

## THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION AND THE MIDDLE EAST

By Norton Mezvinsky

As recently as a few weeks ago, numerous concerned observers, including myself, believed and stated that certain changes and developments in the United States' Middle Eastern policies would almost surely occur shortly after Jimmy Carter and his Administration took office. Not only did intelligence and news leaks indicate this likelihood and not only were some of us so informed directly by those within Carter's top ranks, but recent developments seemed almost to insure change and development.

In the December 1976 issue of *Israel and Palestine I* wrote:

"The incoming of the new Carter administration and the contingent shake-up inside the State Department presage change and development in US Middle East policy as directed towards the Arab-Israeli conflict. The present realities almost dictate that change and development must occur . . . Carter and his staff are considering various possibilities and alternatives for US Middle East policy. They believe Middle East moves need to come rather soon after Carter assumes his leadership . . . The following scenario for US policy towards peace in the ME could develop:

(1) The US Government would begin to press—perhaps in conjunction with the Soviet Union—for Geneva-type meetings of all Jewish-Arab antagonists including the PLO, representing the Palestinians.

(2) The US Government, following its November 10th, United Nations' vote, condemning the State of Israel for certain discriminatory and oppressive practices in the occupied Territories, will take more active steps to help protect the rights of the inhabitants of territories, occupied by Israel.

(3) The US Government will press the Israeli government to retreat from, i.e. give up, occupied territories—without first specifying which territories; if, on the other hand, Arab nation-states and the PLO will simultaneously and publicly underline their acceptance of a sovereign State of Israel in the Middle East, without at first specifying boundaries.

(4) The US Government will press Arab state governments to accept the positions of point No. (3).

(5) The Administration and the State Department will establish contact with the PLO. (The Arafat-PLO leadership would probably agree to this.) Official recognition of the PLO as being the official representative of the Palestinians should follow at a later date, if and when positive progress has occurred. The US government would hereby have the opportunity to directly exchange ideas, and have de facto, if not de jure contact with the PLO. The US government might then be able to influence the PLO leadership to recognize publicly and officially the sovereign State of

Israel, if the Israel government would accept the creation of a West Bank-Gaza sovereign state and independent Palestinian state and make some legitimate offer to solve the problem of Palestinian refugees."

Washington political columnist and *Washington Post* editor, Stephen Rosenfield, wrote last summer:

"Barring a shift by Israel—regardless of who wins the November election in the U.S., a wracking American-Israeli showdown is near."

Mark Bruzonski, a perceptive Middle East analyst, made a similar assessment in *The Nation* on December 11, 1976:

"The Middle East war clock is again ticking and a 'year of decision' is ahead for President elect Carter . . .

The foreign policy of domestic politics will now have to be met by unambiguous Carter assurances that he will follow basically the course set by Kissinger since the Yom Kippur war, i.e. to maneuver for an over-all settlement which would include:

Phased Israeli withdrawal to approximately the 1967 borders.

Creation of a Palestinian "entity" or state.

A novel arrangement for a united but dually administered Jerusalem.

Various forms of security arrangements and 'guarantees' for Israel.

Arab recognition of the Jewish state.

If Carter fails to provide such assurances within a few months, serious apprehensions about his intentions will seem to be confirmed. His apparent shift in the final weeks of the campaign from 'even-handed-

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ness' to pre-Yom Kippur war pro-Israeli attitudes would then threaten an unpredictable deterioration of Arab ties with the United States, renewed Arab-Soviet intrigue, further oil supply and price problems, and preparations for war in the manner of the 1970-1973 period."

*The above assessments now appear wrong on balance.* Obvious personality changes will occur, the most significant of which is the replacement of Henry Kissinger by Cyrus Vance as Secretary of State and of Gerald Ford by Jimmy Carter as the major architect of United States policy. The Kissinger era, in which the shuttling doctor of superman ego unsuccessfully attempted to change by his individual approaches various perceptions held by Arab and Israeli leaders, will officially have come to an end. Neither Vance as the administrator nor Carter as the policymaker will even attempt to continue or to duplicate Kissinger's stylized approach. The personality changes, however, will not, in and of themselves, result in substantive policy changes or developments. There will even be a major personality continuance, serving as a kind of bridge or transition insofar as Middle Eastern policy is concerned. This continuance is in the form of Alfred Atherton who, upon request, has agreed to continue as the Assistant Secretary of State for Middle East affairs for at least six months after the Carter Administration takes office. Mr. Atherton has indicated that he would be interested in an ambassadorial position thereafter; rumors exist that he may become Ambassador to Israel. He might, however, stay on as the Assistant Secretary after the six-month period. The final decision rests upon what Middle Eastern policies may be developing, the extent to which Mr. Atherton agrees with them, and what other persons, who might be wanted for this position, would be interested in accepting the challenges of the job. The importance of the Middle East for the Carter Administration is illustrated by its concern about the Assistant Secretary for this world area.

Personality changes then will occur, and a major personality will continue for at least awhile. Why then were the previous assessments wrong? Or more to the point: Why are change and development in the United States' Middle Eastern policies not likely to occur in the Carter Administration unless they are provoked and greatly pressured for? The answer is at once both simple and



U.S. President Jimmy Carter  
Newsweek Photo

complex. The answer is also multifaceted but still revolves around two major interconnected points:

(1) As already stated, Jimmy Carter wishes to make his own policy decisions. He has been influenced strongly by the government of the state of Israel and by his perception(s) of that state. Following the presidential campaign, during which he increasingly took extreme, pro-Israeli government positions, Carter did call upon numerous people to offer advice to him on Middle Eastern policy. This approach or technique suggested that he was open to various considerations. His direct and rather frank criticisms of Henry Kissinger and the foreign policy he represented indicated that he might move in other ways. The appointments of Vance as Secretary of State and of Brzezinski as head of the National Security Council, both of whom would continually advise on Middle Eastern policy, were also indications of possible policy changes. Some of Vance's closest and most respected friends have views on the Middle East that are at odds on many substantive points with official Israeli policy. Brzezinski's publicly and privately stated views on various aspects of Middle Eastern policy also run counter to official Israeli policy. Note, for example, Brzezinski's view, stated in 1975, that a settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict would probably have to include a PLO-dominated state. (It should be noted here that some political

commentators now suggest that Brzezinski may by now have changed his mind in regard to this latter point.)

Nevertheless, in the last three to four weeks Carter and his top people have given assurances to Rabin, to other top Israeli governmental officials and to certain key American Jewish leaders that they will support Israel and Israeli positions, at least to the same extent and probably more than has been the case in the past. The incoming Carter Administration has attempted to make this clear while at the same time giving other indications that it will attempt to help bring some of the involved parties in the Arab-Israeli conflict to discussions and to the bargaining table. The Israeli government, such as it is in this critical period before the new elections, is not opposed to discussion as long as that discussion is on its terms. One of the major Israeli terms is that the PLO not be the Palestinian representative in discussions at Geneva or anywhere else. Without having made a final commitment on this position and after gyrating back and forth, the Carter camp at this time favors talks and discussions without the PLO and with the Palestinian issue being discussed, and perhaps some Palestinians included in a Jordanian delegation that would attend and participate in the discussions. The recent expressions along such lines by Rabin, Peres and other Israeli leaders—some of whom are or will be running against one another in the election—are presently approved by the Carter camp. Carter and his people have been influenced on this point by the Israeli Establishment. The small handful of Israeli politicians who argue for PLO representation and participation in discussions with Israel have not influenced Carter or his people in the least in recent weeks. Carter representatives have made this point to key Arab ambassadors to the United States and to the United Nations in recent weeks. Not only have some of these ambassadors, other than those of Jordan, told me about this Carter position directly, but they have also stated that they had not voiced strong disapproval. In my opinion, this is significant. Carter and his people now have the distinct impression that the leaders of those Arab states they consider most important will not pressure them on the inclusion of the PLO.

Some observers and, as will be discussed below, the present PLO leadership believe to the contrary that Arab

leaders in a united Arab front will indeed pressure by word, and if necessary by deed, the United States government to emphasize the inclusion of the PLO in all peace discussions and to push the Israelis to accept an independent Palestinian state under PLO leadership. Certain Arab leaders will exert strong pressure in such directions only if the PLO at its upcoming Palestine National Council meeting officially and clearly adopts a specific program advocating the desire for a Palestinian West Bank, Gaza state that would exist side by side with and would recognize (not necessarily approve) the existence of the sovereign state of Israel with its pre-June 1967 borders.

Carter does not have a firm position here. He will not change policy unless really pushed hard by Arab nation-state leaders.

