

palestine perspectives

MARCH 1979

VOL. 1 NO. 11



Long Live Palestine!

The Myth of Coexistence with Zionism

Again a flurry of activity by the leaders of Egypt, the United States and the Israeli entity in Palestine, to reach a settlement, characterized by Menachem Begin's visit to Washington March 3, followed by President Carter's visit to Cairo and Tel Aviv March 7 culminating with his declaration: "We have failed to meet the Challenge." Only to follow that, in his meeting with Sadat, by the other statement that Egypt and Israel had reached total agreement, and by the ceremonious signing of an Egyptian-Israeli "peace treaty" on the White House lawn.

The peace initiative, if a peace initiative it was, which began with Anwar Sadat's trip to Jerusalem and ended with the so-called Camp David Accords, had shown, many months ago, every sign of having collapsed from its own contradictions. Yet Sadat, Begin and Carter pushed on, proclaiming from time to time that the differences between Egypt and Israel were "minor", that they would be bridged finally with the visit of this or that American official to this or that capital, and that if only this or that Arab government went along with this or that notion in the Accords everything would be just fine. Moreover, it was explained, the differences hinged merely on the question of "linkage" (of an Egyptian-Israeli treaty to a Palestinian settlement) and "precedence" (of an Egyptian-Israeli treaty of any other).

There was an air of unreality about all of this, of theatre of the absurd. This quality was not only characterized by the spectacle of Carter in Cairo being cheered by thousands of Egyptians trucked in from the rural areas to shout meaningless slogans, nor from the talks Egyptian officials held with Secretary Vance, improbably enough, at the Palestine Hotel, the first day the American delegation arrived in Egypt. Rather it was characterized by how far removed Carter, Begin and Sadat have become from all rational and dignified possibilities of resolving the conflict in Palestine — the one conflict that both Carter and Sadat have openly recognized as being the cause-root of the Arab-Israeli dispute and that Begin must equally, though not so openly, recognize as such.

In the context of historical imperative and geopolitical realities, the three men surely inhabit a world of fantasy and wishful thinking if they think that their "total agreement" is binding on the Arab world.

Sadat has, since his visit to occupied Jerusalem in November of 1977, suddenly appointed himself the representative of the Palestinians who is to define to the world the nature of Palestinian national rights — when the Palestinians, inside and outside Palestine, have vociferously denied him that authority. Since all Palestinians, including their official representatives the PLO, have made it quite clear that the Egyptian leader's services are not needed and that they found his interpretation of their rights objectionable, then by what authority has Sadat negotiated away the question of Palestine?

Yet this is not all that has happened. Sadat has, by his naive solo diplomatic activity, as he bowed and scraped and gave away everything to Israel that it wanted, allowed Israel to mortify him and the whole Arab nation.

Sadat visited Jerusalem while it was under occupation and gave recognition to the Israeli entity while its foreign troops were stationed in the national territories of three Arab countries. He threw away the right of the Palestinians to be represented by their own leaders, the PLO, which his government had officially endorsed at the Rabat Conference as the sole spokesman of the

people of Palestine. He gave away the one pivotal demand and aspiration of the Palestinians, for which they have struggled and sacrificed these last sixty years, to be free and sovereign in statehood. He reduced the Palestinian problem to a fragment by allowing it to be defined as a question of "autonomy" for "the inhabitants of the West Bank/Gaza." And he even, right at the end, reduced it further still to autonomy merely in Gaza. On the broader issues of the Arab-Israeli conflict, he not only agreed to a separate peace with Israel — by itself an unpardonable act — but allowed Israel to extract from the Egyptian people one concession after another, having to do with exchange of ambassadors, while Israeli occupation forces stayed on in Arab lands, with Egypt giving up all treaties already existing between it and its sister Arab states, and with issues of Egyptian oil in the Sinai to be shipped to Israel.

And still Israel balked. And still Israel wanted more concessions from the people of Egypt, from the people of Palestine and from other Arabs — with Sadat, in the end, doing all the giving.

The designs of Israel and the U.S. in all of this are well-known.

Israeli leaders, formerly of the Ugun and Stern gangs have a well-delineated policy. It is to keep Zionist occupation perpetual in the whole of Palestine (denying the Palestinian people any rights to statehood and freedom) and to weaken the political and military resources of the Arab world by isolating Egypt from its historical place in it. The U.S., especially in the wake of the triumph of the Iranian revolution and the ouster of its puppet, the Shah, has a three-tiered policy: firstly, it is to undertake through Israel, the task of checking the emergence of progressive forces in the Mashrek countries that may threaten the massive political and economic interests of American imperialism in the Arab world. Secondly, and to use American phraseology, it is to transform Egypt into a "bastion of stability," that is, a base of reaction to be used against liberation forces in Africa and the Middle East. This is a role for Egypt that Sadat himself has openly, and without fear of retribution, coveted. Thirdly, U.S. policy in the Middle East at this juncture is to block in the best way it can the emergence of an independent Palestinian state and impede any meaningful translation of Palestinian rights in Palestine — since that, in the mysterious and brutal ethics of American foreign policy, is seen as a "destabilization" of the status quo, which the United States emphatically does not want.

The agreement between Egypt and Israel is a major challenge to the Palestinian liberation movement as it is to the rest of the Arabs, mutilating, as it does, Palestinian rights and opening the door for a firm foothold by American imperialism in the Arab world. Above all, it is a challenge to the whole Arab nation since this agreement legitimizes Zionism, and an extremist right-wing brand of Zionism to boot, in the heart of the region. We are confident the response to this challenge by the Palestinians and the Arab states, including their masses, will not go unnoticed. We are confident that Sadat, Begin and Carter may have, in fact, created conditions for the emergence of forces and alliances in the Arab world dedicated to reversing the gains that Zionism and American imperialism scored in the area.

The resources of the Palestinian movement and the Arab states are not mean. When used, their potential is beyond the ability of a racist, *apartheid* movement like Zionism, or imperialism, to confront. The history of the last thirty years proves it.



Credit: Lynne Barbee

Thousands Protest: "Peace Treaty Means War!"

While Begin, Sadat and Carter were sitting on the North Lawn of the White House proclaiming that the treaty they were signing would bring peace to the Middle East, about 3000 demonstrators — Palestinians, Arabs and their supporters — were across the street in Lafayette Park chanting that "The peace treaty means war; we will fight it more and more!"

The demonstrators were surrounded by police, and Washington, D.C. police reported that security arrangements for the occasion were almost unprecedented. Despite this, the spirit of the crowd was strong. Protestors had come in buses and cars from many states in the East, Northeast, South and Midwest — from New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Michigan, and many other states. Sponsors of the demonstration included the Organization of Arab Students, the Organization of Iranian Muslim Students and Mujahadin of Iran, the All African Peoples Party, the Palestine Solidarity Committee, the Association of Arab American University Graduates and many others, including organizations in Canada.

