



DIVISION FOR
PALESTINIAN RIGHTS

THE NORTH AMERICAN NGO SYMPOSIUM

ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE

United Nations Headquarters, New York
25-27 June 1984

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INTRODUCTION

The first North American NGO Symposium on the Question of Palestine took place at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from 25 to 27 June 1984, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 38/58B of 13 December 1983. Fifty-seven NGOs participated in the Symposium as well as 20 experts, members of the academic community and politicians.

The topics for consideration were:

- (a) The Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian people;
- (b) The role of North American Churches on the Question of Palestine;
- (c) Factors determining policy-making in North America on the Middle East and the question of Palestine;
- (d) Paths to a comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East;
- (e) Women and the question of Palestine; and
- (f) Strategies for NGO collaboration and networking.

The opening session of the Symposium was addressed by His Excellency Ambassador Massamba Sarré, Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and by Mr. Zehdi Labib Terzi, Permanent Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization to the United Nations.

General and wide-ranging discussions followed the presentations of the panelists.

The Symposium concluded its meetings by adopting by acclamation a declaration entitled "The North American Declaration". (See below the text of the Declaration.)

THE NORTH AMERICAN DECLARATION

1. We wish to thank the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Division for Palestinian Rights for making this meeting possible.
2. As non-governmental organizations (NGOs), we are particularly grateful to the United Nations for the creation of an NGO liaison staff function, and for the provision of annual NGO meetings.
3. We, the representatives of 60 non-governmental organizations represented at the North American NGO Symposium on the Question of Palestine, 25-27 June 1984, at United Nations Headquarters in New York, call upon the peoples and governments of the United States and Canada to take definitive steps to secure a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Arab-Israeli conflict, the core of which is the question of Palestine.
4. We wish to voice our support for the United Nations, especially its work to achieve a just and lasting solution to the question of Palestine through the implementation of relevant resolutions.
5. We are of the opinion that there exists an international consensus on the elements of such a peace which is reflected in the relevant resolutions and documents of the United Nations and the positions of the majority of the Member States of the United Nations as expressed in the Geneva Declaration on Palestine, 1983.
6. Recent polls have shown that this international consensus is paralleled by an emerging consensus among the peoples of Canada and the United States for such a just peace. The peoples of our two nations are increasingly recognizing that Palestinians, like Israelis, constitute a nation and are endowed with an inalienable right to national self-determination and statehood within historic Palestine. This right means the right to return to Palestine; the right to be represented by their chosen representatives, the Palestine Liberation Organization; and the right to live securely in peace with all the neighbouring states, including Israel.
7. We believe that it is imperative that steps towards peace be taken immediately since the de facto annexation of the West Bank (including Jerusalem) and Gaza by the government of Israel, is proceeding rapidly and threatens to destroy the possibility of a peace based upon the mutual recognition of the rights of Palestinians, as well as Israelis to national self-determination. We call on the government of the United States to declare unequivocally that the 1949 Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of

Civilian Persons In Time of War applies to all territories occupied by Israel in and after 1967; to secure Israeli compliance with the Convention, as the US is required to do by the terms of the Convention. We are aware that the United States Government and consequently the American taxpayer gives more United States aid to Israel than to any other country. Much of it is in the form of grants which do not need to be repaid. This money permits Israel illegally to build and expand existing settlements.

8. It is our belief that all the parties to the conflict should come together in an international peace conference on the Middle East as called for the the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, August 1983. and as adopted by the General Assembly in A/RES/38/58 C. It is essential that the conference be inclusive and be attended by representatives of both Israel and the Palestinians, which is the Palestine Liberation Organization, those Arab states party to the conflict, the United States and the Soviet Union. Just as General Assembly resolution 181 of November 1947, recognized the right of both peoples to self-determination and statehood, so now should the member states of the General Assembly reiterate these principles as the basis for a negotiated peace under the auspices of the United Nations.

9. With the intent to further this goal of a just and lasting peace, we representatives of non-governmental organizations will work towards the following, and urge our respective governments of Canada and the United States to take similar actions:

Call upon the governments of Canada and the United States for the recognition of the right and just struggle of the Palestinian people under their sole and legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Promote Palestinian right of self-determination and the convening of an international peace conference under the auspices of the United Nations.

Work towards an immediate freeze on the construction and expansion of Jewish settlements in the occupied territories.

Promote the reduction of militarization of this highly volatile region, by refraining from supplying weapons and other means of war. The threat of World War III and the possibility of a nuclear disaster is of great concern.

Take concrete steps to preserve and protect the human rights of all persons living in Israel and in all territories occupied by Israel.

Provide protection and assistance to Palestinians who are victims of dispossession and oppression, particularly women and children.

Ensure academic freedom and freedom of cultural expression in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories, including Jerusalem, with particular attention to the function of universities in these areas.

Urge meetings between religious groups, women's organizations, labour unions, peace groups, human rights groups, and other NGOs with their Israeli and Palestinian counterparts.

Facilitate dialogue among North American Muslims, Christians and Jews concerning the moral and theological basis for a lasting peace in the Middle East.

Encourage meetings between Palestinians and progressive Jewish peace forces within and outside Israel in the hopes of furthering peace and mutual understanding.

Work towards the elimination of discriminatory restrictions on visas to Palestinian leaders to visit the United States and Canada, since such communications among Palestinians, progressive Israelis and the public of the U.S. and Canada are ingredients in a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

Urge that all American and Canadian NGOs working for peace with justice in the Middle East be accorded the full protection of their rights to freedom of expression and association without fear of surveillance, interception of mail, surreptitious entry, or harassment by the governments of the United States or Canada, in light of the deplorable Security Bill recently passed by the House of Commons in Canada and the various proposed "anti-terrorist" bills presently posing serious threats to the civil liberties and rights of Canadians and Americans working in support of various human rights struggles.

Work to initiate, particularly among North American women's organizations, a coordinated campaign of support on behalf of Palestinian women presently imprisoned and under town and house arrest because of their social and political activities.

Urge NGOs to raise the issue of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people in the course of the upcoming electoral campaigns in the United States and Canada.

Urge that UNRWA continue to provide its services to the Palestinians without any decrease or diminution. Cognizant of its mandate we urge the United Nations to re-evaluate and update UNRWA's regulations as to which families and women receive aid. Further, we urge that governments increase their financial support of UNRWA.