In making his own policy decisions on the Arab-Israeli conflict, Carter is also greatly influenced by his religious convictions. One of these is that the state of Israel is indeed the land God promised the Jews. It has admittedly been difficult for some of us in the United States concerned with the Middle East to focus adequately on this belief. In other words, we have erroneously minimized the importance of such of Jimmy Carter's pronouncements as: "I have an absolute total commitment as a human being, as an American, as a religious person, to Israel . . . Israel is the fulfillment of Biblical prophecy . . . ." The importance of such a statement should be clear, especially when combined with the psychological complex of feelings about Jews and their oppression, feelings that have provided a goodly part of the contextual framework for support of the state of Israel in the United States since the state came into being.

(2) The vanguard of the most hawkish Israeli attitude in the United States is the majority of top echelon Jewish Zionist organizational leadership in the United States. This is an indisputable fact. Those who argue otherwise either don't know the facts or are knowingly telling an untruth. This American Jewish leadership has created and continues to present the greatest obstacle to change and to what some consider would be positive development in the United States' Middle Eastern policy. A large percentage of this leadership backed Carter in the election and is now exerting steady pressure. Carter and his people feel the pressure and are im-

pressed by it. They are concerned about Jewish votes and about Jewish political-financial support. They believe the Jewish organization leaders who tell them that they—the leaders—represent the overwhelming number of American Jews, and that if need be, they could turn Jewish support away from Carter. These leaders, who are prone to take most extreme positions largely because they are rarely challenged by American presidents, secretaries of state, members of Congress or other governmental officials, have been successful in the past with other presidential administrations. Their scare tactics are currently succeeding with the incoming Carter Administration as well.

The scare tactics are sometimes utilized to insure that information concerning the formulation or the influencing of Middle Eastern policies is always available to the American Jewish Zionist leadership and to the Zionist lobby in Washington, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC). This is too often done quietly and under cover: certain individuals are nominated for and usually acquire certain sensitive positions. This is rarely publicized. So it is that one of the four individuals recently appointed to a State Department job as a member of the Vance inner circle is Dan Spiegel, a



Israeli General M. Peled  
Photo by Bill Aron

former aide to Senator Hubert Humphrey and a person who reports regularly to AIPAC. Spiegel is Vance's special assistant and, as such, will probably see and even discuss with Vance most, if not all, serious Middle East matters.

One current example of both hawkish extremism and scare tactics utilization by American Jewish Zionist leaders is the steady barrage being made upon the Carter team against any change in United States policy towards the PLO. This barrage began in November 1976 after these American Jewish Zionist leaders as well as the Israeli Embassy learned that two PLO representatives from Beirut had come to the United States, had spoken with some other American Jewish Zionist leaders (in mostly confidential meetings) and had carried through plans to register a PLO office in Washington, whose opening would hopefully be forthcoming. These activities became known almost simultaneously with the revelations about meetings in Paris between PLO representatives and some Israeli political figures who are regarded as Zionist doves—including General Matityahu Peled, Ariele Eliav, Uri Avnery and Meir Pail. Moreover, at this same time various people in the United States and elsewhere, as well as Arab governmental spokesmen, were arguing and pressuring for the PLO's being invited to and participating in any Geneva talks or "peace" discussions involving parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Sensing that important people in the Carter camp and perhaps Carter himself were considering a change in the official United States position of non-recognition and no official contact with the PLO, some top American Jewish Zionist leaders began the barrage. (It is also clear that the Rabin government through Ambassador to the United States Dinitz urged these leaders to begin and maintain the barrage.)

The "lead gunner" in the barrage was—and still is—Rabbi Alexander Schindler, the head of the President's Conference of American Jewish Organizations. Schindler has contacted the Carter camp, as well as Kissinger and Ford. Schindler, together with others, again and again attacked the PLO as a terrorist organization consisting of criminals who have not in the past nor do not now truly represent the Palestinian people. He argued that the United States policy towards the PLO not change, that the United States government oppose the participation of the PLO at any peace talks and that the registration of a PLO office in Washington (to which was attached a Mafia analogy) be rescinded. Schindler and his cohorts purported to speak on be-

half of American Jewry. They also criticized and attacked the meeting of some American Jewish Zionist leaders with the PLO representatives.

In one respect, this anti-PLO barrage did reveal publicly a complexity within the ranks of American Jewish organizational leaders. Without necessarily advocating any change in United States policy towards the PLO and without



U.S. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance  
Newsweek Photo

taking any position whatsoever on the opening of a PLO office in Washington, some American Jewish leaders—from the top leadership as well as from lower echelons—had met with the two PLO representatives in New York, Washington and other places. In and of themselves, those meetings were on balance positive. Both the Jewish leaders and the PLO representatives came away from the respective meetings with the feeling that such discussions could at least begin to pave the way towards understanding and even peaceful resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict. When faced by Schindler's adverse criticism of their having attended such meetings, a few of the Jewish leaders responded publicly to the criticism and indicated that the American Jewish leadership was not monolithic in its views on this point. The internal disagreement was significant enough to prompt a front-page *New York Times* story by Bernard Gwertzman on December 30, 1976, entitled "American Jewish Leaders Are Split Over Issue of Meeting with the PLO."

A few American Jewish leaders, highlighted by Rabbi Arnold Wolf, chairman of Breira—a relatively new and

significant "renegade" American Jewish organization—argued in favor of discussions with the PLO. (Breira previously had called not only for discussions with the PLO but also for United States' recognition of the PLO and for PLO participation at all peace talks.)

Now worried that people in the Carter camp and others in the government might be impressed by the lack of American Jewish unity on this issue and might be encouraged to move ahead towards advocacy of change in official policy towards the PLO, increasing numbers of top American Jewish organizational leaders openly attacked all contacts with the PLO and argued that the great majority of American Jews, whom these leaders supposedly represented, opposed any change in official United States policy on the PLO. Richard Cohen, executive director of and spokesman for the American Jewish Congress; Bernice S. Tannebaum, president of Hadassah, the leading American Jewish women's organization, with a membership of over 350,000; leaders of B'nai Brith, the largest American Jewish organization; and many others led the renewed attack. They sent letters and telegrams to Carter, Carter people, Ford and Kissinger. They also wrote letters-to-the-editor that were published in the *New York Times* and in other American newspapers.

American Jewish newspapers also added to the barrage of anti-PLO antagonism. The column by Joseph Ben-Samuel in the *Intermountain Jewish News* (Denver, Colorado) of November 28, 1976, entitled "The PLO in Washington and Kissinger Says He's Helpless to Stop It," was typical of many such articles that appeared in papers published throughout the nation. Ben-Samuel wrote:

"The PLO is impossible. It consists of hijackers, thugs, cold-blooded murderers and smooth talking intellectuals committed to the same goal as their more attractively criminal comrades."

One highly placed individual in the Carter camp told this writer: "There may be some slight split in American Jewish organizational ranks over the whole question of the PLO, but the front line antagonism still seems to be holding together and to be blasting forth. It simply scares us."

Another current example of both hawkish extremism and scare tactic utilization by American Jewish leaders

is the sudden change in attitude by some Carter people towards consideration of oppressive Israeli governmental activities in the territories occupied since 1967. Using mostly materials collected by Professor Israel Shahak, chairman of the Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights, and Advocate Felicia Langer, this writer interested some Carter people in some of these oppressive Israeli governmental activities, as well as in the increased number of Jewish settlements in the territories. Carter's people were prepared to investigate those activities in depth and to report directly to Carter after his inauguration as President. After admittedly being castigated by some American Jewish Zionist leaders for even expressing interest in an investigation along these lines, these same Carter people asked this writer not to press them further. The personal example cited here is but one of many that could be cited.

Certain developments in both the Israeli and PLO scenes could conceivably be viewed as hopeful signs that positive changes are occurring and that these changes may not only influence and bring changes in United States policy but may also in and of themselves partially pave the road towards peaceful resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict. At first glance, the aforementioned talks between PLO representatives and Israeli Zionist doves, which are irregularly on-going, together with some indications that increasing numbers of Israeli Jews, Israeli leaders, Palestinian Arabs and PLO leaders favor such talks, are hopeful signs. A closer look, however, reveals increasing expressions of hardened antagonism to such talks, especially among major Israeli leaders, who are jockeying with one another in the pre-election time period, and PLO leaders, who are preparing to attend the Palestine National Council meeting. The public allegation by one of the Zionist doves, Matityahu Peled, that a PLO representative had agreed to a document by which the principles outlined by Zionist doves created a basis for peaceful resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict gave hard-liners the argumentative ammunition that agreement on such lines constituted a treasonous sellout to Zionism. Moreover, certain PLO denials caused many Israelis to scoff at the attempts of Zionist doves to deal with the PLO. From the American vantage point, the bickering and antagonism engendered

by such preliminary talks has to date almost totally obliterated any positive value in the fight to convince Carter or the American people that power centers in either Israel or the PLO have changed their basic perceptions of one another.

