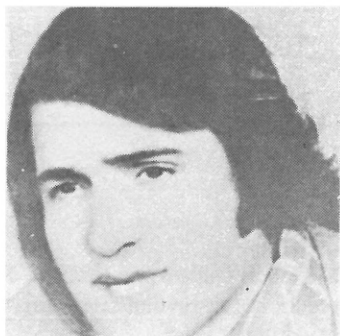


Rooted in Palestine: A Talk with Um Ali

Following are excerpts from an interview by Palestine magazine in Beirut, with Um Ali, an elderly Palestinian woman who fled from Nazareth during the 1948 war and has lived in Palestinian camps in Lebanon since that time. Um Ali remembers the struggle in the 1930s, the 1948 war and the present struggle:

The 1930s

"We were fighting against the British Mandate authorities who used to treat us as if we were slaves. At that time, the fighters



Sons of Um-Ali, martyrs for Palestine

were known as "Thowar," (revolutionaries). The British used to storm our city, along with other cities and villages, and round up men and beat them. Once I saw them parading some men along the street with ropes fitted to their necks, and others they would push with the bayonets of their gun and ride on their backs as if they were donkeys. Most men left for the mountains and joined the "Thowar."

"At the time of the 1936 rebellion I was thirteen years old. My father was one of the "Thowar" who were outlawed. They used to receive food supplies secretly from their fellow citizens. Many times I did this work. I used to carry ammunition to them."

1948

"We were living together, Muslims, Christians and Jews as Palestinian citizens. It is Britain that is to blame for the immigration of Western Jews (the Zionists). The British mandate authorities helped them form their military organizations, the Haganah, Stern Gang and the Irgun and supplied them with various weapons.

"No less a blame, however, should be borne by the Arab regimes who sent the so-called 'Arab Army for the Salvation of Palestine'. It turned out as if that army had

been sent to Palestine to restrict the Palestinian movement so as to give way to the Zionists peacefully, and let them capture Palestinian land they had failed to get in the fighting. They forced the Palestinian to join this army and fight an 'organized war'

"It is impossible to forget, son," Um Ali added after a sigh, "I will never forget that moment on June 17, 1948. It happened that Nimer Abu Na'aj, an ex-officer in the border guards, from the village of Saffouria, came to our house in a panic. He told us that the Zionists had captured Shafaamr and that they were shelling Saffouria.

"At that moment, Nimer took off his Kaffiyah, (Palestinian Head scarf), and started waving it towards Saffouria, saying 'Goodbye Saffouria, I pledge to return.'

On the Present Palestinian Struggle

"I proudly say that I had three sons martyred on the road to liberation. I consider them three roses planted on the path back to Palestine. Two of them, Ali and Ahmed, are my own sons, the third, Mohammed, is not mine, but I brought him up with my sons since he was thirteen years old, after his own mother's death. My fourth son, Mahmoud, was wounded in the eight days war, last March, confronting the Israeli fighter aircraft when they tried to attack our camps around Beirut.

"We have no choice but to resist and fight. We have to defend ourselves in the camps and to liberate our land, Palestine. There are many conspiracies against us which try to liquidate our revolution and cause. Israel is not our sole enemy; its agents in Lebanon are also our enemies. All our people have to be trained, even our old men, women, and children. I, myself, am trained, and have a pistol and a Klashnikov.

"I am not interested in what some women do, 'armed' with their handbags, and paying visits. I spend my time with my sons, the fighters, in their base. There is no military commando base that I have not been to. They call me 'mother Um Ali'. Whenever there has been a battle, I have been with them. I go there with the cars carrying ammunition and foodstuffs. I look after the wounded and take them to the back lines, so that they can be taken to the hospital. My best times are when I am with the fighters. Really, I will be with them until I am martyred, or until I return to Palestine with them."□



Um-Ali

The struggle in Africa and the Middle East against traditional colonialism, settler colonialism, imperialism and indigenous reaction has common historical roots. Liberation movements in *terra media*, seeking social justice, freedom and self-determination, have, especially in recent years, come to realize the commonality in

their struggle as being the same battle, against the same enemy, for the same cause. There is no case in which this is more true than in the struggle in Zimbabwe and Palestine where ZAPU and ZANU of the Patriotic Front in the former, and the PLO in the latter, have waged a fierce struggle against settler colonialism and apartheid. It

is not surprising, then, that poets of both peoples should express this political, historical bond in their poetic idiom. The following is a poem by the Palestinian writer and poet, Fawaz Turki, recited recently at the Solidarity Conference for Palestine and Zimbabwe in Atlanta, Georgia.