Promote the dissemination of the speech made by Chairman Yasser Arafat at the International Conference on the Question of Palestine, August, 1983.

10. We urge the United Nations to:

Include, in the mandate of the NGO liaison function of the Division for Palestinian Rights, work on the Decade of Women Conference in Nairobi, 1985. This should facilitate inclusion and full participation of Palestinian women in that Conference.

Facilitate the North American NGO community in the establishment of a clearinghouse for information on the question of Palestine.

Continue the development of a bi-monthly North American calendar of NGO activities, and facilitate its wide dissemination.

— Produce a comprehensive directory of all NGO organizations working on this issue including those that have not participated in any United Nations activities.

Coordinate the development of a guide to resources, "how to" expertise, and action-oriented networking, including the development of a telephone tree for the communication of urgent information.

11. We in turn will create ways for better communication among ourselves and for dissemination of our collective resources, hoping that the formation of North American public opinion can be a joint NGO/United Nations venture.

12. We urge the publication of the proceedings of this Symposium, including the North American Declaration and the statements of the panelists, by the United Nations.

13. We urge the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to convey this resolution to the 39th General Assembly as part of the Committee's report.

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENTS

Ambassador Massamba Sarré

The North American NGO Symposium on the Question of Palestine is called to order. On behalf of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, I have the honour to welcome you to this very important Symposium which is the first of its kind in North America. The Committee's conviction which is implicitly reflected in the International Conference on the Question of Palestine held last August, in Geneva, as well as by the General Assembly at its thirty eighth session, that NGOs have a signal role to play in the efforts undertaken by the international community in order to find a just and lasting solution to this difficult question, which is that of Palestine itself. It is only by making the elements of the question better known and by ensuring their broader dissemination and by taking an unbiased look at the facts that it will be possible to make progress in this direction.

As regards the United Nations, this matter has been before the Organization for some 40 years as you know and it has constantly searched for a solution which would ensure justice to all the peoples, and, in particular, the Palestinian people, a martyred people. This may seem to be an exorbitant duration and even some doubts may arise with regard to the effectiveness of the United Nations. Although there is good reason to have some doubts on the matter, this observation must not give rise to discouragement since on the universal level there is at least broad agreement on the principles which should serve as a basis for a just solution to the Palestinian question.

As you know, at present the only obstacle to their implementation we must recognize and we must say so is the lack of a political will and it is because of this lack of a political will, the United Nations following lengthy experience in 1975 set up the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People which has harnessed itself to a search for a solution and a formulation of the principles which should serve as a basis for a just and lasting solution to the question. For the first time this Committee in 1976 submitted a programme designed to enable the Palestinian people to exercise freely its rights, in the published document you will find the first report of the recommendations of this Committee which considers the basic causes and the principles regarding the inadmissibility of any taking of territory by force, the question of the liberation of Palestine, the role of the United Nations, the eminent role of the United Nations in this question. Another principle which will be found in this report is that of the right to return. You are aware that following the events of 1947 and 1967 thousands of Palestinians were uprooted from their homes and a sine qua non to enable the Palestinian people to exercise their rights is at least the return of these persons to their homes. You will find as another guiding principle in this report the right to self-determination, to independence and national sovereignty which, as you know, is a principle enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration on Human Rights.

These recommendations were, as I said, submitted in 1976 to the Security Council; unfortunately, following a veto of a permanent member of the Security

Council the recommendations did not materialize. None the less, in spite of this obstacle, year after year and session after session, at every meeting at which the Palestinian question has been examined the Committee has confirmed its recommendations as I have already mentioned. And in spite of these obstacles and the rejection especially at the level of the Security Council which is the essential body of the United Nations, in spite of these rejections the recommendations preserve their entire value to serve as a basis for a just solution to this problem, and in this respect we must at the level of NGOs undertake every action in order to bring about a favourable political climate in your respective Governments so that this question be settled as rapidly as possible. An urgent problem arises and this has been the basis for convening an international peace conference on the Middle East, an idea which is contained in the Geneva Declaration of last year and which was adopted by the General Assembly this year with a very large majority in resolution 58/38. Unfortunately, progress so far attained with respect to this idea has remained very slight in view of the interpretation put upon it by the parties directly concerned. None the less, it is encouraging to note that, in spite of some reservations, the interested parties have begun to realize that it is high time and indeed just and necessary that an opening be made, that is, appropriate conversations should be held on the Palestinian question. And as I have said earlier, it is at this point that your role becomes more important than ever. You must make your respective public opinions understand as well as the political will in your country, the importance of the settlement of this problem, the peace and security of the world depend upon it, and whatever arguments and whatever reasoning may be advanced on one side or the other on the Palestinian question, for or against dialogue between Arabs and Palestinians.

It is perfectly clear that, until there is a just and lasting settlement of the Palestinian question, in all its various components and variants, there will never be any peace in the Middle East, and I think we must keep this in mind, history so recommends as well as our objectivity. I believe, therefore, that NGOs do have a very important role to play, on the one hand by harmonizing and co-ordinating their efforts in the search for this long awaited peace, and on the other hand by organizing their reports of their efforts with the United Nations in order to bring about some progress in this matter. Some may say, following what I have said, that the impression may arise that NGOs have never had any active participation in a search for a solution to this question, on the contrary, this is merely a reminder, all the more so as at the last Conference which was held in Geneva on the Palestinian question, more than 100 NGOs took an active part, and indeed made a positive contribution to this Conference, and the documents which you drafted there, once followed up, could certainly constitute an important step in the achievement of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. All this demonstrates the influence of the NGOs and the important contributions which they may make to the settlement of this question and I should like to recall here that in the course of the Geneva conference, the Committee where I had the honour to propose on behalf of the Committee, that a meeting of the NGOs be organized during the last session of the General Assembly of the United Nations. Unfortunately, in view of technical difficulties, the meeting could not take place. However, the idea was not dropped. On the contrary, it has been improved. The Committee quickly realized how importance it was to follow up the results of the Geneva Conference through meetings of NGOs. Therefore the General Assembly at its

last session decided to convene a series of regional colloquia every year which would culminate in an international meeting of NGOs.