Carrying signs and brightly-colored banners denouncing the treaty, and waving Palestinian flags, the demonstrators

chanted "Down, down with Sadat!" "Carter, Carter you should know, we support the PLO!" and "Long live the Egyptian people!" One often-repeated slogan was "Today Iran, tomorrow Palestine." A powerful sound system joined the voices of the crowd to carry these slogans to those assembled on the White House lawn. The press reported that the audience for the signing was "distracted" by the chanting and at times during the live coverage of the speeches of Carter, Begin and Sadat, some words were obscured by the voices of the protestors.

The demonstration, which, according to participants, was the largest pro-Palestinian demonstration to take place in the United States, was supported by the Arab and Palestinian community in Washington in many ways. For example, owners of Arab bakeries and restaurants send large amounts of food to Lafayette Park.

Speakers at the rally received an impassioned response when they condemned Sadat for bringing more bloodshed to the Middle East and betraying the rights of the Palestinian and Arab people. As the new "Shah of the Middle East," according to one speaker, he was warned that he would meet the Shah's fate

at the hands of the Egyptian people. Hatem Hussaini, speaking for the Palestine Liberation Organization, said: "Sadat is hugging Begin and Carter in Washington, D.C. while Arab land on the West Bank, Gaza, the Golan and even the Sinai is still under occupation. Sadat is signing a treaty with Begin while Israeli troops on the West Bank are shooting Palestinian children."

All of the speakers argued that the treaty was not a peace treaty, but a mandate for another and more destructive war in the Middle East, bringing stepped-up military involvement and arming Egypt and Israel to police the area. The speakers urged the American people not to allow their tax dollars to pay the price for this treaty, which was estimated by the *London Economist* as \$25 billion over the next five years, a treaty which legitimizes the Israeli military occupation and denies Palestinians their human and national rights. Both speakers and demonstrators vowed to continue the struggle against the treaty and to reach their communities, schools and workplaces with the real truth about the Palestinian people.

In addition to the Washington demonstration, protests, teach-ins and press conferences occurred in over 40 American cities.

U.S. Military Involvement: Hidden Item on the Peace Agenda

"The lesson of Vietnam is to teach us sophistication about where to get involved." Vice-President Mondale, quoted in *Newsweek*, March 19, 1979.

As President Carter announced the beginning of a new era of peace in the Middle East with his engineering of the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty, the U.S. Constellation and three American escort ships steamed towards the Indian Ocean in a display of American military force designed to reassure Saudi Arabia and shore up North Yemen, embroiled in a war with the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen to the south. The Administration also announced the sale of 12 F-5s to North Yemen, to be financed with Saudi money.

On the eve of the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty, an American military buildup in the Middle East had begun. It had been augured by statements by U.S. Defense and Energy Secretaries on February 27. Energy Secretary Schlesinger warned: "The United States has vital interests in the Persian Gulf. The United States must move in such a way that it protects those interests, even if that involves the use of military strength or of military presence."

In fact, warships and warnings of increased military involvement are a better symbol for the role of the U.S. and for the future of the Middle East after the signing of the peace treaty than the euphoric prophecies of Begin, Carter and Sadat. The paradox of Carter's peace is that it propels the region closer to confrontation, war and foreign intervention. It is no mistake that reporters noted that this round of peace talks dealt even less with the Palestinian problem and more with strategic considerations. Carter's actions, both in the Gulf and in Cairo and Jerusalem, signal a dangerous turn in U.S. policy in the post-Vietnam era.

State Department staffers, the *Mideast Observer* of March 1 reports, are describing the atmosphere at the Department as "reminiscent of Vietnam in 1963," the year elated policymakers convinced themselves that commitment of American advisors and ground troops would lead to easy victory in Southeast Asia. In the wake of the shattering defeat in Vietnam, the Nixon Doctrine, which advocated the use of regional client-states to protect U.S. interests and avoid direct commitment of U.S. troops, emerged. The fall of the Shah of Iran, a bulwark of the Nixon Doctrine, and the withdrawal of the new Iranian government from CENTO and other

commitments to the U.S., has thrown this policy into question.

Certainly, reliance on client states has not been abandoned, but if the old form of the Nixon Doctrine is moribund, the U.S. faces the task of reformulating the guidelines of its policy. An increasing chorus harks back to the "good old days" of the height of American power. The display of force in Yemen was greeted by a *Wall Street Journal* editorial which applauded Carter's firmness and noted that "North Yemen is as good a place as any" to "draw the American line."

In different ways, Egypt and Israel are vying as volunteers to fill the gap left by the Iranian revolution. When Defense Secretary Brown visited the area in mid-February, Sadat told him that in return for billions of dollars of modern weapons, Egypt would assume "responsibility for ensuring stability in a region stretched from Algeria in the East to Afghanistan and from the Mediterranean south into Sub-Sahara Africa." It is unlikely that defense and policy analysts will accept such a grandiose offer from so shaky a leader, but the trend is important.

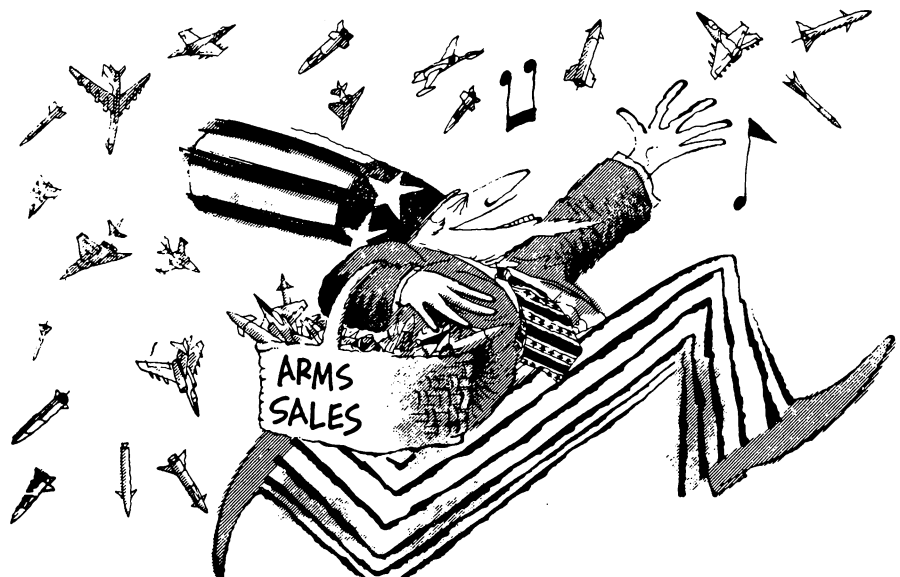
Israel, on the other hand, feels confident of its credentials. Continually stressing its role as "the defender of the Free World" and the "only democracy in the Middle East," Israel has lately been promoting the concept of being "full strategic partners" with the United States. In early March, when asked about a mutual defense pact between Israel and the United States, Begin replied "Israel would be delighted." Israeli military

correspondent Yosef Goell, writing in the *Jerusalem Post* of March 16 noted the significance of increased military alliance with the U.S. when he wrote "It seems that there is no alternative to reinforced American military presence in the area." Again like Egypt, Israel's "strategic partnership" will require more billions of dollars for American weapons.