If successful, the PLO's attempts to open a Washington office, to engage Americans, including American Jewish Zionist leaders, in positive dialogue and to emphasize a reasonably moderate approach could influence Carter and his Middle Eastern policy. The possibilities for such an influence still exist, especially in the interrelation of this attempt to promised official changes in PLO policy that have been strongly hinted at by certain PLO leaders. At the time of this writing, however, this creative and brave attempt by the PLO in Washington seems stymied because of American bad faith and State Department mishandling, which have resulted in insult to the PLO. The



Prime Minister Y. Rabin  
Wide World Photos

changes hinted at in PLO policy, e.g., the emphasis upon the acceptance of a West Bank-Gaza state and the recognition of the state of Israel's existence — both of which have actually occurred in some pragmatic ways — may still not be formally declared and/or officially accepted at the Palestine National Council meeting, if and when it occurs, or by the PLO leadership soon thereafter.

Once hopeful signs of development, which could in various ways effect positive changes in Israeli policy, have rapidly faded. The Abu Daoud affair in

France, regardless of any explanation about how and/or why *he* came to the funeral in Paris on behalf of the PLO, has greatly undercut any moderate approach(es) toward the PLO in Israel, the United States and other places. At present, the PLO leadership seems to be pinning most of its hopes on what the leaders of Arab nation-state governments *say* they will do for the Palestinians. Such an approach has proven to be disastrous for the Palestinians in the past. Many Arab nation-state leaders have in the past disappointed the Palestinians; some leaders have turned against and killed Palestinians. Certainly, the PLO leadership knows this. And certainly, the PLO has in the recent past relied upon and attempted to manipulate Arab nation-state governments, while at the same time attempting to play its own game. This procedure is the most logical one for the PLO leadership to follow vis-a-vis the United States' extremely bad former and present policy.

As stated above, certain Arab nation-state governments, especially Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Kuwait, can most likely affect Carter's Middle Eastern policy. They can, of course, have such an influence because of their oil power and its potential political clout. To be effective, these specific governments, perhaps in conjunction with Syria and Jordan, must list certain specifics. Israeli withdrawal from occupied territories can certainly be expected to be one such specific. Investigation of oppressive Israeli practices in the occupied territories could easily and reasonably be another. United States agreement to PLO participation at Geneva or at any peace talks could be yet another, as could United States agreement to the creation of a Palestinian state entity. The danger exists, however, that those governments may again, as they have in the past, be misled by vague American promises. Such promises, usually not fulfilled, have often sufficed in the past. To be effective, Arab governmental insistence needs to be constant and at times even threatening.

If provoked by lasting Arab nation-state pressure, the Carter Administration would most likely learn quickly that it could at times and on certain points move against Israeli and American Zionist pressure and still not lose support. At the same time, the Carter Administration could still provide great support for Israel. Congress would most

likely follow this Carter lead, the Zionist lobby notwithstanding. Even the Israelis and American Zionists would probably fall into line.

The major question, posed repeatedly from many different angles, is whether the Arab nation-states with economic clout, especially Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Kuwait — can be expected to pressure the United States government to move towards peaceful resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict by insisting upon a truly just settlement for the Palestinians. Without the PLO's constant pressure on these governments to do so and simultaneously attempting creatively to work the American side, Palestinians should not "bet on it."

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*Addendum to Speech of Norton  
Mezvinsky  
February 17, 1977*

Before he left for the Middle East on February 14 and during his trip, Secretary of State Cyrus Vance emphasized that the PLO's formal and directly expressed recognition of the state of Israel's existence would constitute a positive step forward towards peaceful resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict. While in Israel on the first leg of his trip, Vance stated in a press conference that the PLO could not be considered as a partner in discussions at any Geneva-type meetings unless the PLO changed its National Covenant and deleted those articles and parts of articles that seemed to call for the destruction of the state of Israel. Do these statements mean that, if the PLO did so recognize the state of Israel's existence and did change its National Covenant, the United States government would change its official policy towards Palestinians and pressure Israel to accept the PLO as a representative of the Palestinian people at any forthcoming Geneva-type discussions? PLO leaders may expect Vance to answer.

Some informed sources have recently said that the Carter Administration will soon develop a new, more substantive and more positive overall policy towards the Palestinians. Arab nation-state leaders may emphasize to Vance that this policy needs to be developed and must be specifically implemented quickly. Palestinians, disappointed so many times because of broken and unfulfilled promises, will probably wait and see.

# Backing up Middle East Peace with Economic Development

By John H. Davis

The need for economic development on a massive scale as a buttress to peace in the Middle East would seem to be self-evident. If and when peace comes, new jobs by the hundreds of thousands must be created to give employment to the Palestinian refugees, war-displaced victims in Syria and Egypt, the jobless victims of occupation and, more recently, those left destitute by destruction in Lebanon. In addition, there will be the pressing need for more jobs for the ever-increasing native population of the countries bordering Israel, for these persons will be in competition with refugees and other victims of conflict, not only with regard to jobs but also the capital that can create jobs.

This need for massive job creation will be imperative as a backup to peace, regardless of the formula by which peace may come and whether it comes at a peace table ahead of war or in the aftermath of another bloody war.

Yet, in the voluminous discussions about peace that have taken place in recent months, little has been said about the need for economic development to back it up. America's hands will be tied on this front for so long as she refuses to recognize the existence of the Palestinian Arabs as a people. This should give us pause for thought.

The Middle East has many positive factors favoring economic development. It has skilled entrepreneurs heading a growing number of successful enterprises; and it has many skilled technicians and facilities for training and re-

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training. Moreover, it has an array of natural resources and, particularly important, it has an abundance of energy, investment capital and financial institutions. Even more important, the people of the Middle East want economic development. Motivation for the education of the younger generation is strong and universal; an ever-growing number are pursuing advanced degree in universities in the Middle East and elsewhere, particularly in the United States. The countries of the Middle East have a rapidly developing economic infrastructure. Certain states near the Mediterranean have an excess of highly educated and technically trained people who are eager for a more challenging opportunity.

At the same time, certain obstacles to development exist. The area is not uniform in regard to resources, capital availability and an adequate working force. The area is divided into more than twenty sovereign states which, like all sovereign states, have a propensity to formulate policies based on immediate rather than long-term considerations. This means that from time to time the flow of communications, goods and people may be temporarily disrupted by the closing of a border or other restrictive measures. But the record on this front is improving.

The point is that if economic development is to progress in an efficient manner—one that enables a region like the Middle East to be competitive on a continental or world basis—development must take place on a geographical scale that is compatible with efficiency. Thus, in a region subdivided into numerous autonomous political entities, these entities must permit, or at least tolerate, economic forces to work across political boundaries. Fortunately, economic forces have a propensity for penetrating boundaries even where formal political agreements between states have not been worked out. Already in the Middle East one can see this principle at work as firms, banks, development planning, university acti-



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vities and the like extend their functions and influence beyond the boundaries of the state in which they are domiciled. Furthermore, intergovernmental discussions and actions are becoming commonplace in the Middle East, both within and outside of the League of Arab States.

Presently, the most ominous threat to economic development on a regional scale that is compatible with efficiency is the conflict that now exists between the Arab and Israeli peoples. The repercussions from this conflict today affect every aspect of life in the Middle East and, to a large degree, the external relationships of this area to the world.

So it is that on the one hand economic progress in the Middle East is being retarded by Arab-Israeli conflict and, on the other, peacemaking cannot be sustained through time unless it is accompanied by economic development on a massive and growing scale. To say this is to point out that peace and development are interrelated, that while planning for development can take place ahead of peace, it cannot really flower. Once peace is achieved, however, economic development can take place on a scale that will sustain it. But the planning for development should proceed now.

At best, economic progress will not be automatic as a backup to peace; it will have to be planned, designed and fostered. Moreover, such economic planning and execution is a never-ending process. Then, too, it must occur simultaneously at many levels—govern-

mental, intergovernmental, local, in the public sector and in the private sector. Basic to economic progress is the need for a political, social and cultural and economic climate that motivates people, indigenous people in particular, to look ahead, to plan ahead and to assume risks. The greatest need is for a climate that will facilitate responsible entrepreneurship—individuals who can see a business opportunity, seize it and then successfully build a viable enterprise. It is imperative that such persons have opportunity to attain roles of leadership. They will not necessarily

the Middle East is already relatively fortunate.

Now let us examine more closely the interrelationship between peacemaking and economic development. To do this let us assume a given situation: let us assume that the peace formula that ultimately emerges brings into being a Palestinian state comprising the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Once Israel withdraws from these areas and a Palestinian state is proclaimed, what then?