From now on, our Committee is thus active on three levels in a programme, the aim of which is to awaken the greatest possible interest in the Palestinian question and to make it better understood throughout the world whilst ensuring that its components be properly understood. First of all, during the last four years, the Committee has organized and participated in seminars on the Palestinian question, in various regions; seminars took place in Central America, Africa, Europe and North America. And very soon, in the month of August, the tenth Seminar of this sort will take place in Tunis, where it will bring together the European and the African participants. These participants will be personalities chosen from among eminent political and civic leaders, university professors and journalists. Next we take part in a programme recently started up by the Department of Public Information of the United Nations, with a series of colloquia designed for journalists. The first of these colloquia has just taken place at the beginning of this month, in Vienna. A colloquium at which a large number of journalists, the largest number of which were from Western Europe and Eastern Europe, took part. We know that these NGO meetings give an opening and a new dimension to the co-operation between the United Nations and NGOs. The colloquium of the North American region which is opening today is the first of the series. Your participation and the interest which you have demonstrated in this question is welcomed with special satisfaction, as it will complete and sustain the efforts made by Governments in the United Nations. Your determination, I am convinced, will mobilize greater attention and participation throughout this continent which will entail national policies which will assist in the solution of this problem. I also hope on behalf of the Committee that you will take part in the International Meeting, which will take place in August at Geneva. These meetings, I am convinced will be useful to co-ordinate your efforts both in this region as well as on the international level.

We hardly need to add that the Committee is pleased with your co-operation and is prepared to assist you in every possible way. We hope that this colloquium is only the beginning of a long and close collaboration founded on a common interest in the cause of the Palestinian people as well and for that of all the peoples and States of the region, which are desirous, and I underline this, to live in peace in active solidarity.

Before concluding, I wish to thank you on behalf of the Committee. As you have accepted with the experts to take part in the various round tables of this colloquium, thanks to the various reports, the question of Palestine will be dealt with in its entire breadth, problems will be enlightened and solutions proposed. The views which will be expressed and the discussions which will follow the reports will, I am sure, provide a solid basis for the conclusions of your deliberations. The task which is entrusted to you is immense and it is inspiring. It has at least the merit of constituting an important step in the efforts undertaken to render justice to the Palestinian people and to restore peace to this region of the world. On behalf of the Committee, I welcome you to the United Nations and I am convinced that your efforts will be crowned with success, not only for the Palestinian people, but for the understanding between peoples and nations, and on this note, I wish to conclude and wish you every success.

Mr. Zehdi L. Terzi

It is with great pleasure and satisfaction that I see the "grassroots" in the United States of America and Canada are convening to consider ways and means in order to contribute, in a joint endeavour, to the achievement of peace in the Middle East. The search for peace has been the focus for many years. But for peace there are prerequisites. Peace cannot be attained in a vacuum. Peace will be through a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the Palestine question is at the heart of the conflict.

Thus, in endeavouring to attain peace and guarantee its viability, it is imperative that endeavours be directed at achieving a just solution to the Palestine question. As a matter of fact, an international consensus of opinion emerged stressing this specific point. Namely, that the just solution of the Palestine question is the sine qua non for a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The Palestinian people, through its sole and legitimate representative, the PLO, and at the specific request of Chairman Yasser Arafat, wishes to put on record our gratitude to the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and will appreciate it if you, Mr. Chairman, will convey our esteem and appreciation to each and every single member of your Committee. Our appreciation goes equally to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and his staff, particularly the staff of the Division for Palestinian Rights.

With your permission, I wish to express our thanks and gratitude to the participants in this symposium - to the distinguished members of the panels as well as the distinguished representatives of the non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

I know that the distinguished participants are knowledgeable about the plight of the Palestinian people and the endeavours of the United Nations, particularly since 1975, when the United Nations Special Committee was established. But I shall take the liberty to address the specific item "Paths to a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East". In 1964, when the Palestine Liberation Organization was proclaimed, the Palestinian people had all its hopes that the international community would respond to its appeals and that it would redress the injustice and bring to an end the misery and dispersion of our people. In 1968, we decided that since such appeals went unheeded, we should exercise our right to struggle by all means, including armed struggle. This did find some response. It is really lamentable that much blood must be shed to awaken the conscience and arouse curiosity, interest, understanding and recognition of facts, culminating in identification and solidarity.

In 1974, Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the PLO, appeared before the General Assembly offering two options -- the olive branch or the gun of the freedom fighters. Since then the PLO adheres firmly to both options.

Since 1976, the PLO has welcomed and encouraged all endeavours by the different organs of the United Nations to achieve a settlement conducive to peace, and guaranteeing the restoration and exercise of our inalienable rights. The PLO has rejected all partial agreements as such agreements have ignored and even attempted to annul our rights and have only contributed to exacerbating the situation, to the consolidation of the Israeli occupation of our homes, to the persistence of Israel in its policies and practices against our people and to further Israeli military adventurism and expansionism.

The PLO saw a gleam of hope in the joint declaration of the USSR and the United States in October 1977, but the Government of the United States reneged. Since 1976 the Government of the United States has wilfully obstructed all endeavours for a settlement under the aegis of the Security Council. The Government of the United States has responded adamantly and in a very negative and destructive way against the call by the General Assembly to convene an international peace conference on the Middle East. The General Assembly has adopted such a call almost unanimously with the exception of the United States, Canada, Israel and a fourth member. "In the case of the liberation of Namibia, the United States finds itself a party to the delaying process." In the case of peace in the Middle East, the United States is the party obstructing peace and undermining all international efforts for peace.

In this context we are confident that the distinguished participants will use all their resources and endeavours to bring the United States in line with the rest of the world. Isolationism in the sense of imposing Pax Americana will not help bring peace in the Middle East or justice to the Palestinian people. We do appreciate the efforts of Jesse Jackson and the Rainbow Coalition - particularly their endeavours to include a just position on the fate of the Palestinian people in the platform of the "Democratic Party".

The prime concern should focus on the fate and destiny of almost five million Palestinians and how to redress the injustices and visitations that have afflicted the lives and well-being of the Palestinian and Palestinian people.

It is commonly known at the United Nations that as early as 1948, the Government of the United States called for the return of the Palestinian refugees to their homes. While we appreciate this constant position by consecutive United States Governments we appeal to you, the "grassroots", to increase the awareness of the United States and Canadian communities of the social and economic burdens of the Palestinian people as a result of the continued Israeli occupation and its persistent policy denying this fundamental right of the Palestinian to return to his home. We believe that you will use all your resources to increase the awareness of the need to facilitate and ensure the return of the Palestinians to their homes in Palestine, where they can live in peace.