Among American legislators, Senator Henry Jackson has been the most enthusiastic about a stepped-up role for Egypt and Israel. On ABC's *Issues and Answers* of March 11, he painted a grim picture of the "undefended" and "wideopen" oilfields of Saudi Arabia and prophesied the Western world coming to a "grinding halt" if these resources were attacked. Jackson's solution was a "contingency plan so that local forces, Egyptian and Israeli, or a combination of both, should be available to defend those oil fields in the event of sabotage or in the event of a direct assault on those fields."

Jackson's strategic "thinking" raises both incongruities and dangers. Aside from the logistical near-impossibility of a "strikeforce" defending hundreds of miles of oilfields, and the interjection of the Arab-Israeli dispute into Gulf politics, Jackson adds a third and frightening dimension when he calls for an "American backup" for these local forces, rhetoric again reminiscent of the early Vietnam era. Jackson also supports the creation of a "Fifth Fleet" in the Persian Gulf.

Jackson, of course is well-known as a hawk whose rhetoric surpasses even the



"A tisket, a tasket. . ."

By Keith for the Philadelphia Inquirer



U.S. Sixth Fleet patrols Mediterranean; Pentagon studies creation of new fleet for Gulf.

Pentagon, but it would be a mistake to dismiss his voice as a fringe element. Both CBS Evening News and Cooley in the Christian Science Monitor have reported that a Fifth Fleet is under study at the Pentagon. Cooley reported that "the Carter Administration is preparing a set of tentative security plans designed to spread a protective American umbrella over final Middle East peace arrangements and to defend the Western world's vital oil reservoirs." This "strategic umbrella" includes bases and more air and sea power in the region.

This is a change in post-Vietnam policy but it is not new. One Palestinian spokesperson remarked that the U.S. "seems ready to turn back the clock to the Eisenhower Doctrine of 1957," which stated that the U.S. was prepared to "contain communism" in the Middle East by any means, including "the employment of the armed forces of the United States." One immediate legacy of this Doctrine was the invasion of Lebanon by American Marines in 1958. Given the configuration of forces in the 1970s, including the role of the Soviet Union, it is frightening to imagine what the results of a new Eisenhower Doctrine would be.

Apparently, State Department officials are not gifted with historical imagination. When Representative Lee Hamilton asked Acting Assistant of State William H. Crawford "Is the U.S. prepared to go to war to protect Saudi Arabian oil?", Crawford eventually replied: "Yes, although we wouldn't go to war without full consent of

Congress."

Congress, however, is unlikely to serve as a brake on increased American militarism. Already berating Carter for the "loss of Iran," as if the U.S. owned that country, legislators, and especially Presidential hopefuls, are vying with each other to "wave the flag." Some of this is pure rhetoric designed for an election year. But behind the extreme language, is a real crisis and a dangerous drift back to U.S. military intervention as a solution to a changing world, a world where the Third World is seeking a new international order based on justice and equality. Instead of formulating a policy based on cooperation and justice, the United States has chosen to go the route of a "sophisticated" militarism, expressed well by a senior Administration official quoted in Newsweek of March 19 as saying "We're not the world's policeman, but we're prepared to lead the posse in certain circumstances."

The question remains if the American public can be convinced to support increased military involvement. They are already asked to pay an additional \$5 billion dollars in tax money (a very conservative estimate) as a pricetag for "peace." The fact that both Israeli Defense Minister Weizman and Egyptian Defense Minister Kamel showed up in Washington a few days after the announcement of peace with shopping lists for arms is a good indication of the nature of this "peace." The sentiment in Congress that "it's cheaper than paying for a war" ignores the fact that it is precisely this separate peace that increases the chances

of war.

But even if the American public is temporarily convinced to sacrifice tax money that is needed for social and economic programs domestically for Sadat and Begin's "peace," they will certainly question sending young Americans abroad to fight foreign wars and will deeply resent the host of problems, including renewal of the draft, inflation and crucial cutbacks that military involvement inevitably will bring.

Politicians attempt to justify U.S. involvement by citing the "vital resources" of Middle Eastern oil, and picturing an America stripped of energy. Less than 6% of American domestic oil consumption comes from the Middle East, and as the "energy crisis" of 1973 amply demonstrated, the "strategic" necessity is not lack of energy for American consumers, but control of Middle Eastern oil and its profits for the giant multinational corporations. Anti-Arab racism is another tool in the bag of those who want to justify "leading the posse" in the Middle East.

As Yasser Arafat noted in a speech on March 14, "the age of cowboys, gangsters and policemen in this region has ended forever." This is also an appropriate answer for Americans to give leaders who want them to sacrifice resources and lives to support a "peace treaty" that denies the national rights of the Palestinians and brings increased conflict to the Middle East. Peace emerges from a just solution that grants independence and self-determination to the Palestinians and all peoples of the Middle East, not from gunboat diplomacy.

Carter's Human Rights: The U.S. State Department and American Policy

On March 15, as demonstrations and strikes against the Carter visit to the Middle East swept the occupied West Bank, Israeli soldiers shot and killed 21 year old Nasri Hassan al-Anani and 16 year old Rab'a al-Shalada in the town of Halhoul. Eyewitness observers reported that Rab'a al-Shalada lay dying for several hours in the cordoned-off street. The shootings were one of many incidents of brutality by Israeli soldiers and settlers towards West Bankers in the last weeks.

Back at the U.S. State Department, spokesperson Tom Reston, when asked if the U.S. had any comment on the killings, responded: "It is a source of great regret that a recent series of demonstrations and disturbances on the West Bank seem directed against the successful outcome of the peace negotiations and that two young people lost their lives. We note that the Israeli authorities are conducting an investigation into the shooting at this time."

On the face of it, it seems as if the Carter Administration is more disturbed by Palestinians under Israeli occupation protesting a peace treaty that ignores their human and national rights, than at the Israelis for violating these rights by killing young Palestinians. President Carter, who declared on December 8 that "human rights is the soul of our foreign policy" has pragmatically developed political blinders on the question of Israeli violations. This

convenient "blindspot" is not from lack of knowledge but from a basic conflict between current Administration policy in the Middle East and human rights. This is evidenced by the release of the 1979 State Department report and the February 7 publication by the Washington Post of a blistering expose detailing Israeli torture of Palestinian security detainees in the occupied West Bank. (see Palestine Perspectives #10)

The Post article drew extensively from two secret cables sent to the State Department by the American consulate in Jerusalem. Describing 29 cases of torture of Palestinian detainees, investigated over a nine-month period, the cables noted markedly similar patterns of interrogation and abuse, including hanging by feet or hands, extreme forms of sexual sadism, use of electrical shock and refrigeration, and concluded: "Physical mistreatment is systematically used on many Arab security suspects interrogated on the West Bank." Despite cautious wording and omissions, the 1979 U.S. State Department human rights report, released a few days later, added a roster of other rights abuses by Israel in the occupied territories: collective punishment including house demolition, land confiscation and diversion of water resources, invasion of the home, violations of due process, administrative detention, and banning of political parties, among

others.