First, there must be a government to provide law and order and basic services. How such a government is to

tion. Initially, the relationship to Jordan will be very critical in view of the long border between the two areas, and the fact that the communication and commercial lines of the new state must largely go across Jordan to reach the Arab world and to gain access to the waterways of the Suez Canal, the Red Sea and, at least at first, the Mediterranean. On the favorable side is the fact that roughly half of the population of Jordan is of Palestinian origin. Also, Jordan already is relatively advanced in its economic planning and development and already has able leaders and technicians.

Communications and trade between the new Palestinian state and Israel will probably come slowly—at least for as long as Israel retains the posture of a Jewish state for the Jewish people and hence is unable to deal with Jews and Palestinians on the basis of equality. Especially troublesome will be the Law of Return that grants automatic citizenship to any Jew coming to Israel from any part of the world, but denies citizenship, and even the right of residence, to the million plus Palestinian Arab refugees and their descendants who were born in the area that now comprises the state of Israel. Western



Housing

come from the elite classes or even the best educated classes, nor can they be “hot-house” produced. Fortunately, every society has within it those individuals who possess the latent genius for leadership. The important thing is to permit them to emerge and to assume roles of leadership. The less class structured a society is the easier it will be for persons who have the genius for leadership to emerge. In this regard,

evolve is beyond the subject of this article. It is, however, germane to emphasize that, regardless of the method used, it must provide a dynamic climate for economic enterprises to take root and prosper. For this climate to be possible those economic forces that become active in the West Bank and Gaza Strip must be closely interlinked with their counterparts in Jordan, Syria, Egypt, Lebanon and, ultimately, the entire re-

Industry—Photos by UNRWA



diplomats, particularly those from the United States, have not yet faced this phase of the peace problem, nor has the Western press ever explained it to the public. But the problem is clearly there and will work to complicate any effort to bring about open boundaries between Israel and her neighboring Arab states. Now is the time for this aspect of the problem to be faced for what it is.

Significantly, Israel will need open boundaries with Arab states much more urgently than will the new Palestinian state need an open boundary with her. For when American aid to Israel begins to dwindle, as some day it must, her survival will depend on trade, both import and export, with neighboring states. Even if Israel is initially given a breathing spell through the presence of international security forces along the border, plus commitment for peace-keeping by the great powers, and massive foreign aid, still she will ultimately have to reckon with the discrimination against non-Jews that is inherent in the Law of Return and related attributes of a Jewish state for the Jewish people—a state that unfortunately exists on land that is still claimed by uprooted, displaced and, as yet, exiled Palestinian Arabs. As this reckoning takes place, whether by peaceful means or war, the need for a strong international border police will gradually diminish, thus reinforcing the forces working towards an enduring peace. Accordingly, when peace exists, the faster the rate of economic growth in the Middle East, the more stable the peace will become.

Because almost two million displaced people living in exile and under Israeli occupation will have to find jobs for the most part on Arab soil, including the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the rate of economic growth and job creation on the Arab side will be critical in the early stages of a peace settlement. Occupation by Israel has largely stifled the growth of Arab economic institutions on the West Bank and Gaza Strip as a result of a policy of deporting much of the able Palestinian leadership and establishing there some seventy new Jewish communities for Jewish occupants, in defiance of international law. Thus, economic development there will have to start almost from scratch. Planning for rapid and progressive economic development on the West Bank and Gaza Strip therefore needs to be started at once and then persevered in with understanding and a sense of urgency. It will require the sympathetic support of

the Arab states and the developed nations of the world as well.

It is important that basic leadership within the new state be assumed by the Palestinian Arabs themselves rather than be imposed by economic entities whose control and ownership are foreign to the new state. This, of course, would not rule out the establishment of branch plants there by foreign firms, preferably under a joint venture arrangement involving joint local-foreign ownership combined with local management.

An urgent need of a new Palestine state will be to offer strong incentives to attract back to the state the able Palestinian talent that has been expelled and then exiled, including entrepreneurs, bankers, economists, engineers and teachers. For such persons to want to return, they must be convinced that the new state has a future, a conviction that the international community and great powers working through the United Nations can help to provide.

Also urgent will be the need for an inflow of investment capital at a rapid rate. This can be in the form of loans, foreign investments, joint ventures and grants. In this regard, it is important to keep in mind that new jobs on the massive scale needed will not be forthcoming unless the essential capital for their creation is inflowing on a continuing basis. The new state itself can help this inflow to take place by doing its utmost to assure security and profitability for investments.

Progress toward development occurs fastest when there is an appropriate balance between the public and private sectors. What that balance should be will vary with the stage of development, but in general much of the responsibility for an infrastructure will fall on the public sector, whereas production, processing and marketing of goods and commodities generally will be more viable when performed by the private sector.

Earlier, a reference was made to the urgency that a responsible government be formed immediately after the new state comes into being, and it was pointed out that this subject, because of its complexity, was beyond the scope of this paper. Even so, it is pertinent to emphasize here that this government must understand the need for economic development and the priorities essential for making it a reality, with regard to both the private and public sectors. Moreover, this new government must

recognize that economic forces must be able to function on a scale compatible with efficiency, even when this involves a scale that transcends international boundaries.

As a backup to policymaking, a need will exist, both in government and the private sector, for reliable factfinding and research that is forward looking. In a newly formed state, the basic need will be for factfinding and research that is germane to the special needs of the state and its people at a given time. Therefore, its emphasis should be on an empirical and pragmatic approach rather than on basic research. It is imperative that it be objective; otherwise it will be providing policymakers with spurious findings that will lead to wrong conclusions. In the beginning, before a seasoned research unit can be assembled, work of this type can be contracted for with existing universities or organizations that specialize in such work. Fortunately, such institutions exist.

Supplementing the factfinding and research on a local scale will be the need for its counterpart on a regional scale that encompasses a geographical unit compatible with successful economic development. Happily, a beginning has been made in this direction, which means that the new state must join hands with other states to produce the specific findings needed.

While it is also beyond the scope of this paper to delve into the nature of a peace settlement between the Arabs and Israelis, it is relevant to note that the more promising the prospects of an enduring peace, the more viable will be the economic development that takes place initially.

Another factor that will have a material bearing on the rate of economic progress on the West Bank and Gaza Strip will be the policy posture of the United States. So long as America refuses to recognize the Palestinian Arabs as a people and their right to have a state of their own on the West Bank and Gaza Strip, if they clearly indicate that this is their desire, progress towards both peace or viable development will be slow, if not impossible. The danger is that such progress will be so slow that it will be negated by another war.

Fortunately, the United States is in a favorable position to ward off another war in the Middle East, but to do so it needs to act with promptness in regard to both peacemaking and economic development.



# PLO Spokesman Offers Peace Views in Conference Address

*Telephoned statement by PLO representative Isam Sartawi to American Friends Service Committee, Middle East Conference, Washington, D.C., February 12, 1977*

Nowadays the general consensus regarding the Middle East crisis is that it should be brought to a speedy conclusion. Being the repository of the major world reserves of fossilized energy, the region is far too vital for international stability and prosperity to remain forever the proverbial "sword of Damocles." The urgent need for a just and lasting solution has been acclaimed by the totality of the international community and has become a common denominator of international politics.

## Alternative Solutions

Unfortunately, there has been a great deal of confusion over what constitutes the basic ingredients of such a just and lasting solution. So far, two formulas have been under consideration in international forums. The first defines the Middle Eastern crisis substantially as a confrontation between the Arab states and the state of Israel over frontiers, occupied Arab territories, and all the sequel of the state of war, which exists between the two parties. The second insists that the contradictory claims of both Palestinians and Israelis to the same country are the essence of the problem.

The first formula assumes that a set-

The following is the text of a speech delivered by Issam Sartawi at the conference sponsored by the American Friends Service Committee on February 11-14, 1977, in Chevy Chase, Maryland. Mr. Sartawi spoke by Trans Atlantic telephone. He substituted for Sabri Jiryis who was unable to address the meeting because he was denied a visa by the State Department.



Palestine Plan of partition recommended by the General Assembly of the United Nations, 1947.

tlement is possible between the Arab states and Israel, with the Palestinians being relegated to a better status under Jordan, whereas the second one asserts that peace can be achieved only when the Palestinians and Israelis reconcile their contradictory claims amicably and satisfactorily in a mutually accepted solution, which grants each side the degree of self-expression which it seeks and is desirable. The first formula, which was favored by the previous American Administration and which is now the declared policy of the current Israeli Cabinet, is categorically rejected by the Palestine Liberation Organization. This position is not based upon an implacable and irreversible animosity toward the Hashemite dynasty, as some observers suggest, but rather upon the Palestinian people's unswerving de-

termination to achieve their inalienable national rights.