The concept of self-determination is usually referred to as a Wilsonian doctrine, dating back to the first decade of this century. The image of the United States in developing countries used to be, well at least for us Palestinians, as the champion of this right to self-determination of peoples. With the exception of the United States and Israel, the entire world community advocates and upholds this right for the Palestinian people and is endeavouring to find the means to guarantee the free expression of the right to self-determination by the Palestinian people.

It is here that we feel that you can contribute to bring to the awareness of the American and Canadian peoples that the Palestinian people has the right to self-determination and that you should participate in finding ways and means to make the exercise of this right as one of the aims of the Administration in Washington in particular. On the eve of national elections both in the United States and Canada, you would contribute to the espousing of this right for the Palestinian people and its free exercise.

It is a common right of peoples to choose their representatives and the Palestinian people has already and unequivocally proclaimed that the PLO is their sole and legitimate representative. We do understand that some Governments may have their own views on who should represent peoples, but regardless of these views, our people stand fast and united that the PLO is their representative. After all, the United Nations in 1974 invited the PLO, representative of the Palestinian people, the principal party to the question of Palestine.

We welcome you here today as you do subscribe to the above aims of this symposium, namely, to enable the Palestinian people to exercise its inalienable rights, and to return to its own homeland, Palestine.

In Geneva in the summer of 1983, the Conference adopted a programme of action for the achievement of Palestinian rights and in some detail what is suggested is that the NGOs intensify their efforts in every possible way. Such efforts are mentioned there but we would hope that you will intensify your efforts, particularly in exchanges and other programmes of joint action with your Palestinian counterparts, be they in the occupied Palestinian territories or in the diaspora.

We further trust that your strategy for collaboration and networking will focus on your activities in your own countries, specifically in the coming few months in preparation for your presidential elections. In the United States you have elections almost every year, so it is not only for your endeavours during the presidential elections but for any and all offices, state, city, borough, county, trade unions, student councils, any sort of elections. It is through your direct involvement that you will definitely prove to be a factor among the factors determining policy-making in North America. It is with great

satisfaction that we have noted in the last few months an awakening and sensitizing of the American worker on the street. It is this involvement of the worker on the street that will help reshape the determining of policies. Let us consider that you are starting on the last ten metres towards the complete emancipation and involvement of the American worker in determining the policies of his country. We admit it will be a rather long process.

We must as well consider the economic aspects of the United States-Israel relations. I am sure you know that by January 1985, the United States will import from Israel two billion dollars worth of Israeli products. That will be a direct result of the implementation of free trade zone agreement. Some claim that this will not seriously endanger United States industry. But let us think of another aspect - the racist white minority régime in South Africa has found in Israel an outlet through which to market its products in the European Economic Community (EEC), we also know that by providing this facility to Israel, the Israeli military industry will also benefit and will increase its marketing in some neighbouring countries in Central America and South America. I leave it to your imagination to assess to what extent this will affect the economy of the United States and its work force, and its involvement in CIA and other operations.

In the military field, the General Assembly last December had demanded particularly from the United States to refrain from taking any steps that would supplement Israel's war capability and consequently its aggressive acts, whether in the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied since 1967 or against countries in the region. In total disregard and contempt, the United States reviewed and developed its strategic agreement with Israel and as a matter of fact has initiated the implementation of such an agreement by conducting so-called medieval manoeuvres. In this context we are sure that you, the "grassroots" in North America will definitely have something to say to your Governments about this involvement.

And finally, I must say the time to act is now. We are confident that your final declaration will be a true reflection of your determination to contribute.

Let us not wait for the establishment of more Jewish settlements in occupied Palestinian land. Let us not wait for the results of such policies - results that will be manifested in more repressive action by the Israeli Zionist forces of occupation - manifested in expulsions of farmers and workers from their homes, manifested in further stealing of irrigation waters, manifested in closing of schools, manifested in strangulation of Palestinian Arab towns and villages and the consequences of such aggressions.

Let us not wait for another Sabra, Shatilla, Ein El Helweh, not another Deir Yassin and Kafr Kassem - not another 1967 and 1982. Let us act now.

A. The Inalienable Rights of the
Palestinian People

Professor Ibrahim Abu-Lughod

At the beginning of my presentation I should like, as a person who has benefited enormously from the work of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, to express my appreciation for your continuing good work. I would like also to express my appreciation to the Division for Palestinian Rights which has organized this conference. I know that the effort to organize this conference, as well as many of the previous conferences that were not intended for NGOs, have met with the overt hostility of certain States that shall remain nameless, as well as with interference from alleged friends of the Palestinian people.

I find it ironic that in 1984 in fact we still have to talk about the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the national basis for such rights. For as many of you know, in 1921, that is 63 years ago, Palestine's independence was provisionally recognized by the League of Nations which has done a great deal of course to undermine that provisional independence. In 1921 there was no question about the existence of a Palestinian national community or a Palestinian people, possessing national rights. Yet in 1984, we now try to articulate these inalienable rights. As they have been articulated both by Professor Said and Ambassador Sarré and Mr. Terzi and summarized also by Professor Zureik, the right to independence and sovereignty in Palestine, they are the right to return, and the right to representation by their own representative, which is the Palestine Liberation Organization. The articulation of these rights and therefore the effort to implement them on the ground, I think are based on a valid assumption that runs contrary to an invalid assumption. That is there are two assumptions that are in conflict which is probably the reason why we are here today. There is the historical Zionist assumption which quite clearly denies the existence of the Palestinian people and there is the other assumption that the Palestinian people do exist. One assumption, that is the Zionist one, has been expressed repeatedly over time. Most recently you will find a number of publications including the John Peters book which participate in this game of denying the existence of the Palestinians. But I have also a statement, which I shall quote to you, which I think sums up the attitude of the current Israeli population, not their agents, but the Israeli population, towards their view of the Palestinian people. So I do not need to quote Golda Meir's statement. I will quote another statement that came out on 1 December 1983 and published in the Israeli newspaper Ha'aretz, and written by someone I assume to be a Ph.D. like us, Dr. Shlomo Ariel. Now I will quote the statement in full.