Yet what has been the result of this plethora of information on Israeli violations? Alexandra Johnson, the author of the cables, has been fired from the State Department; to date, no American newspaper has published the full text of the cables and few have even followed up on the State Department report (the *New York Times* went as far as editorializing against it as harming the "peace process"); government officials and politicians have either defended Israel or remained silent. None have called for a change in American policy, which under the 1975 Foreign Assistance Act should prohibit aid to "any country which engages in a consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights." Representative Gerry Studds (D. Mass.), in a hearing before the House Europe and Middle East Subcommittee on February 13, reported the *Mideast Observer*, asked an Administration spokesperson if, since the "United States has termed (Israeli) settlements illegal," and Israel has just announced plans to "thicken" the settlements, would the U.S. use "any leverage granted by the very substantial A.I.D. program. . . (to stop) what we construe to be illegal activities?" The Administration spokesperson replied in the negative.

On the other hand, Israel's defenders have been most vocal in condemning the cables and the report. They have focused on the issue of torture, which is the most difficult to prove, and ignored the more visible violations of land confiscation, expulsion of Palestinians from the West Bank, collective punishment, and so forth. Aside from declarations of moral absolutism like Israeli Minister of Justice Shmuel Tamir's remark that "there is no nation which has a right to point a finger of accusation at this nation," Israeli justifications have taken two tacks: personal attacks on the author of the cables, Alexandra Johnson as an "Arab sympathizer" and attempts to use the visits of the International Red Cross to Palestinian prisoners which are allowed after 14 days of interrogation since 1977 as proof that torture does not exist.

Israel's use of the Red Cross as a shield against its accusers is misleading. In order not to jeopardize access to prisoners, the Red Cross, as a matter of policy, does not make its investigation and concerns public.



3500 Palestinians are imprisoned by Israel for "security reasons". In 1978, Israeli military courts sentenced almost 800 Palestinians to jail or gave them large fines.



Palestinian women in Jerusalem protest denial of their rights by Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty.

Moreover, on February 12, the Washington Post reported that it had "evidence that Red Cross representatives in Jerusalem were acquainted with the content (of the cables) and shared the concern expressed in those cables." One Red Cross official stationed in Jerusalem reportedly endangered his job by flying to Washington to confirm Johnson's findings. In addition, as Post reporter William Claiborne noted on March 4 "the watchdog presence of the Red Cross is of limited effectiveness because of a combination of restraints." The most important restraint is the 14 day period before the Red Cross is allowed access to prisoners (it was 28 days until 1977, and is still revoked for special "security" cases). Most prisoners interviewed by Johnson confessed in the first week of interrogation and West Bankers report that interrogators are careful to inflict punishment that will fade before Red Cross physicians arrive.

Repeated attempts to form an international inquiry into Israeli torture have been refused by Israel. Amnesty International, according to their 1978 Report, was "sufficiently concerned by the allegations of torture committed by the Israeli security forces to renew its request, in July 1977, that the Israeli Government permit an independent inquiry into the allegations. To this request — as to Amnesty International's earlier ones — the Israeli authorities have not, at the time of writing, replied."

Ad hominem arguments are always suspect. In the case of Johnson, it is clear that her reports were supported by her superiors in the consulate and are certainly confirmed by independent sources and other investigations, like Amnesty International, the Swiss League for Human and Civil Rights, and United Nations commissions. In a summary of the cables in

the *Palestine Human Rights Bulletin* (April, 1979), Johnson notes an interesting confirmation of her findings: "During these debates (on torture), a significant point was overlooked — on a day-to-day working level, the State Department has for some time accepted Israeli torture of Palestinian political prisoners as a fact. Visa regulations require that most "visa security cases" be submitted to the State Department for decision. . . In May, 1978, the State Department explicitly informed the Jerusalem Consulate that statements about interrogation practices, as well as Israeli court records were being taken into consideration in making these decisions. Thus, for almost two years before the recent public controversy, the State Department was substantially invalidating Israeli court decisions as based on confessions obtained by torture."

This private understanding of the State Department is reflected only in a watered-down conclusion in its public report. Although stronger than the 1978 report, it merely states that "the accumulation of reports, some from credible sources, makes it appear that instances of mistreatment have occurred." This balancing act is a notable feature of the 1979 report. For example, the report notes Israel's rejection of "the view of the United Nations (including the United States) that the stipulations of the Fourth Geneva Convention. . . apply to its governance of the occupied territories," but then goes on to say without comment that "Israel claims it voluntarily observes most of these stipulations." In fact, Israel directly violated 19 articles of this convention, according to the National Lawyers Guild Report.

The fact that, despite compromise language and evasion, the 1979 report is stronger than its predecessors is due, to

some extent, to an escalation of Israeli violations. In is interesting to note, in the year of the "peace process" and Camp David, Israeli "non-military settlements" increased from 77 to 95 and Israeli settlers from 8000 to 14,500. (State Department figures exclude settlement in Arab Jerusalem).

One flagrant omission in this report, as in preceding reports, is the situation of Palestinian Arabs inside Israel. The report affirms that "Israel is a full-fledged parliamentary democracy with extremely high standards of justice and human rights" which are "applied fully inside Israel proper." In a state where 92% of the land is held in "trust" for the Jewish people, where discrimination against Arabs has been documented in jobs, housing and education, and where recently Foreign Minister Dayan warned the Arab population that they would face expulsion if they expressed support for the PLO, the "high standards of justice" would seem to be applied only to Israel's Jewish citizens.

East Jerusalem, Golan and the Sinai are also not discussed in the report, despite the official U.S. position against the Israeli annexation of Jerusalem. This is no small omission, as it involves the denial of the rights of the 70,000 Palestinian inhabitants of East Jerusalem and the 100,000 refugees from the Golan who have never been allowed to return.

The cautious wording of the report also serves to conceal the magnitude of Israeli violations. For example, it cites the well-publicized fact of Israeli demolition of Palestinian homes and writes "at least two homes were demolished and there have been at least six cases of sealing up of homes." Not only are the figures understated but the extent of this policy, which has destroyed 1500 homes in the West Bank and Gaza during the period of Israeli occupation, is not noted. In the same manner, the Israeli policy of expulsion of Palestinians, which has resulted in the deportation of over 1000 Palestinians, primarily leaders, educators and professionals, from the West Bank and Gaza is reported only as a violation that has "ceased since 1976." However, the denial of the right of return to those expelled and to refugees from 1967 is a continuing violation of Palestinian rights.