In the Night Sky of Zimbabwe

In the brown marshes,
the storms remember
the dark waters and the dry grass
that they could not tame.
And in the outback,
in the back of beyond,
in placeless places,
freedom fighters from
the people of Zimbabwe
talk to each other.
Their whispers are the only sound,
in the comfort of darkness,
in the night sky of Zimbabwe.

★ ★ ★ ★

Soon in the valley,
children will visit the colonial cow,
dying of fever
and the terminal disease
known as the *mission culturel*
and *apartheid*.
And in the backyard of African homes,

settler colonialism
will lie in winter puddles
like cigarette butts in the rain.
Everyday the blood of memory
and the passion of dreams
are delivered by the midwife of revolution.
From now on children will rise,
like birds,
from the womb of Africa,
and fly down the dirt tracks,
along the lakes,
where the water no longer trembles.

★ ★ ★ ★

Elsewhere in the Third World,
where they have emptied out our
pockets of our names and our humanity,
and left us a collection of shrivelled up
memories
and the pungence of nameless pain. . .
elsewhere in the Third World,

there are freedom fighters
lying in marshes
and bushes and valleys and hills,
singing a chorus of revolutionary fury
at the cruel finger
of ten centuries of oppression. . .
elsewhere in the Third World
the whispers of freedom fighters
are reaching out for tough argument,
and midwives are delivering babies,
who will continue to rise like birds,
who will be satisfied with the ravenousness
of vision,
like lovers in foreplay,
touching the flesh of dreams of liberation,
in Zimbabwe and the whole of Africa,
in the West Bank and the whole of Palestine.
Elsewhere in the Third World,
oppressors will disintegrate,
breathing asthmatically,
at the stubborn pull
of our angry gods.

cannot be resolved without, or at the cost of, the other since both are derived from the same historical dynamic. In other words, if the struggle for Palestine is the cause, the Arab-Israeli dispute is the effect.

It is very difficult to see how a resolution of the mideast dispute could be arrived at without addressing the problem of the Palestinians. For even the unlikely event that a settlement between Egypt and Israel, or even one between the other Arab states and Israel, was achieved, that did not address itself to the Palestinians, the Palestine conflict would remain as a geopolitically de-stabilizing center of energy, a trigger for new and more conflict.

Today, the main thrust of Israel's approach to a settlement, if Begin's racist "self-rule" plan can be called an "approach" or a "settlement," is to deny the existence of a Palestinian problem and reduce the Mideast conflict to a question of a territorial dispute between Israel and the Arab states, thereby reducing a 60 year old national struggle between Zionism and Palestinian nationalism to one of its mere peripheral components.

This Israeli insistence is rooted in the ethos of Zionism as a movement dedicated to territorial expansionism and settler colonialism. (Menachem Begin, a follower of the neo-fascist faction of Zionism founded by Jabotinsky, has campaigned throughout his life on the theme that not only the whole of Palestine, including West Bank and Gaza, are part of "Eretz Israel", but also the whole of Jordan. The slogan of the Herut party,

Begin's group, remains to this day "Two Sides of the River Jordan.")

The most depressing and irrational aspect to the current momentum for a settlement — and one would have to stretch the definition of "momentum" to describe the dribble that is nowadays passing for "peace plans" — is the emphasis that commentators, especially in this country, are placing on "West Bank Palestinians" as "negotiating partners," as if there are no Palestinians elsewhere and as if Palestinians do not have their own chosen representatives to negotiate on their behalf.