"As part of my job, I organize some seminars about current issues for youngsters about to be conscripted [that is into the Israeli army]. I met with ten such groups of 50 boys each who can be described as a representative, random sample of Israel-Jewish population. The boys came from all sections of society and from all groups of ethnic origin existing within that age group. Since this happened after Finkelstein

from upper Nazareth had been interviewed on television on 1 November I chose as one of my topics the attitude towards the Arabs of Israel (the citizens of Israel that Dr. Zureik was talking about). Almost all the participants in the debate said they fully identified with Finkelstein's racist attitude towards the Arabs. When I argued that the Arabs in question were citizens accorded equal rights by our laws, the typical response was that they should be deprived of Israeli citizenship. In every discussion group there were several boys who argued that the Arabs of Israel should be physically eliminated, including the old, women and children. When I drew comparisons with Sabra and Shatila and with the Nazi extermination campaign, they voiced their approval and declared in all honesty that they were willing to do the exterminating with their own hands without guilt feelings or hangups. Not a single boy voiced his horror or even reservations about these remarks, but some did say that there was no need for physical extermination. It was enough to expel the Arabs across the border. (That is the term also that was used by Mr. Herzl, when he wrote The Jewish State.) Many argued for South African style apartheid. The idea that the Arabs of Israel regarded this country, Palestine, as their homeland was received with amazement and contempt. Any moral arguments presented, were rejected with sneers. In any one group there were never more than two or three boys with humanitarian and anti-racist opinions, and I felt that they fear to express these publicly. Those few who are there to present unpopular views were indeed immediately silenced by a chorus of shouts."

Now, it seems to me in my presentation I will try to tell you the other assumption which underlies the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the attempts to implement them. It seems to me that there are two national bases for these rights. One, is a historical one, and the other is existential. Both of these concern the current struggle of the Palestinian people for their attainment of their national rights. The argument of the United Nations, which as well follows the Palestinian argument, is that the Palestinians do constitute a national community, related to the soil of Palestine. The historical basis for this is that the Palestinian people who have grown in Palestine since time immemorial, have produced a specific cultural identity that makes them a people. They have produced a particular national system, a particular artistic system, legalistic system and all these facts that help to determine the existence of a specific national community. It is admittedly proved that the Palestinian people are also part of the Arab national community. The expression of the culture in Arabic and the participation in the Arab cultural endeavour has been an aspect of the contribution of all the specific Arab peoples. There is no denial today that the Egyptian people exist, they have their own specificity within the framework of the Arab national community. There is no argument about the fact that the Iraqi people do constitute a national community entitled to live in a sovereign State as part of the Arab community and therefore just as the Egyptians have contributed certain institutions, certain artistic productions, certain literary achievements, and the Iraqis, the Syrians, the Lebanese and the Saudis, so did the Palestinians over time. And you will find specific

expression in language, in art, in cuisine that are specific to each of these national communities. While the Arab community as a whole shares a national culture, each of its constituent elements have its own specificity. In that sense, since time immemorial, the Palestinian people have made their contribution on the soil of Palestine. They did not make that contribution on the soil of Iraq, or on the soil of Egypt. They made it specifically in Palestine and historians have recognized for quite a long time certain peculiarities to that soil in terms of its interaction with the people of Palestine, in terms of the attitudes that people have held since time immemorial. You will find for example, and it is not an accident politically today that the Palestinians are the only national community in the Arab world that have been in the forefront of advocating a democratic secular existence for multi-ethnic, multi-religious, multi-confessional communities. In fact, Palestine has always been much more receptive to a variety of religious experiences than most of the other States in the region. The only times that Palestine was not tolerant towards other communities were the times when Palestine was in fact occupied by people alien to the soil of Palestine. In the Middle Ages Palestine was an intolerant place when Palestine was controlled by the Kingdom of Jerusalem. Palestine today is intolerant towards other ethnic groups, other religious groups because it is controlled by alien settlers who came from another area and planted their own ideas about social and cultural existence.

Now when the Palestinians therefore today affirm their national identity, they affirm it in the positive sense, on the basis of the historic continuity of the Palestinian people in terms of its interaction with the soil of Palestine, participating at the same time in the general creativity of the Arab national community. But there is a second basis which is negative. The second basis is essentially the existential experience of the Palestinians in modern times, specifically in terms of its struggle for national independence from British colonial control and in its attempt to frustrate the Zionist endeavour to transform Palestine into a racist State of Israel. This is specifically dated obviously from the onset of the mandate, that is from 1921, when Palestine as a specific geographic unit as we know it today in fact developed specific national institutions in terms of education and national economic system and so forth, constantly struggling to attain its independence. I have summarized in the paper that you will be receiving, six processes that describe the Palestine experience today. These are the existential experiences of the Palestinians since 1921. And I will enumerate them without going into great detail.

Experience No. 1 is the fact dispossession. The Palestinian people of all people in the Middle East today are the only people in fact whose experience since 1921 is one of continual dispossession from their soil. So that today, as Benvenisti's report will indicate although it addresses itself only to the West Bank and Gaza, in fact the Palestinians today, own, in terms of their own soil, roughly 30 to 35 per cent of the soil of Palestine. When in fact, they were the possessors of the land up to 1921. Today, only 30 per cent of the soil of Palestine or 35 per cent of the soil is owned by its Palestinian people. The dispossession, is a common experience to all

Palestinians so that when Professor Zureik quotes to you a commonality to the reaction of the Palestinians to their fate, the commonality comes both from an affirmation as well as from the negative experience that they have experienced largely at the hands of Zionist settlers.

Second, all Palestinians share in the experience of expulsion and dispersion. Today, of the 4.5 million Palestinian people that are available in the profile that Professor Said might refer to later, only a minority of the Palestinian people today live on the historic soil of Palestine. Approximately 40 to 42 per cent of the Palestinian people today live in historic Palestine, which means that the process of expulsion that started in fact way back in the 1920s, as the Zionist companies began to acquire land with the aid of the British colonial administration, that resulted in continuing displacement, is a process that continues until this very moment. No one, no Palestinian is exempted from the experience of expulsion. Dispossession and expulsion are both common, irrespective of citizenship, irrespective of locale. So Palestinian citizens of Israel are also dispossessed. They continue to be dispossessed by the legal machinery of the State and they continue also to be expelled whether it is from upper Nazareth or from some other area. So this is the second.