In fact, the major flaw of the State Department report is a failure to examine Israeli violations as *policy*, as an organized strategy to suppress Palestinian self-determination and control Palestinian land. The methodology of the report is similar to noting each individual board of a blazing house without reporting that the house is burning down.

The Report attributes the "complex
(Continued on page 12)

Palestinians Inside Israel: Open Support for the PLO



Arabs in Israel: Second class citizens.

The following article was written by a Palestinian who lived in Israel until 1967.

The 1948 Arabs, as they are often called, are Palestinians. The fact that they have been geographically separated from the rest of their compatriots does not mean that they are no longer Palestinians and no longer identify themselves as Arabs. Since Israel's establishment in 1948, Palestinians under its rule have not missed a chance to place their identity and support where it really belongs — with the Palestinian people across the borders. Israel is now arresting Palestinian students and Dayan is threatening all of the Arabs in Israel that "if they will not be satisfied and if they don't want to live together with us, then they will have to pay for it very dearly." (*New York Times*, Jan. 27, 1979)

The Palestinian people lived together in Palestine, cultivated its land, built its cities and defended it together for a very long time. As social beings they naturally developed a culture of their own. It obviously takes more than thirty years to break the net of social, cultural and political ties of a group of people, and even more time to break the historic national identity of that group. All of this, however, does not mean that colonial settler states such as Israel will not try, by all possible means, to

shatter all of these ties.

From the beginning of the establishment of the state of Israel, its leaders followed colonial models and tried to force the Palestinians to forget their past. Palestinians were and still are now being exposed to all kinds of pressures including various socialization processes and other attempts at degrading everything Arab — Arabic language, history, culture and tradition — so that Arabs under Israeli rule might change their identity and eventually depart from any connection to their past. Arabs who work with Jewish Israelis are continuously reminded that they are inferiors and that they should stop doing things like Arabs, i.e., being bad and inefficient. Nothing Arab is characterized favorably — the intention being, of course, to encourage the Arab Palestinian people in Israel to renounce their identity, their past, and their national and political ties to the Palestinian movement.

To the disappointment of the leaders of Israel, nothing has and, they now know, nothing will come of their scheme. The Palestinian Arabs who remained in their own land after the creation of Israel are Arabs and Palestinians and will remain so always. Since the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza by Israeli forces in 1967, contact has been reestablished between the 1948 Arabs and those on the newly occupied parts of Palestine. Those contacts are strengthening the ties between the scattered parts of the Palestinian people. Sympathy of Arabs inside 1948 Israel and identification with what is happening among their brothers and sisters across the borders is not new. The support of Israel's Arabs for the Israeli Communist Party, (Rakah) mainly because of the party's adoption of the slogans of the Arab Nationalist Movement, is a good example of the Arabs in Israel identifying with the rest of the Arab movement.

Even back in 1958, long before the coming to the political scene of the PLO, the Arabs in Israel established the Arab Front. This Front was composed of Arab nationalists in Israel and the Israel Communist Party. Because of friction in the Arab world between the nationalist forces and the communist parties, the Front inside Israel was also split. The split between Arab Nationalists and Communists resulted in the creation of *Al-Ard* (The Land). *Al-Ard* became very popular among the Arabs in Israel, so much so that when its members applied for a permit to publish a newspaper, they were denied the right by the Government without any explanation for

the denial. In 1964 *Al-Ard* applied for registration under the name *Al-Ard* Movement, and this request was rejected for "security reasons".

Israel's hardline policy towards the 1948 Arabs continued and so did the Arabs refusal to accept permanent alienation from the rest of the Palestinian people. Many young Arabs crossed the borders into Lebanon, Jordan and Syria in the late 1960's and early 1970's in order to join the ranks of the Palestinian struggle. Those inside Israel felt more and more identification with the Palestinian movement and the Arab Nationalist Movement of Egyptian President Nasser. The Arabs in Israel responded to all nationalist events taking place in the Arab world. When Nasser died, for example, on September 28, 1970, many Arabs in many villages stayed home and marched in funeral processions just like other Arabs did in Beirut, Algeria, Iraq and almost every other Arab capital.

All through the 1970's the sympathy of the Arabs in Israel was with the PLO. The support of the majority of the Arab students in Israel's universities for the demands of the Palestinian people was and continues to be very obvious. The *New York Times* reported on January 27, 1979, that "Israeli authorities... have ordered six Israeli Arab students suspected of circulating a leaflet supporting the Palestine Liberation Organization to leave Jerusalem (where they studied at the Hebrew University) and return to their homes." The orders to the students were issued not through the courts but in accordance with the laws left from the period of the British mandate. These laws give the commanders of the army the right to limit personal freedoms for security reasons.

The leaflet which was distributed and signed by "The Progressive Nationalist Movement" in branches of the Hebrew University, in Haifa, Jerusalem, Tel-Aviv, and Beer Al Sabi (Beersheva) called for continuing the struggle against imperialism, Zionism and Arab reaction. The statement also condemned the capitulatory regime of Anwar Sadat and saluted the resisting spirit of the Palestinians and the masses of the Arab people.

The statement ended with the following salutes:

"Long live the Palestine struggle! Long live the Arab struggle! Long live the Arab nationalist, popular, democratic revolution!"

In a series of articles in the *Jerusalem Post* which began February 25th of this year

(Continued on page 9)

Literature and Resources

Palestine Information Office, *The Palestine National Council:*

Documents and Statements, 1979 \$1.00 ☐

National Lawyers Guild 1977 Middle East Delegation, *Treatment of Palestinians in Israeli-Occupied West Bank and Gaza* \$4.50 ☐

Peoples Press Book Project, *Our Roots Are Still Alive* \$4.50 ☐

Abdul Wahab Al-Messeri (editor) *A Lover from Palestine and Other Poems* .. \$3.00 ☐

★ Fawaz Turki, *Tel Zaatar Was the Hill of Thyme* (poems) \$4.00 ☐

Fawaz Turki, *The Disinherited: Journal of a Palestinian Exile* \$4.00 ☐

Richard Stevens and A. El-Messeri, *Israel and South Africa* (new edition) \$4.00 ☐

In Solidarity with the Palestinian People (folder of pamphlets and posters) \$1.00 ☐

Hatem Hussaini (ed) *Towards Peace in Palestine* \$1.00 ☐

Hatem Hussaini and Fathalla El-Boghdady (ed) *The Palestinians* \$1.00 ☐

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

O. Kelly Ingram (ed) *Jerusalem: Key to Peace in the Middle East* \$4.00 ☐

★ P.L.O. Political Department, *The Palestinian Resistance: A National Liberation Movement* \$1.00 ☐