This is a trend harking back to the *status quo ante* of the 1950's, when the Palestinians were dismissed as "refugees."

The historic rights of the Palestinian people and their historic rights as a nation, did not end with the British Mandate of 1948. They did not end with the Jordan or Lebanon crisis or any other major events in the Middle East. They will not end, be subordinated or dismissed by any changes in the region — since these are rooted in the very core and essence of the Mideast dispute.

One basic, irreducible, immutable fact remains: the Palestinians, as one people, whether in the West Bank/Gaza or in exile, have veto power over any settlement in the Mideast conflict. And any settlement of the Mideast conflict that is negotiated over the heads of the Palestinians, and without the PLO, is worthless. It certainly will not be that durable settlement that everybody is allegedly seeking. The sooner the U.S.

government, the leaders of the Zionist regime in Palestine, and other interested parties, recognize this fact and act upon it, the sooner peace and justice will come to Palestine and the whole Mideast.



Child with Palestinian flag in New York city Solidarity rally.

Inam Ra'ad. . . (Continued from page 3)

"underdevelopment" of the country by Western imperialism. Israel's "protection" of the Christian sects in Lebanon parallels similar strategies by the French and British earlier in the century for gaining influence in the area by "protecting" religious minorities. In this context, Ra'ad criticized U.S. foreign policy in its attempt to shore up reactionary religious alliances in Lebanon. He commented that "we are still part of the strategy of preserving the mineral resources in the area. We are part of the security of the oil baron." Against this domination by the West, Ra'ad posed a vision of "national independence" for Lebanon and said: "We refuse to be treated as a means. We are a nation and a free people."

Unfortunately, this vision of an independent, democratic and peaceful Lebanon stands in grave danger at the

moment. On July 5, Israeli Major General Shlomo Gazit warned Syria that Israel might intervene if fighting between the rightists and the Arab peace-keeping force continued. This threat was emphasized by seven low-flying Israeli Kfir jets flying in formation over Beirut. Gazit also said that Lebanon would be considered a "confrontation state" if the Syrians succeeded in curbing the rightist militias. Such threats emphasize the danger of a new regional war breaking out in the area, triggered by the situation in Lebanon. On July 10, *Filastin Al-Thawra*, the official organ of the PLO, declared that the situation "bears one of the most serious threats to Arab security" and compared the situation now to the climate which "prevailed on the eve of the creation of the Zionist state in 1948."

War in the Middle East is a threat not only

to the peoples of the region, but a threat to international peace. Yet as leaders like Ra'ad call for a democratic forum for Lebanese to work through their own problems, Israel continues to threaten new intervention. And while the Lebanese National Movement stands for unity and supports the central government, Major Sami Shidiak, one of two rightist officers in South Lebanon who received key positions from the Israeli Army in the wake of its withdrawal, was quoted in the Washington Post of July 10 as saying: "I can blow up the whole situation. . . We are not the army of anyone. We are the army of our own security." Inam Ra'ad came to the U.S. to ask for "moral and political support" from Americans in constructing a peaceful Lebanon, based on democratic principles. In the light of recent events, his plea becomes more important than ever.

LITERATURE LIST

The following books, pamphlets and posters are available from the Palestine Information Office. Bulk rates are available upon request.

Richard Stevens and A. El-Messiri, *Israel and South Africa* \$4.00

A. El-Messiri, *The Land of Promise: A Critique of Political Zionism* \$4.00

Peoples Press, *Our Roots Are Still Alive: The Story of the Palestinian People* \$3.50

Felicia Langer, *These Are My Brothers* (in Arabic) \$4.00

Fawaz Turki, *The Disinherited* \$4.00

Permanent Committee for Palestinian Deportees, *Enforced Exile* \$1.00

Free Palestine, *Tal Al-Zaatar, The Fight Against Fascism* \$4.00

Paintings by Ismail Shamout...\$1.00 each

Palestine In Perspective: Paintings From 1880\$1.00 each

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Zeinab Sha'ath: *Resist: Palestinian Songs* (on tape) \$4.00

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