It is true that Palestinian-Jordanian relations underwent a measure of strain in the past, but it is equally true that the ties between Palestine and Jordan are so strong, so historic, and so deep that they will withstand any degree of strain and will preserve the special relations that have always existed between Palestine and Jordan. And contrary to some widespread, general misconceptions, there exists no difference between Jordan and the PLO over the conditions of a just and lasting peace. In his latest public statement, as reported by *France Soir* on February 4-5, His Majesty King Hussein unequivocally affirmed his repeatedly stated position that there can be no peace in the area without the prior recognition and implementation of the Palestinian people's inalienable right of self-determination. It is highly conceivable, and indeed most probable, that the sovereign Palestinian state that will emerge from the exercise of this right will also exercise a prerogative to enter into a very special relationship with the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Happily enough, the negotiations, which are scheduled to take place very soon between the PLO and the Jordanian authorities in Amman, constitute a rebuttal of all allegations about Palestinian-Jordanian differences and are in reality the harbinger of all good thinking. Apart from this objective Palestinian and Arab argument against the first formula, there is an objective argument that possesses enough irrefutable logic to demolish it completely as a viable option and to eliminate it irrevocably from the agenda of any serious forum.

## The Palestinian Role

Peace, for the simplest of mechanical reasons, cannot be achieved without the approval and participation of a duly constituted, legitimate and freely chosen Palestinian representative body. The historic, legal and demographic

conditions for peace are so complex and specifically Palestinian in nature that no Arab state is capable or even willing to enter into any peace negotiations without official Palestinian participation. It is necessary to emphasize here that non-institutionalized Palestinians are as incapable of making peace as any of the other parties to the conflict.

Viewed from this perspective, it is the . . . \* that the evolution of the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and its recognition by all Arab states as well as by 103 non-Arab nations has been a crucially important development without which any talk about peace would have been nothing but irrelevant rhetoric. This . . . goal of the PLO as the cornerstone in any peace initiative has been recognized by nearly everyone except the official Israeli establishment. When this fact is borne in mind, it becomes apparent that the public assertions of Israel's desire for peace are in fact negated by Israel's total rejection of the PLO.

Naturally enough, it might be argued that Israel is fully justified in taking such a position because of the PLO's refusal to contribute to the establishment of peace in the Middle East.

Unfortunately for Israel's apologists, the facts do not support such a conviction, as we shall conclusively establish later on. Fortunately for the cause of peace, however, this official attitude does not reflect the true sentiments of the country. A sizable portion of Israel's public opinion is deserting the official, hard-line position and adhering to the reconciliatory peace platform of the Israeli Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace. Thanks to the activity of this dedicated group of distinguished and influential Israeli peace activists, the percentage of Israeli citizens favoring peace talks with the PLO, as measured by the public poll taken late in November 1976, rose from an insignificant 5 percent to an impressive 38.5 percent in less than one year.

What is particularly interesting about the Israeli Council for Peace is that it considers the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to the recognition of the Palestinian right of self-determination and the establishment of a sovereign Palestinian state in currently occupied Palestinian territory as the cornerstone of peace in the Middle East.

With these formative developments taking place on the Israeli scene, on the eve of the Knesset elections, the hard-

line policies of the Rabin government become much less of a danger to the prospects of peace than appear otherwise. Taking the Israeli public's real desire for peace into consideration, it also seems certain, both on analytic grounds and on the basis of available data, that the Israeli electorate will return a peace-oriented candidate after the elections on May 13. In summary, it can be stated that the first formula cannot bring peace, or even a temporary respite from war. The crucial Palestinian factor, with its built-in capacity to destabilize the situation in the Middle East, will unavoidably trigger another round of confrontation, with untold damage to the protagonists themselves as well as to the world interest at large. On the basis of all preceding premises, it can be concluded that the only way to peace and stability in the Middle East is through the recognition and implementation of the legitimate Palestinian national rights.

#### **Palestinian Peace Initiative**

Having established that peace is impossible without the Palestinians and having eliminated the first formula as a possible option, we must now turn to the question of whether or not the PLO is prepared to contribute to the establishment of peace in the Middle East. If the answer to this question is an affirmative, we must then try to determine whether the PLO's readiness to do so will make it acceptable as a partner in peace. The answer to the first question is "yes"; the PLO is willing and ready to contribute to the establishment of peace as an equal partner. In fact, the PLO has been signalling its readiness to do so for a number of years. While it has succeeded in convincing the majority of the world's public opinion of the seriousness of these signals, it has unfortunately been unable to elicit any appreciable response or positive acknowledgment from certain important quarters. As interesting as it is to analyze the reasons behind this skeptical reception, it is far more interesting and important to analyze the phenomena that have led to the emergence of the signals in the first place, against their respective historic background. To do so properly, I must beg my audience's indulgence to digress briefly into the field of social psychology.

We know from the wealth of material derived from the study of the historic

Jewish experience, as well as from the discipline of social psychology itself, that when a people are expelled from their original country and subjected to persecution and hardship in the diaspora, they develop a collective social consciousness and a collective memory, which focuses upon a point of reference in the distant past and appears to be incapable of going beyond it. The imprisonment of this collective memory behind an arbitrary temporal layer produces fascinating social and psychological end results which may present themselves as stereotypes and self-repetitive patterns.

The temporal point of reference for the Jewish experience was the second destruction of the Temple in the year 70 A.D. and the subsequent expulsion of Jews at the hands of their Roman conquerors. It is of interest to note here that the collective Jewish memory could not penetrate the barrier of that year and could not see Palestine for what it became — the country of the Palestinian Arabs. For nearly 2,000 years, division of the pre-70 A.D. Palestine fired the imagination of world Jewry and provided them with the psychological prop they so badly needed in order to preserve their collective cultural identity and permit them to survive the periodic persecution to which they were regularly subjected. Under these pressures, the Jews used to escape to the . . . dream of an old Palestine where Gentiles and Occidentals were non-existent. Within their collective memory, Palestine never progressed beyond the year 70 A.D. and stayed as it was left then. This explains roughly why the Zionist movement from the first day of its inception could not admit that the real Palestine of the early twentieth century was populated by a people who had tenanted it for two millennia at least and insisted all along that Palestine was a country without a people.

The Palestinian experience after the fall of Palestine in 1948 bears an uncanny similarity to the Jewish experience after the destruction of the Second Temple. The uprooted Palestinians experienced hunger, misery and hardship, and underwent periodic persecution. In order to preserve their sanity and maintain their collective national consciousness, they had to escape to the spiritual haven of the pre-1948 Palestine. In much the same way that the collective Jewish memory refused to recognize any change in Palestine be-

yond the year 70 A.D., the Palestinian memory failed to recognize anything in Palestine beyond the year 1948. This held true throughout the first twenty years of the Palestinian diaspora, but then something happened in the Palestinian experience that differentiated it in a remarkable way from its Jewish counterpart.

### The Liberation Movement

In the latter part of the Palestinian diaspora, the Palestine Liberation Movement, otherwise known as Fatah, came into existence and gradually evolved to become the instrument of institutionalized, national Palestinian existence. On March 21, 1968, the forces of Fatah, supported by units of the Jordanian Royal Army, fought an armored Israeli expeditionary force which crossed the River Jordan to attack the positions of Fatah in the village of Karameh. The battle began at day-break and lasted well into the night, and before it was over, it had earned a place of honor in the annals of Palestinian national history. The Palestinian army acquitted itself quite honorably in the first major encounter with the Israeli army, but far more important than any achievement on the battlefield was a psychological elation which all Palestinians experienced throughout their diaspora and a feeling of confidence and hope that instilled itself in the Palestinian national consciousness thereafter.

Armed with the Karameh victory and a new sense of confidence, the Palestinians became convinced that the liberation of Palestine was a practical reality and that they needed no longer escape into the pre-1948 Palestine of their dream but must apply themselves instead to the Palestine they would be inheriting soon. What the leadership saw when it took a look at this new Palestine was a country with 2.5 million Jewish inhabitants, who looked at it as their own country and were as attached to it under its new title of Israel as the Palestinians were attached to it under the older label of Palestine. The question that faced the Palestinian leadership was what to do with these people after the liberation of the country. The answer that emerged after two full years of search and deliberation crowned the Palestinian diaspora with a unique moral halo of its own. The Palestinians did not say, "Who are these people? They do not exist and they never existed," but instead said, "They are

here and they must love the country as much as we do, so we shall share it with them." In the Palestinian National Council of 1969, all Israeli Jews were granted equal citizenship in the projected secular, democratic state of Palestine. The Palestinian National Council could have easily emulated the Basle Conference of 1897 which laid down the groundwork for the state of Israel as an exclusively Jewish state by setting as its objective the creation of a purely Arab



Israel territory resulting from Armistice Agreements, 1948. Territories occupied as a result of the hostilities of June 1967.