★ P.L.O. Political Department, *The Struggle for the Land of Palestine* \$1.00 ☐

★ P.L.O. Political Department, *Palestinian Culture* \$1.00 ☐

★ P.L.O. Political Department, *From Ghetto to Yishuv* \$1.00 ☐

★ P.L.O. Political Department, *Stars in the Sky of Palestine* \$1.00 ☐

★ Free Palestine, *Tal al Zaatar; The Fight Against Fascism* \$4.00 ☐

★ Permanent Committee for Palestinian Deportees, *Enforced Exile* 1.00 ☐

★ Elmer Berger, *Memoirs of an Anti-Zionist Jew* \$3.00 ☐

★ Fouzi Al-Asmar, *To be an Arab in Israel* \$3.00 ☐

★ Paintings by Ismail Shamout \$1.00 each ☐

★ Photos by Hani Jouhariaya (packet of 18 photos) \$15.00 ☐

★ Posters from the PLO \$1.00 each ☐

المقاومة الفلسطينية حركة تحرر وطني
م.ت.ف. الدائرة السياسية

شهادات من ارض المعركة \$ 3.00
حرب الجنوب
١٩٧٨ - ٢٣ - ١٥ اذار

اوراق من زمن الاشتباك \$ 3.00
يحيى رباح

اميل حبيبي - الوقائع الغريبة في
اختفاء سعيد ابى الحس المتشائل

الاتحاد العام للمرأة الفلسطينية
تل الزعتر

خطاب الاخ ابو عمار في المجلس
الوطني الفلسطيني

معين بسيسو، الان خذي جسدي
كيسا من الرمل

عبد الوهاب المسيري، موسوعة
المفاهيم والمصطلحات الصهيونية

TO OUR READERS:

The first issue of *Palestine Perspectives* came out in May, 1978. Since that time, *Palestine Perspectives* has covered the unfolding crisis in the Middle East, as the United States, Egypt and Israel attempt to impose an unjust solution on the area and deny Palestinians their national and human rights. The news and analyses in our magazine are difficult to find elsewhere. We draw from Palestinian, Israeli and international sources, as well as direct interviews and investigations to report and analyze current developments in the occupied territories, the PLO, the Arab world and Israel. Analysis of policy developments in Washington and reports of important events in the country add another dimension. In addition, *Palestine Perspectives* strives to present Palestinian culture and daily life to the American public.

If you are one of many readers who have received our magazine for free and if you have found our magazine useful, we hope you will subscribe now. If you are a subscriber, we hope you will encourage other people to also subscribe. Our financial situation will no longer permit us to distribute large quantities of *Palestine Perspectives* without charge. **SUBSCRIBE NOW!** Don't miss the next issue of *Palestine Perspectives*, a crucial source of information about Palestine and its people!

.....
Please check the material you want and send us the form with check or money order.

☐ I enclose \$10 for 12 issues of *Palestine Perspectives*. ☐ I enclose \$_____ for literature.

Name _____

Address _____ Zip _____

Please send a complimentary copy to _____

Please make checks payable to the Palestine Information Office.

Posters Affirm Palestinian Identity



"Palestine: Return to Sender" by Polish artist Jack Kawalski



"Palestine" by Polish artist Merion Nowaski

These two posters won prizes at an exhibit of Palestinian posters in London this March. More than three hundred painters participated in the exhibit, which was sponsored by the Iraqi Cultural Center.

(Continued from page 8)

the Arab students in Israel and the Arab community in general reveal that they are Palestinians and identify with the PLO. A spokesperson of the Progressive National Movement told the *Jerusalem Post* "we demand that the right of national self-determination for the Palestinian people also include the masses in Galilee and the Triangle. Our far reaching slogan at the present stage is for the right to self-determination."

Azmi Bishara, a leader of the Arab Student Union in Jerusalem, is quoted in the same article to have said: "you speak of moderates and extremists. In fact. . . we are all extremists." In opposing discrimination, land expropriation and occupation of Arab lands, one can't be moderate. He also went on to say: "My ways of waging the Palestinian struggle are moderate only because those in the present context are more effective." Mustapha Asle, another Arab student, affirmed that he and his group the Progressive National Movement not only support the PLO but also call for the "disappearance of the Zionist entity and the establishment of a secular democratic state in all of Palestine."

Dr. Jack Cohen, the director of Hillel House of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, says that the "Arab student scene

in Israel is certainly a reflection of somewhat similar process in Arab society in Israel in general." The reunification of these two parts of the Palestinian people, those under Israeli rule since 1948 and those under Israeli occupation since 1967 on the West Bank and Gaza, in addition to the positive international role of the PLO, seem to have rekindled the nationalist feelings among the 1948 Arabs. Rakah, the Communist Party which enjoys a majority of Arab support, is now considered "moderate". The Arabs in Israel, because of the circumstances and facts mentioned above, so the article says, have gone through radicalization and "totally Palestinized". Rakah and the more radical groups of Arabs in Israel have succeeded in having some representation, and the mayoralty of 22 Arab cities and villages in Israel.

Moshe Dayan, Israel's Foreign Minister, alarmed by the open condemnation of his Zionist regime and the open support to the Palestinian movement by Arabs in Israel, warned the Arabs in Israel not to be "carried away by the Islamic Fanaticism now sweeping the Middle East." Dayan and his government's alarm is not based on the statement of a few Arab students, or the message of support sent to the 14th Palestine National Council meeting in Damascus, Syria by another group of

students. In a public meeting held in Nazareth of about 200 Arab dignitaries, "expressions of support for the PLO" were quoted by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency on January 26, 1979. Terrified at what happened to their friend, the Shahinshah dictator of Iran, and what effect that may have on the reactionary regimes in the Middle East, Dayan was quoted to have said "we are not the Shah."

Dayan's, Sadat's and other reactionary regimes in the Middle East should watch very carefully what happened to their friend the King of Kings. To Mr. Dayan we the Palestinian Arabs say, however, no matter what you do and no matter how hard you try to alienate and isolate the Arabs in Israel from the rest of the body of the Palestinian and Arab masses, you are doomed to failure. The Palestinian people are one people, the creation of an artificial border between the parts of our land and people will not give them two separate national identities nor will it eliminate the historical, political and cultural experiences they have acquired, cherished and fought for together. It has been only thirty years since these two factions of the people of Palestine lived together homogeneously. They are still in touch with each other, share each other's happy and sorrowful experiences and yearn for their ultimate unification.

Arafat in Tehran: Two People in One Struggle



Iranians greet Khomeini and Arafat.

In the end, the Shah of Iran could not be saved even by the U.S., which had underwritten his survival over the last quarter of a century through massive investments in his army, and repressive secret police forces. The absolutist, autocratic power of the Shah, and the pain inflicted on the Iranian people by his apparatus of repression, had been so awesome, pervasive and terrifying that not a single segment of Iranian society was left untouched.