The third experience is one of national oppression. All the Palestinians, irrespective of place, have differentially experienced national oppression, whether it is in Israel or in the occupied West Bank or in Gaza or in Lebanon. Wherever the Palestinian is, today, he cannot because of the absence of statehood, because of the absence of a governing authority, and because of the fact that the Palestinians are outside their soil, he cannot fashion a national curriculum by which to educate the people. They are subject to the curricula of all other States, but Palestinians themselves cannot implement a curriculum by which they can educate their children in terms of Palestinian national culture. In Israel, their education is in the hands of what Professor Zureik described as the orientalist of Israel, those who are experts on the minds of the Arabs. Therefore the national curriculum of the Palestinian citizens of Israel is in fact shaped by their opponents, opponents who obviously hold the negative views and stereotypes that are essential to the process of their expulsion and displacement.

The fourth process is the process of genocide. Now the Palestinian people have experienced both cultural and physical genocide and the statement that I quoted to you encourages in fact the attempt of the Government to launch campaigns of extermination whatever the pretext maybe. But the Palestinian people today have gone through the experience of cultural and physical genocide, sometimes with deliberate planning. Now I want to alert you to, and you are obviously familiar with the definition of genocide that is accepted by the United Nations, is when a State plans for the destruction of a people in whole or in part and the campaign that was launched in Lebanon was intended to annihilate the Palestinians, that portion of the Palestinian people that lived in Lebanon. When a State incarcerates the able-bodied males between certain ages, i.e. between ages 17 and 18 and 60, in fact it is interfering with the birth rate of that community. Now everyone knows that,

for Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza who are of that active age category, and Palestinians who were in Lebanon and were incarcerated in the Ansar concentration camp, figures that reach over 20,000 to 25,000 people and everyone knows the consequence for the birth-rate of that community. Now you read the definition of genocide that is accepted by the United Nations and apply it to Israel's behaviour in Lebanon as the MacBride Commission's report on Israel in Lebanon conclusively demonstrates, in fact, genocidal behaviour was expressed in that campaign. And in that sense, the trauma of the Palestinians embodies this experience in genocide.

The fifth process is the process I call politicide, that is there are obviously two consensuses in the world. There is a consensus which is international in character, an international consensus which calls for the establishment of an independent Palestinian State in Palestine led obviously by the Palestine Liberation Organization, and the whole basis of the work of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People represents essentially the international consensus that affirms the rights of the Palestinian people to establish an independent sovereign State in Palestine. But there is a more powerful consensus. The consensus which is Israeli-American. These two, because they have more power, are able to annul the international consensus and their consensus is that, under no conceivable circumstance, should the Palestinians have an independent State. Under no conceivable circumstances, in accordance with all proposals that I have read, emanating from either Israel or the United States Government, is there a possibility for the Palestinians to establish an independent political community. This is a process of politicide. President Reagan's plan of 1 September 1982 was explicit. Now in that sense, this is a unique experience. These five processes today concerning the Palestinian experience and the historic affirmation of the Palestinian people that have grown on the soil of Palestine as well as the negative experiences of the Palestinian people converge to affirm the rights of the Palestinian people to national independence, sovereignty, return and representation by the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Now the final comment that I want to make, having laid the national basis, is that it seems to me it is extremely important on existential grounds for the Palestinians to obtain an independent sovereign State, because it is only in the context of an independent sovereign State that a culture could survive. If the Palestinians do not have a State, Palestinian culture, in fact the community, will be participating in both physical as well as cultural genocide. That is number 1. Number 2, I see a great danger that there is a tremendous amount of effort that is going on to implement the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. We see today that in fact the violation of these rights, their denial is more successful and, with time, those violations and those denials are gaining ground, on the ground, that is in Palestine itself, in occupied Palestine itself, the Palestinians are losing more ground instead of obtaining greater rights by the sheer power of Israel, a Power that is an admitted derivative from some other super-Power. The Palestinians are losing more grounds, more land, less control over their destiny and so forth.

But I see also a great danger in terms of the future, not only for the Palestinians, because the success of Israel in denying the Palestinian right to self-determination is already in fact affecting the implementation of the rights of the Arab people to maintain their independence. Now we have two instances already in which Israel has succeeded in depriving the Arab people of their right to maintain their independence and sovereignty and to live their own lives on their own historic soil. That is in Lebanon and in the Syrian Arab Republic. The Syrian people of the Golan are deprived of their right to maintain their independence by the continued occupation of the Golan. The people of Lebanon are denied their right to maintain their independence on their soil. Now this is not accidental, it is related to two issues. Issue number one: that Zionism has never had an intention only over Palestine, but had the intention of implementing its State in a territory that it calls Palestine but whose frontiers go beyond mandatory Palestine. The recent threats that have emanated and you have seen them in the advertisements in the New York Times that Palestine is Jordan indicates also an intention to undermine the independence and sovereignty of Jordan. So our failure in fact to implement the rights of the Palestinian people may also lead to an expansion of the violations of the rights of the Arab people. So if peace is threatened, it is not only threatened because the Palestine question remains unsolved, but because the intentions of Zionists go beyond the Palestinian people.

Edward Said

Although I have been designated as moderator of this session, I would like to conclude the presentation of individual statements by making a short summary statement and then open the floor to discussion.

The present situation of the Palestinian people, as has been persuasively argued by both Professor Zureik and Professor Abu-Lughod, is fundamentally and seriously anomalous. Palestinians have all the attributes of nationhood, a common history, the language, a set of traditions, a national culture, national institutions, a national representative in the Palestine Liberation Organization, recognized universally by every segment of the Palestinian population as well as by a large majority of the world's states and a common framework of aspirations and values, but the Palestinians do not control Palestine which is the natural site of their projected independent State. The United Nations has been very clear on the imperatives of Palestinian national self-determination and so too have the Islamic Conference, the Movement of the Non Aligned and the Organization of African Unity as well as various important European, Asian and Latin American states, yet still the processes continue by which the Palestinian people has been alienated both from its natal territory and its cultural patrimony.

Today, more Palestinians than ever before are born in exile and face the prospect of continued exile, external as well as internal. In the occupied territories, in Lebanon, and in the Syrian Arab Republic, more Israeli settlements, more Israeli violence in collective punishment attempts to break the Palestinian national will. The aims of Israel are clear. For as Zionist and Israeli leaders have been saying candidly for several generations, that Palestinian national claims are neither admissible to them nor valid. As for Israel's chief ally, the United States of America, while Presidents Carter and Reagan have gone as far as admitting the existence of a question of Palestine, even to the extent in the case of President Carter of speaking guardedly of the need for a Palestinian homeland of some sort, the United States has not accepted the premises of Palestinian nationalism. With Israel the United States has opposed the idea of national self-determination for the Palestinians and in so far as it foresees the need for a solution to the question of Palestine, it does so in terms that firmly opt for not accepting the Palestinian and international consensus' definition of an acceptable solution.