Palestinian state with no room in it for others. It did not do so, however, and opted instead for the multi-confessional solution.

### Toward Peaceful Co-existence

I have deliberately elaborated the evolution of the concept of the democratic, secular Palestinian state against the comparative background of the purely Jewish state to focus attention on one of the major tactics employed to misrepresent our position and to discredit our constructive suggestions. To our critics, the slogan of the secular state carries only a negative meaning; therefore, no redeeming value whatsoever. Be this as it may, the progress of Palestinian evolution did not stop at the concept of the secular state but proceeded much further.

As more time passed and as the PLO attained more prestige and power, it also acquired more confidence and moral courage. Having made the crucial decision to accept the whole of the Israeli population as equal citizens in the Palestine of our dreams, it became possible for the Palestinians to speculate on the would-be democratic rights of the 50 percent of the Palestinian population who possessed distinct cultural, religious, and social traditions and backgrounds, and whether they were not entitled to an autonomous status within the state, and if so, whether they were not entitled to exercise the right of self-determination. These questions were discussed in depth from 1969 to 1973. I am not empowered to disclose the outcome of these discussions, but I can safely mention that as of late 1973, a series of evolutionary Palestinian positions were announced.

In November and December of that year, Said Hammami, the PLO's official representative in London, published a series of articles suggesting the PLO's willingness to accept the establishment of an independent Palestinian state on a portion of the Palestinian patrimony. In June 1974, the Twelfth Palestinian National Council promulgated the famous "Ten Point Program," which provided the legal basis for accepting Palestinian statehood on part of the Palestinian homeland. The same program also indicated the PLO's determination to participate in all international forums seeking a solution for the Palestinian problem. In addition, it spelled out Palestinian reservations on Security Council Resolution 242, by stating explicitly that the PLO rejected Resolution 242 because it treated the Palestinian problem only as a question of refugees—which plainly reads that the PLO would probably accept Resolution 242 if it recognized the Palestinians as a people and not as mere refugees.

In March 1975 Hammami shared the platform with an Israeli speaker in a CAABU† symposium held in London and delivered his well-known article, "A Palestinian Strategy for Peaceful Co-Existence," in which he outlined some views on the possible relation between a sovereign state of Palestine living in peaceful co-existence with the state of Israel.

This gradual unfolding of the Palestinian position, as culled from official Palestinian National Council resolutions and the statements of accredited

PLO representatives over the span of a number of years, was received by official Israel with indifference, if not outright hostility and rejection. But official animosity did not stop Israeli public opinion from understanding and responding to the evolutionary attitudes of the PLO. The Israeli Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace came into existence in December 1975 to signal the open disenchantment of a significant segment of the Israeli public with official Israeli policy and to affirm its determination to join forces with the PLO and the Palestinian people in their fight for peace. In June 1976, the first contact was established between the two peace forces, and thus birth was given to the highly publicized Paris talks. In this brief review of the PLO position vis-a-vis peace, I have deliberately limited myself to public reports, but hence, as the Palestinian positions as expounded by Palestinian leaders during confidential meetings . . . can be gleaned from occasional . . . two particularly interesting examples were provided by the *Washington Post* coverage of Adlai Stevenson's visit to Beirut in the spring of 1975, and Waldheim's two-day-old statement when he spoke with Chairman Arafat . . . With all this evidence I feel satisfied that the available reports establish beyond any doubt that the PLO is very serious in its determination to contribute to the establishment of peace in the Middle East.

Now I shall turn to the remaining outstanding question, namely, does this qualify the PLO to be an equal partner in the search for peace? To answer this question we must study all instruments for peace, that is to say, the Geneva Conference. According to its UN mandate, the conference is chaired by the two superpowers and is composed of the confrontation Arab states and the state of Israel. Any additions to the conference must be approved by the two superpowers as well as by all members of the conference. The positions of the Soviet Union and the Arab confrontation states vis-a-vis the participation of the PLO are too well-known for further elaboration. The position of Israel is irreversibly opposed to the participation of the PLO. That leaves the position of the USA under consideration. The available evidence seems to suggest that the Carter Administration is serious in its declared intention of seeking a just and lasting solution to the Middle Eastern problem. Whether or not it will succeed will depend upon its ability first

of all to recognize the centrality of the Palestinian question in the Middle Eastern problem and the impossibility of bringing about peace without satisfying legitimate Palestinian national rights. Secondly, it depends on its ability to apply enough pressure on Israel to force it to change its hard-line position.

### The American Position

There seems to be a clear awareness of the importance of the Palestinian question in the mind of President Carter, as can be determined from a statement made by then-Governor Carter to (Richard) Holbrooke in Louisville, Kentucky, on November 23, 1975. Governor Carter said, and I quote, "I think the community of nations has got to recognize some basic principles of a settlement on a permanent basis in the Middle East. And I think one of the integral parts of an ultimate settlement has got to be the recognition of the Palestinians as a people, as a nation, with a place to live and a right to choose their own leaders." This statement acquires added importance when it is borne in mind that it was made at a time when the prospective Presidential candidate was most susceptible to minority criticism and hence most careful about committing himself to a clear-cut position on controversial issues. The fact that Governor Carter made such a commitment in that phase of the campaign indicates that it represents a deep conviction which is unlikely to be reversed within the security of the Presidential office. In all fairness to President Carter, it must be added that he went on thereafter to state, "But I would not as a nation recognize the PLO, or Arafat as a spokesman of the Palestinian people, even though that might be an actual fact, until after Arafat agrees that Israel has a right to exist in peace as an integral part of the Middle Eastern community." I believe that this is as fair a statement as can be hoped for by either Palestinians or Israelis. It clearly indicates that Governor Carter would have recognized Palestinians as a nation only after Arafat agreed that Israel had a right to live.

Well, it seems that the condition laid down by Governor Carter has been fulfilled: precisely forty-eight hours ago, according to *Le Monde* of today, Saturday, February 12, 1977, Mr. Kurt Waldheim stated in an interview with the *Jerusalem Post* that "All Arab leaders, including the leader of the PLO, are ready to accept the existence

of Israel." With the fulfillment of the condition which Governor Carter stated in November 1975 as a prior requirement for American recognition of the PLO, will it be reasonable to expect that President Carter will afford the PLO that long-promised recognition? Only President Carter can answer this question. It might be argued, of course, that the promises and commitments made during the Presidential election campaign are not necessarily binding. This might well be very true, but on the other hand, the statement made by Mr. Cyrus Vance to the *New York Times* two days ago seems to indicate strongly that President Carter has not forgotten what Governor Carter said in 1975. Be this as it may, there is no doubt that Mr. Vance's statement is a clear indication of the Administration's determination to play an active and constructive role in contributing to the search for real peace in the Middle East. The final American position, as this by itself, is very reassuring. The final American position has not yet been stated, and its eventual formulation will have to await the return of Mr. Vance. But if the accumulated facts are any indication of the nature of the expected decision, and if the USA takes the logical step of recognizing the PLO regardless of Israeli objections—as the well-informed *New York Times* seems to suggest—then the hope for peace in the Middle East will burn brightly.

In conclusion, I would like to express to all of you my deep gratitude for taking the trouble to come and listen to the Palestinian point of view on peace in the Middle East, which is being presented to you in such a uniquely unorthodox and unprecedented manner as to suggest perhaps the uniqueness of the Palestinian tragedy. I would also like to express my thanks to the American Friends Service Committee, which has made it possible for me to address this meeting. Finally, I would like to state a word of apology on behalf of Mr. Sabri Jiryis, who was supposed to be giving this speech but who, unfortunately, and for reasons beyond his control, was incapable of doing so.

Thank you very much.

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\*Gaps in the text reflect unintelligible words/phrases due to transmission technicalities.  
†CAABU is the Council for the Advancement of Arab-British Understanding

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# Palestinian-Israeli Peace

## A Contribution to the Discussion

*A statement by Dr. James Zogby, Vice-President, Association of Arab-American University Graduates, Inc. Presented at "New Imperatives for Israeli-Palestinian Peace." February 13, 1977, Washington, D.C. Sponsored by American Friends Service Committee.*

There is a peace discussion in the United States and in Israel today, and General Matti Peled's Israeli Council for an Israeli-Palestinian Peace is an important component in this discussion. While, as we have seen, dialogue is possible between the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Israeli Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace, they are not the negotiating partners who will bring peace to this region. We have heard from the PLO, but we have not heard from the Israeli government.