Finally it was not only because, but in spite of this terror that the mass energy of the Iranian people exploded. And such an explosion could not have been checked by anyone.

The popular, unarmed uprising in Iran is without a doubt one of the most intense in human history. Its popular eloquence (millions marching in the streets) had rarely been matched or witnessed before, nor had the power it wielded — where it destroyed a massively equipped, still intact U.S. trained army, a task that confronted neither the Russian revolution (where the army had already been shattered by World War I) nor the Chinese (where the Kuomintang had

been totally drained of its resources by 1949).

It is difficult to conceive of the Iranian revolution in the Middle East in isolation of its impact on and its links to the struggle of the Palestinian people. Even before the triumph of the uprising against the Shah, it was evident that the Iranian people's solidarity with the Palestinians was both intense and predictable. Often, the slogans of the Palestinian revolution, ("Revolution, revolution, till victory", and "Were I to fall, a thousand others will pick up my gun"), became those of Iranian revolutionaries marching in the streets of Tehran in defiance of the shah, of his appointed prime minister and well-equipped army.

And in like manner, the trials and tribulations of the Iranian revolution were watched carefully by the Palestinians, who for years had shared with the Iranians a loathing for the Shah and for his policies of support for Israel, as the Iranians had shared with the Palestinians an equal loathing for Zionism and its links to SAVAK, the Iranian secret police.

It was inevitable, then, that the first foreign leader to arrive in Iran, to a

tumultuous revolutionary welcome by the mass of Iranians, was Yasser Arafat, leader of the Palestinian liberation movement.

Arafat, accompanied by a PLO delegation, arrived in Tehran on February 18. At Tehran airport, the Palestinian leader was met by Ayatolla el Maazi, representative of Ayatolla Khomeini, and officials from the revolutionary government of Mahdi Bazargan as well as the revolutionary minister of the Iranian airforce. Arafat's plane was accompanied, in Iranian airspace, by Phantoms of the revolutionary government.

Soon after news of the arrival of the PLO delegation to Tehran broke, Iranian radio repeatedly broadcast songs of the Palestinian revolution and prefaced newscasts with: "Today Iran, tomorrow Palestine." Tens of thousands began marching in the streets in welcome.

Arafat's motorcade drove directly to the "Martyrs Cemetery" in Behest Zahra where thousands of patriots, who had fallen in the struggle, had been buried. The Palestinian leader delivered a speech dealing with the solidarity of the Iranian and Palestinian peoples. Dr. Yazdi, deputy prime minister of the revolutionary government, and Haj Sayyed Ahmed Khomeini, the Ayatollah's son, were present during the speech. Thousands of Iranians shouted slogans back in support of Arafat and his delegation. Tehran radio confirmed that among the Palestinian delegation, accompanying Arafat on his tour, was Um Salim, a Palestinian woman guerrilla who had lost her three sons in the Eight Day War of the south of Lebanon.

The following day, Arafat met with Prime Minister Bazargan at the Foreign Minister's office, where issues concerning the Palestinian and Iranian revolutions were discussed. At a press conference held at the Foreign Ministry, attended by fifty Iranian and foreign correspondents, Arafat said, when asked why he came to Iran: "You can not ask a person why he is visiting his own country and his own brothers." When the P.L.O. leader was asked if he considered Iran his homeland, he replied: "My first homeland is Palestine, Iran is my second." On the subject of the support the Palestinian revolution had extended Iranian guerrillas in the past, Arafat said the relations between Iranians and Palestinians are "not relations of interest, since we consider the struggle of one people to be an

(Continued on page 12)

The Palestine National Council: Its Origins and Role in the Palestinian Struggle



Discussion at 14th PNC session, January, 1979.

The defeat of the 1936-1939 Revolt in Palestine, by the collaborative forces of British colonialism, Zionism and Arab reaction, followed by the expulsion of the Palestinians from their homeland in 1948, left the Palestinian national movement fragmented and leaderless. Its very ethos and direction, for almost a decade after that, were assimilated in the over-all Pan-Arab movement whose critique of the struggle rested on the belief that the liberation of Palestine should come through the liberation and unity of the whole Arab world.

Concurrently with that sensibility, there also began to emerge, in Gaza and elsewhere, other groups who placed the liberation of Palestine at the top list of their priorities. These groups were composed, for the most part, of youngsters who were barely in their teens or early twenties when Palestine was transformed into a Jewish state and they themselves were expelled into the surrounding countries.

It was around that time, in the late 1950's, that el Fatah was created and its newspaper, *Faistinuna*, began distribution in the Arab world, very often clandestinely. The appeal of el Fatah, however, remained limited, since the major current of thought among the Palestinians was still, at that time, a conviction that only through Pan-Arab unity could Palestinian rights be regained. A reversal in this mass sentiment, in the direction of el Fatah's political program of self-reliance and the notion that Arab unity is not a pre-requisite for the liberation of Palestine, occurred in the early 1960's when three major events took place in the Arab world. The first was the collapse of the union between Syria and Egypt (which had been considered by Palestinian Pan-Arabists to be a highlight of the Pan-Arabist movement), the success of the Algerian revolution (which drew on Pan-Arab resources

but remained independent) and an aboriginal distrust by the Palestinians of various Arab regimes (whose intentions, it became clear at one point, were to use the Palestine cause as an instrument of inter-Arab feuding).

As if to pre-empt this upsurge in independent Palestinian self-expressions, an Arab Summit in 1964 called for the creation of an "independent" Palestinian voice. It was there that the first steps were taken toward the creation of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

In February of that year, Ahmad Shukeiry, who had been appointed representative of Palestine at the Arab League in 1963, toured the Arab capitals announcing that a Palestine National Council, a Palestinian Parliament in exile, would be held in Jerusalem in May of 1964 and it was there that the P.L.O. was officially proclaimed.

The Council sessions, which concluded on June 1, 1964, adopted various resolutions affecting the lives of the Palestinian people on the social, economic, military and political levels. In addition to the P.L.O., with its executive committee (headed autocratically by Shukeiry himself), a Palestine National Fund, a Palestine Liberation Army and a Palestine National Charter, were created. The Palestine National Council was to be the ultimate sovereign body of the Palestinian people.

In the year that followed all of this, the P.L.O. came under increasing attacks by the militants, including el Fatah and George Habash's Arab Nationalist Movement, as an instrument of the Arab cold war, whose "notables" were responsive to the dictates of the Arab states. Independently of the P.L.O., the revolutionary groups carried out various guerrilla attacks against Israel and organized their cadres underground.

By the end of 1966, Shukairy, conscious of the criticism of the P.L.O. by the Palestinian militants, announced the replacement of the executive committee by a "Revolutionary Council" which was to prepare the people "for a war of liberation."