I may refer here to a statement that appeared in today's New York Times of a symposium on terrorism conducted by an Israeli organization in Washington. The United States Secretary of State defined Palestinian efforts to regain a homeland as different from those of other peoples (he was speaking of the Afghanistan people for example) and defined Palestinian efforts as terrorism saying that the various allies of the United States including the Governments, for example, of Honduras and El Salvador, do not engage in acts

of terrorism. And indeed it might strike one as somewhat peculiar to have this remark from a Secretary of State given that declarations by the United States Government on some of its allies in Central America have in fact defined what has been done there in the case of El Salvador as in fact terrorism (the killing of innocent church people and other civilians) But since they are allies of the United States they therefore qualify for approval, whereas the Palestinians who are by all standards the victims of sustained State terrorism by Israel at a scale in proportion to which all other claims pale, are defined as terrorists.

The sufferings therefore, imposed upon the Palestinian people in its dispersion and its political difficulties, are therefore legion. All these sufferings derive from the perfect inability of every Palestinian, man, woman and child to exercise a fundamental set of inalienable rights. No Palestinian has a Palestinian passport. No Palestinian has Palestinian nationality. No Palestinian can vote in a national election as a Palestinian. No Palestinian can voluntarily return to Palestine and take up residence there. In most places the very word Palestine is either denied or in some way made the object of particular, usually injurious juridical, political, social and cultural discrimination. Thus, for example, there has never been a Palestinian census, nor for that matter referendum. The anomaly of course is that as a people the Palestinians are among the most advanced in the world so far as their political consciousness is concerned. Every Palestinian shares with all other Palestinians a history of dispossession and a no less important history of struggle. For the profoundest truth about the Palestinians today is not that they are exiled, dispersed and punished, but that they have advanced so far beyond these negative attributes as to have articulated a positive vision of the future.

Unmistakably and collectively, the Palestinian people has formulated its own sense of itself and of its future as aimed at the establishment of an independent Palestinian State on the historical national soil of Palestine.

Elia T. Zureik

A quarter of a century after the establishment of the State of Israel, and with it the dispersal of a majority of the indigenous Palestinian population, slightly less than one half of the more than 4 million Palestinians continue to reside in historical Palestine and thus find themselves in varying degree under Israeli military, political and economic control -- 1.2 million live in the West Bank and Gaza and 0.6 million in pre-1967 Israel, whereas the rest are scattered in the Arab world and outside it. Regardless of where they happen to live, the Palestinians and their spokesmen are being constantly hounded by Israel's agents and military apparatus. Israel is being assisted in this undertaking by an elaborate and vicious campaign of hatred, orchestrated by leading politicians, intellectuals, mass media specialists and fundamentalist religious groups, all of whom have made it their business in this country and outside it to deny the very existence of the Palestinians as a people, who are entitled to their right of self-determination and a place under the sun.

Let there be no mistake about it, the official Zionist establishment in Israel and outside it is waging total war against the very existence of the Palestinian people; in this they are aided and abetted by the legacy of the holocaust and Western anti-semitism whose heinous crimes in exterminating European Jewry are now being exorcized at the expense of the Palestinians' right of self-determination. The obscenity with which the holocaust was, and is being now, traded by Begin's, Sharon's and Shamir's ilk, the terrorists of yesteryear and today's representatives of Israel's ruling circles, is being matched by the callousness of gentile Zionists of all shades, from the religious right of Jerry Falwell's types in the United States, to Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, infamous for his racist and venomous attacks on the Arabs in general and the Palestinians in particular and his fake liberalism which condemns United States aggression in Central America but celebrates it together with Israel's in the Middle East, to the charlatan and opportunist Senator Gary Hart, and ultimately to Vice-President Walter Mondale, that perennial product of the Democratic party machine whose godfather, organized American labour in the shape of the AFLCIO, prides itself for coming out in total support of Israel's aggression in Lebanon and for being oblivious to the historic role of the Zionist trade union movement, the Histadrut, in cultivating profitable ties with oppressive régimes such as South Africa and in dispossessing the Palestinian workers from genuine national, political and economic rights. It is fair to say that racism against the Arabs in general and the Palestinians in particular is the only cause in recent memory where the so-called left in this country has either supported Israel or maintained silence over the Palestine question, and in so doing has managed to close ranks with its arch-enemy, the radical right. This is indeed a commentary on the politics of the left in North America.

The tragedy in all of this is that the conniving against the Palestinian people is being orchestrated behind the backs of the American masses and at the expense of the American taxpayer, whose hard-earned money is subsidizing to the tune of \$200 million to \$300 million a year Zionism's avaricious

appetite for the expansion of settlements on the West Bank and Gaza, so as to negate the Palestinian dream for an independent State in historical Palestine. In addition to the unlimited infusion of the American taxpayer's money into the coffers of the Israeli Government, there is the funelling of huge amounts of tax-exempt funds raised by Zionist organizations in the West, not to mention the enormous write-off of United States aid to Israel amounting to the billions of dollars -- all this in order to oil and fuel Israel's aggressive military and industrial machine. The latest hushed military agreement between Israel and the United States serves as another slap in the face of an impotent Arab world, which is being duly rewarded for surrendering what is left of its integrity to the Pax Americana.

The tremendous political and economic leverage which the United States has at its disposal to compel Israel to consider more conciliatory measures in relation to the Palestinian issue is matched only by its total capitulation before the vociferous Zionist lobby in the United States, whose main and traditional occupation of covering up Israel's crimes has now been extended to defaming the reputation of those few courageous Americans who venture to expose the lunacy of American foreign policy in the Middle East and as a result find their names included in an elaborate and preposterous "enemies list" prepared by Zionist organizations such as the B'nai Brith. Jesse Jackson is the latest, but by no means the last, to suffer at the hands of the new breed of the self-styled McCarthyites of the so-called Anti-Defamation League -- more appropriately the Defamation League.