The problem that remains — the source of the continuing state of war — is the unwillingness of the Israeli government not only to make peace, but to take the first step to begin the peace discussion, that is, to recognize the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination.

In fact, this Israeli refusal involves three separate denials:

- (1) recognition of the existence of a Palestinian people;
- (2) acknowledgment of their national rights in the land of Palestine;
- (3) and a leadership which represents them — the PLO.

Instead, the Israeli government asserts that it alone has any claim to the entire land; that, in the words of Golda Meir, "the Palestinian people do not exist"; and that the PLO is merely a "band of terrorists."\*\*

Such a refusal to recognize the na-

tional and human rights of this entire people is nothing less than a racist action. By way of illustration, let us look briefly to an example from the Jewish people's own experience. Historically, anti-Semitism has meant not merely the dislike of a Jewish person (because he or she was Jewish). Nor has it simply meant the contempt shown for the abstract and stereotyped category — "the Jew." It has also meant the failure of the Christian world to respect the existence of the Jewish people as a people, as well as its failure to respect the integrity of Jewish institutions and organization. The Israeli government is today displaying a similar complex of attitudes toward the Palestinian people.

Even at their best, when Israeli government figures speak out in a "moderate" voice about peace with the Arabs, they place impossible demands on the Palestinian people. One recent proposal, for example, spoke of "quasi" self-government for the Palestinians of the West Bank, but insisted that the Palestinian region not include Jerusalem (and another one-third of the land mass of the West Bank — for "security reasons"). In addition, the Arab region would have to be demilitarized and enter into an economic federation with Jordan and/or Israel. Furthermore, in order to "qualify" for such a settlement, the Palestinian people would have to surrender their other claims on the state of Israel, including the right of the refugees to return, and renounce their dream of working for the establishment of a unified, non-sectarian, democratic state for all the people in Palestine/Israel. In response to such a proposal, anyone seriously interested in peace can only ask: "what regard for Palestinian rights does such a proposal demonstrate?"

The doves in Israel insist that the PLO must go further both in word and in deed to demonstrate its desire for peace. In justice, however, we must reply to them that such an attitude is unfair. It is not Israel that is the injured party in this situation; it is the Palestinian people who live under military occupation, and it is the Palestinian people who remain in refugee camps still awaiting the right to return to their homes. While the fears of the Jewish people of Israel must be recognized — living as they do with still fresh memories of the "holocaust" — we cannot allow this fact to cause us to ignore the real situation of suffering among the Palestinian people.

There has certainly been a strengthening of the peace forces within Israel. These various forces have been active and courageous in their demand that the government develop a more positive posture toward peace. At the same time, we must also note the more frightening strengthening of the forces of war and occupation. Instead of the peace movement having the effect of moving the ruling party toward peace, other developments on the right are causing a hardening of attitudes. The growth of a new hard-line mass party, the Democratic Movement for Change (DMC), has had just such an effect on the ruling Labor Party — especially with the new elections only a few weeks away. To the growing strength of the DMC must be added the already powerful right-wing LIKUD Party. In addition, there is the dangerous growth of the extreme right-wing, anti-Arab rights organizations of the "Gush Emunim" and Meir Kahane's Jewish Defense League.

As a result of all these developments, the Labor Party (with both the Rabin and Peres factions agreeing) has adopted a platform that encourages new Jewish settlements in the occupied lands, rejects any recognition of Palestinian national rights and rejects any notion of a return to the 1967 borders.

Hence, while it is true that there is a growing peace movement in Israel, it is also true that peace is not at hand. This point is emphasized here because if our purpose is a real concern for human suffering and our responsibility to act to alleviate that suffering — and not mere political discussion — then we must face the reality of the current situation.

While the "dove-hawk" battle seesaws within Israel, and while the peace discussion drags on, we must note that the *occupation also continues*. And that occupation brings with it the continued systematic violation of Palestinian human rights. It is this occupation and the human suffering that it creates that is the continued cause of tension in the Middle East. Our peace discussion would therefore be abstract and hollow if we failed to address the Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands — *today*.

While we are talking and debating solutions of this or that type:

(1) Arabs continue to be evicted from their lands and homes to make way for Jewish settlements.

(2) Arab activists demanding their human rights are being deported, thus

\*\*The Israelis persist in this claim, even though PLO candidates won over 80 percent of the local elections held on the West Bank; the PLO's organizational structure encompasses elected representatives of dozens of Palestinian national organizations (including the Palestine Red Crescent and the General Unions of Palestinian Students, Women, Artists, Engineers, Doctors, and Workers).

becoming new refugees.

(3) The systematic and brutal repression of Palestinian political detainees continues unabated, even though it has been condemned in recent weeks by the International Red Cross, Amnesty International, and the United Nations Committee on Human Rights.

Discussion of this human suffering and action to alleviate the situation must be placed on our agenda today. Such action will not, as some have suggested, distract from our peace discussion and work. Rather, it will strengthen and deepen it. It will also test our commitment to the cause of peace.

It is clear that the Israeli peace forces have realized that the continued occupation of Arab land, the denial of full democratic rights to the Arabs who live in Israel and the denial of self-determination to the Palestinian people in no way contribute to a peaceful and secure future for the Jewish people. Maintaining a state of war is harmful, though in different ways, to all the peoples of the region. To insure that the Palestinian Arabs and Israeli Jews — both of whom have suffered and continue to suffer — can, in the future, live in peace and security, we must intensify our efforts to build a just and lasting peace. Toward this end, pro-

gressive Arabs and progressive Jews must unite. They must cast off the exclusivist and divisive philosophies that have caused us for so long to view each other in racist stereotypes and to treat one another with suspicion.

Together, we must now take the difficult steps, first to a dialogue and then hopefully to action for peace. In such a combined struggle, we will learn much from one another—about our past sufferings, about our hopes for the future, about our humanity.

In closing, I want to thank the American Friends Service Committee for helping us to begin this difficult dialogue.

## What Should the Palestinians Do Next?

by Sir John Richmond former British ambassador to Kuwait



The PLO makes its first appearance at the UN Security Council, January 1976.

The issue in the Middle Eastern conflict has always been this: does Palestine rightly belong to Zionist Jews or to Palestinian Arabs? The core of the Zionist claim is a belief that "The Land," "Eretz Yisra'el," was promised by the Almighty to the children of Abraham. The Palestinian claim is less exalted, but to many people more convincing. It is based on an occupation of some 1,300 years. But the history of the last half century has strengthened the Zionists' claim, because their success in establishing a viable Jewish state in Palestine has caused the departure of about half of its Arab population, leaving the other half under Israeli rule or occupation. In the shorter term, therefore, it would perhaps now be more realistic to state the issue in less absolute terms, and to

try to resolve it by negotiation about how much of Palestine should be Israeli and how much Palestinian.

From the beginning, the aim of Zionism has been to deny its Arab people the right of self-determination in Palestine. Some Zionists then believed that this could be done painlessly—"Arabs moving out as Jews moved in"—in the ineffable words of the Labour Party programme for the 1945 election. More realistic Zionists were the Revisionists, who recognized from the outset that Zionist success would require the forcible expulsion of the Arab population.

By the end of World War I, Zionists had secured British support for their aim of making Palestine a Jewish state and for international recognition for the National Home policy under which this

aim was then concealed. By the end of World War II, they had developed enough strength in Palestine to dispense with British protection, and in 1948-1949, after the British withdrawal, they succeeded in expelling most of the Arabs from about three quarters of the country.

By the end of the 1950s, Israel had built up a more solid state structure and more effective armed forces than any Arab state could boast. By the end of the 1960s, the Zionist State had expanded its control to cover the whole of Mandatory Palestine and was occupying the whole of Egyptian Sinai and a sizable slice of the Syrian Golan. In 1967, however, expulsion of the Arab population (it amounted to about 50,000 Syrians and about 200,000 Palestinians) was less wholesale than had been the case in 1948-1949.

Most things have thus gone right for Zionism. One thing has gone badly wrong, however. Palestinian Arab self-consciousness as a people, which barely existed in 1917, has grown and hardened instead of crumbling under the blows of the last half century. Palestinians have now secured a measure of international recognition and are no longer just a refugee problem. On October 5, 1976, the British Foreign Secretary told the United Nations General Assembly that "they regard themselves, and are now generally recognised, as a people distinct from their neighbours, with their own strong aspirations towards nationhood. One essential element in a settlement," Mr. Crosland went on, "will be a land for the Palestinians, not necessarily a sovereign state, but a place where they will be free to look after their own affairs."

This degree of recognition has not been achieved without shattering setbacks like that suffered by the Palestine Liberation Organization at the hands of King Hussein in September 1970. But the prospect of the return of Palestinians to refugee status, or to that of docile subjects of a Jordano-Syrian condominium, is not easily imaginable. The change in the Palestinian situation between 1949 and 1976 seems now to be irreversible, and if this proves true, the PLO will have provided a classic example of Professor Toynbee's concept of Challenge and Response.