Whatever merit this proposal had had, it was soon overtaken by events. Six months later, the June War broke out.

Shukairy's rhetoric during that time, as contrasted with his lack of initiative during the war, discredited him totally among the Palestinians. On December 9, el Fatah (which grew out of the Arab Nationalist Movement) and the General Union of Palestinian Students, demanded his

resignation. By the end of 1967, after failing to rally any kind of support, Shukairy faded out of the Palestinian activist scene.

The situation created in the aftermath of the June War had opened up a lot of possibilities for the organizations that had operated outside the P.L.O.

Eight guerrilla organizations met in Cairo, January 17-20 and demanded that the P.L.O. and the PNC be totally restructured, and their members be reflective more democratically of the various ideological currents with which Palestinian society was imbued. A second PNC session was held, this time in Cairo, whose members were drawn from both the guerrilla groups and from organizations representing students, workers, women and independents. A new executive committee of the P.L.O. was established. It was only a matter of time before the guerrillas took formal leadership of the Palestinian liberation movement.

★ ★ ★

The Palestine National Council has held a great number of meetings since that first one in Jerusalem in 1964. Its structure and its role have developed as equally dramatically as has its original political orientation.

The PNC remains today the most important institution in Palestinian society, the equivalent of a parliament in membership and authority. It is the supreme authority for formulating policies and programmes, and the P.L.O. is an agent of implementing them. During its ordinary sessions, the Council considers reports from the executive committee of the P.L.O. and its various organs, as well as the report of the Palestine National Fund, recommendations from Council Committees and reports on achievements of the P.L.O. in endeavors with which the P.L.O. had been entrusted in the previous sessions. Two-thirds of the PNC membership form the quorum and decisions are taken by simple majority. In 1973, in its eleventh session, the Council created a Central Council from its own membership to follow up on and implement its resolutions. This body has 21 members.

The most striking feature about the PNC, indeed about the whole structure of the Palestinian liberation movement, is not just the fact that it has employed the most democratic means to give voice to all the

(Continued on page 12)

(Continued from page 11)

existing political trends in Palestinian society, but that the PNC, along with its popular organizational extensions, have survived and developed in the face of massive attacks. And the reason it has survived is obvious: It has strong political roots among the Palestinian people everywhere. Had it not had that, had it not had national and international sympathy and support, it would have been swept away by the force of dramatic events in the Middle East since 1967.

(Continued from page 7)

human rights situation in the West Bank and Gaza" to "tensions between the occupying authorities and the indigenous population." To analyze why these tensions exist, what policies enflame them, and how they might be resolved is far too politically dangerous for the Carter Administration. Instead, the report gives the Camp David proposal for a "self-governing authority" as a panacea. Ironically, none of the violations mentioned in the report itself would cease if the proposed "self-rule plan" is instituted: Israeli military control would be maintained; Israel would still control water resources and maintain and build new settlements; and Israel could veto any move towards Palestinian self-determination. Administration policy at this point, reinforces, rather than restrains, violations of Palestinian human and national rights.

The April, 1979 Palestine Human Rights Campaign Bulletin (available from PHRC, 1322 18th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036) contains a summary of the cables and commentary by Alexandra Johnson. In addition, the March 1979, Palestine/Israel Bulletin (P.O. Box 53, Waverly, Mass. 02179) contains a detailed critique of the State Department report.

(Continued from page 10)

extension of the other." He added: "They have given us and we have given them."

Arafat, in his press conference and later statements, said that the triumph of the Iranian revolution has so dramatically transformed the geopolitical picture in the Middle East that the machinations of American imperialism are weakened. He said the Iranian revolution, among other things, was a response to Brzezinski's remark, "bye-bye P.L.O." He said his presence in Iran and his reception by the Iranian people and their revolutionary leaders is a response to that. "It is bye-bye American interests," he stressed.

One of the highlights of Arafat's visit was the transfer of the Israeli embassy to the Palestinian delegation. The embassy, which had been attacked and ransacked by Iranian demonstrators, had been a center through which Zionist police agents passed to train, advise and arm SAVAK and other repressive agencies of the Shah's regime. At an official ceremony, where the embassy building was handed over to Yasser Arafat, Iranian officials named it "the Embassy of Palestine." Speeches of solidarity were given by both Palestinian and Iranian leaders on the occasion. Thousands of Iranians watched the ceremony and shouted slogans of support. There was no question about the significance of the event and about its historic symbolism.

On his five day visit, the P.L.O. leader visited with various Iranian political and religious leaders in different parts of the country, such as Mashad and Ahvaz.

Hani el Hassan, a P.L.O. official accompanying the Palestinian leader on his visit who will stay behind in Iran to be the representative of the Palestinian movement, said, after talks with Iranian officials

February 28, that the new Iranian revolutionary government has made the "liberation of Jerusalem from Israeli occupation one of its foremost religious and moral commitments." Hassan said that the pledge had been made to the Palestinian delegation by leaders of the Iranian government, including ayatollah Khomeini.

At a meeting on February 27, a delegation of Iranian Jews met with Al-Hassan and offered their congratulations on the opening of the PLO office and their support of the Palestinian people. They noted that Iranian Jews had marched with the Iranian revolution, and would participate in the Palestinian revolution as well. Al-Hassan replied that their visit was one of the happiest events for the new PLO office and that "As you know, we, the PLO, have a democratic secular state as a solution to the Palestine question and have called in our charter for the coexistence in Palestine of Jews, Muslims and Christians without any discrimination whatsoever. We also differentiate between Jews and Zionists, and have always had good and militant relations with Jews." Al-Hassan stressed that "the PLO has fought anti-semitism because it is our enemy as well as the enemy of the Jews."

Back in Beirut, the P.L.O. chief spoke at a rally in support of the tenth anniversary of the foundation of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, where he scored the Begin-Sadat-Carter talks as being a "futile exercise in view of the victory of the Iranian revolution." He declared: "Carter thought he could contain and isolate the Palestinian revolution and the Lebanese National Movement. . . that the area would kneel before him. . . Let them (in Egypt, U.S. and Israel) say what they please, let them sign what they want. The dustbins of history will be their inevitable destiny."

This material has been written, produced and/or distributed by the Palestine Information Office, 1326, 18th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 which is registered under the Foreign Agents Registration Act of 1938, as amended, as an agent of the Palestine Liberation Organization, Beirut, Lebanon. Two copies of this material are being filed with the Department of Justice where the registration statement of the Palestine Information Office is available for public inspection. Registration does not indicate approval of the contents of this material by the United States Government.

palestine
perspectives

MARCH 1979

Vol. 1, No. 11

A
Monthly
Magazine
published
by

PALESTINE INFORMATION OFFICE
P.O. Box 57042
Washington, D.C. 20037

RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Brentwood, MD
Permit No. 3039