Mr. Crosland's qualification about Palestinian sovereignty showed that international opinion is still deferential to Israeli anxieties about security, and that Britain is still responsive to United States pressure. Nevertheless, it seems quite possible, now that the American presidential election is out of the way, that international pressures might develop for the setting up of a Palestinian state, or near-state, on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip. It seems important therefore for Palestinian leaders to consider very carefully what attitude they should adopt towards the prospect of freedom "to look after their own affairs" in that part of Mandatory Palestine.

This question has already been hotly debated by Palestinians. During the 12th Session of the Palestinian National Council in Cairo in June 1974, a large majority agreed to struggle for the establishment of a Palestinian National Authority over "any territory liberated from Israeli occupation." This left unanswered the crucial question of how such territory would come to be liberated. The more militant Palestinians presumably assumed that it would come about through "armed struggle"; others that it would be achieved by "political struggle." I think it may be important for Palestinian leaders now to face this issue squarely.

The salient facts appear to be these:

1. Since October 1973, the Arab States feel stronger and less humiliated than before. They consequently see less need to support the Resistance as an alternative strategy against Israel.
2. Opinion in the front-line Arab States has moved towards acceptance of Israel as a sovereign neighbor. They all need peace for pressing economic reasons and are now less vulnerable to internal pressures against seeking it at Palestinian expense.

3. "Armed struggle," which has been so successful in unifying Palestinians and impressing international opinion with their existence as a people, has not only failed to change Israeli attitudes, but has in fact hardened them. It is not only Galilee, but also the West Bank which is now in the course of Judaization.
4. Closer identification with the revolutionary left in the Arab world has led the Palestinian movement into a losing confrontation in Jordan and has threatened the same in Lebanon.

On the other hand:

5. Palestinian resistance in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip has completely destroyed the Zionist propaganda myth about "the most benign occupation in history."
6. Israel's land expropriation policies in Galilee and the Negev have shown the world that the much trumpeted "loyalty" of Israeli Arabs may not be unconditional.
7. The antics of Rabbi Levinger and Gush Emunim are alerting more and more sensible Israelis to the risks of expansionist policies.
8. In the past three years "political struggle," especially inside Palestine, has been generally successful, while "armed struggle," both in Palestine and outside, has often been counterproductive.

If the foregoing analysis is accepted, it would seem sensible for the PLO to adopt the military maxim that success should always be followed up and failure never reinforced. It would lead the organization to place more emphasis on "political struggle" and less on "armed struggle." "Political struggle" appears to have a better chance of securing an early Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories than any military action of which the PLO is at present capable. At the present time, there are at least two compelling reasons for trying to achieve such a withdrawal as early as possible. These are, first, the importance of halting the development of Jewish settlement in the West Bank, and secondly, the fact that, of the roughly three quarters of a million Arabs living in the territories, perhaps 10 percent are working in Israel proper. A change of policy or an economic recession would therefore compel most of these to leave Palestine altogether. Very few have land to fall back on in their villages, and they would be very lucky to find alternative employment in the economically depressed areas under

occupation.

The main resource of the Palestinian movement is the Palestinian people; until it can win back some or all of Palestine, this is in practice the only resource on which it can unconditionally rely. Palestinian leaders would therefore plan to strengthen and to husband this resource, and do their utmost to avoid draining it away in armed confrontations with other Arabs. History has shown that, if forced into such confrontations, they risk the destruction or emasculation of the organization they have built so painfully. To keep this organization in being, and to preserve for it some freedom of action, must be their first priority.

But because pressure from the Palestinian people can be brought to bear on Israel more efficiently in Palestine than in dispersion, their second priority should be to develop and strengthen the Arab community in the West Bank and in Gaza. Fears that financial assistance to the economic enterprise of Arabs under occupation would indirectly strengthen Israel's economy are unreal. On the contrary, providing alternative employment on the West Bank for Palestinians who now live by building flats in Israel for Israeli Jews to live in would weaken, not strengthen, Israel's economy. To provide assistance to Arab educational institutions like the university at Bir Zeit would directly build up the Palestine movement's real resource—the skills and energies of Palestinians. Since the municipal elections earlier this year, the fear that a West Bank state would mean a sellout to the West Bank notables has surely faded into insignificance. If the PLO proved capable of substantially strengthening the economy and cohesion of Palestinians still in Palestine, I believe this would prove the quickest way forward for Palestinians as a whole to secure the beginnings of a return to Palestine.

For the present, "armed struggle" seems to have served its turn. Its potential must be kept alive because it is an essential weapon in defense of the independence of the Palestinian movement. At the same time it needs to be kept under firm control, and its employment must support and not make difficulties for the "political struggle." This means a careful choice of targets and avoiding those which antagonize the liberal and moderate elements which exist in Israel and must eventually provide the "interlocuteur valable" who will be necessary when real peace becomes a possibility.

## The Evasive Peace: A Study of the Zionist-Arab Problem

**John H. Davis**

*Foreword by Eugene R. Black, former President of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Cleveland, Ohio; Dillon/Liederbach, 1976. 136 pp. \$5.95.*

Books about the Middle East, especially the Arab-Israeli conflict, seem to be in endless supply these days. And there should be no end, for the Middle East represents one of the world's most persistent, baffling and misunderstood problems. Among the important recent additions to this literature are Fred Khouri's *THE ARAB-ISRAELI DILEMMA* — a solid, comprehensive work which has been newly revised — and *THE FOREIGN RELATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES, 1948* (Vol. V, Pt. 2), a publication just released by the U.S. government dealing with American policy during the 1948 period, when the state of Israel was struggling to be born.

Now John DAVIS has revised his *THE EVASIVE PEACE*, originally published in 1968, following the Israeli *blitzkrieg* of 1967 — the so-called Six Day War. The revision brings *THE EVASIVE PEACE* substantially up to the date of publication. The first edition, originally published by John Murray, London, not only underwent six printings, but was translated into German, Finnish, Polish and Arabic. The work is based on Dr. DAVIS' wide study of Arab-Israeli relations as well as on his decade of direct involvement in Middle Eastern affairs first as Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) for five years, and then as Vice-President of the Board of Trustees of the American University of Beirut. As Dr. DAVIS explains, the book attempts to probe and evaluate the complex forces and factors that will determine the future of the contentious Middle East.

As a result of his work and study, Dr. DAVIS became convinced that popular understanding of the problem in the West, particularly in the United States, was not only at variance with the facts,

but, in many ways, was also the opposite of the truth. In this brief and succinct account, Dr. DAVIS traces the history of the problem roughly from the foundations of the Zionist movement during 1897-1917, the achievement of the Jewish "national home" during the period of the British mandate in Palestine and the perennial conflict between Jews and Arabs, down to World War II and afterward, the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948 and the conflict that has continued ever since.

The peace has indeed been evasive and is likely to remain so until the fundamental issue is squarely faced: the irrepressible conflict between the Zionists and the Arab inhabitants of Palestine who resisted being turned into a minority in their own country. It is sometimes forgotten, although Dr. DAVIS has not, that the Palestinians lost their livelihood, their homes and their country. Dr. DAVIS maintains that UN Security Resolution 242 of November 22, 1967, holds the key to an equitable solution, although the full rights of self-determination must be recognized. In Dr. DAVIS' view, if the United States is to maintain a constructive leadership position in attaining peace in the Middle East, it must recognize the Palestine Arabs as a people, not merely as refugees, and work for justice in their behalf. The next basic step is to work out an adequate international security arrangement for the total length of the borders, as re-established along the pre-June 1967 lines. A third step is the withdrawal of Israeli forces and citizens from the occupied areas. Once Israel has withdrawn from occupied territories, it is imperative that generous development funds be made available to both sides.

This is a very thoughtful, albeit brief, work, dealing with very serious problems. It is well written and straight to the basic points. It is well illustrated and contains a very useful selected bibliography. In bringing his standard work up to date, the author has rendered a most useful service to students and the general public as well.

Harry N. Howard

This book can be purchased directly from the publisher, Dillon/Liederbach, Inc., 14591 Madison Avenue (Lake-wood), Cleveland, Ohio 44107.

*The Link* aims at maintaining contacts among Americans who believe that friendship with the people of the Middle East is essential to world peace, who would contribute to this goal by spreading understanding of the history, values, religions, culture and economic conditions of the Middle East, and who would — in this context — press for greater fairness, consistency and integrity in U.S. policy toward that area.

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**The views expressed in *The Link* are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the opinion of Americans for Middle East Understanding, Inc.**

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