It would be a mistake to differentiate official Israeli objectives, as some pundits do, on the basis of the political colouration of the Government of the day. The overriding objectives of successive Israeli Governments, whether articulated by so-called Labour Zionists, Revisionists, or groupings of other ideological shades in power, have always been to obliterate any sense of Palestinian nationalism. In this respect, the cultural genocide perpetrated against the Palestinians and their institutions during Israel's 1982 destruction and occupation of West Beirut and Lebanon is an attempt to annihilate the Palestinians (with the aid, of course, of United States weapons and financial backing). It is different from what goes on daily in the West Bank and Gaza only in terms of tactics and not ultimate ends: in both instances there is a convergence in Israeli policies toward liquidating the cultural, political and even physical survival of Palestinian institutions and their representatives.

In examining the data pertaining to the Palestinians under Israeli control, we are told the reason that the Palestinians are worse off than the dominant majority Jews on indicators of income, occupation, education, health, housing, ownership of durable goods, modes of political organization, cultural participation and general economic viability is due to their traditionalism and social backwardness inherited from centuries of ignorance. This approach, which blames the Palestinians for their own oppression, has not withstood the onslaught of empirical evidence, intellectual integrity

and, most importantly, the reaction of Palestinians themselves. The originators of this psychologistic ideology are orientalist of all kinds, some of whom run the Israeli bureaucracy, and others who parade themselves, inside Israel and outside it, as experts on the Arab mind. Shlomo Avineri, a self-professed socialist and previous Director General of the Israeli Foreign Ministry under the Labour Government, who has been attacked recently in the pages of the Israeli daily Ha'Aretz by a repentant Benvenisti -- the former Deputy Mayor of Jerusalem -- for indoctrinating Israeli soldiers prior to the occupation and destruction of West Beirut; Amnon Cohen, a previous advisor to the military authorities on the West Bank; Menachem Milson, the discredited West Bank administrator appointed by the Likud government to manage the systematic oppression of West Bank Palestinians, and of course Yehoshafat Harkabi, the spy-turned-academic, to name a few, all are but intellectual specimens of Israel's academic élites whose interpretation of the Arab mind goes hand in hand with their dedication to warped political ideals and their disservice in the cause of peace. Even Moshe Arens, Israel's Defence Minister, who is sure to give the word "intellectual" a bad name, is (according to his advisors as revealed in a laudatory exposé in The New York Times (Franks, 25 March 1984) "beginning to study the Arab mind".

There is a tendency among those of us who watch the Middle East closely in search of the slightest sign of hope for peace to attribute a great deal of importance to the various splinter peace movements inside Israel on the assumption that they are just the beginning of a change in the climate of opinion to eventually lead to a change of heart among the Israeli public concerning the Palestine issue. While I do not want to minimize the significance of these movements inside Israel and outside it, it is equally important to remain realistic about their prospects in spreading to the majority of the population in Israel.

Let me review before you two sets of data which reflect the position of the Palestinians under Israeli rule on the level of public opinion and economic circumstances. I will start with the latter first, to be followed by the former and conclude by summarizing the reaction of the Palestinians themselves. My objective now is to update some of the attitudinal data which I gathered in the middle of the 1970s when I was working on my book, The Palestinians in Israel. At that time I tried to show that the ideological underpinnings of the Israeli political culture are premised on a form of hegemony characteristic of settler societies. Indeed it could not be otherwise, for this superstructural system is what makes and justifies the existence of discriminatory practices at the level of the economy and polity. The interesting feature of this comparison, as the data below will show is that a decade or more later there has hardly been any change in the overall orientation of the dominant Jewish majority to the Palestinian issue. Let me first recapitulate the earlier results. In a study carried out in the 1960s and early 1970s, 80 per cent of Israelis polled agreed with the proposition that the "Arabs will not reach the level of progress of Jews", and 90 per cent endorsed the proposition that "Arabs understand only force". It is not surprising to find in the same poll that

90 per cent of the Jews sampled would prefer to see fewer Arabs remain in the country (Peres, 1971). In another 1971 survey of Jewish adults in Israel, it is shown that 84 per cent would be bothered if a friend or relative married an Arab, God forbid; 74 per cent if their own children befriended Arabs, 54 per cent if their children were taught by Arab teachers, and 49 per cent if Arabs moved next door (Segal, 1973). Contrast this to the findings of a study of rural Palestinians carried out at the same period, in which 90 per cent of them said they would be willing to befriend Jews (Yalan, 1972). A group of psychologists in the middle of the 1960s, who studied the mutual perceptions of Arab and Jewish youth, reached the following astonishing conclusions, namely that Arabs were perceived by Jewish children to be "lower on nearly all traits, significantly so on courage, good looks, intelligence, leadership, cheerfulness, pleasantness, manners, truthfulness, successfulness, good-naturedness, self-confidence, permissiveness, reliability and capacity for hard work" (Lambert et al., 1965). And from Segal's study Whose Jerusalem? we discover that 53 per cent of the Jewish adults in the sample said that Arabs are lazier than Israelis; 74 per cent that Arabs are less intelligent; 68 per cent that Arabs feel blind hatred toward the Jews (I wonder why, one might ask?); 75 per cent that Arabs are crueller; 88 per cent that Arabs are more dishonest; and 67 per cent believe that Arabs are inferior to Israelis.

More than a decade later, an Israeli psychologist, Dr. Shlomo Ariel, summarized in a letter to the Ha-Aretz (1 December 1983) the conclusions of his investigation based on in-depth interviews he conducted with would-be draftees into the Israeli army in the following words:

"In every discussion group there were several boys who argued that the Arabs of Israel should be physically eliminated including the old, women and children. When I drew comparisons with Sabra and Shatila and with the Nazi extermination campaign, they voiced their approval and declared in all honesty that they were willing to do the exterminating with their own hands, without guilt feelings or hang-ups. Not a single boy voiced his horror or even reservations about these remarks, but some did say that there was no need for physical extermination. It was enough to expel the Arabs across the border.

Many argued for South African-styled apartheid. The idea that the Arabs of Israel regarded this country as their homeland was received with amazement and contempt ..."

David Shipler, The New York Times correspondent in Israel, filed a four-part series in December of 1983 in which he dealt with the predicament of the Palestinians who are citizens of the State of Israel (The New York Times, 27-30 December 1983). In the course of detailing the sad economic, political and social conditions of the Palestinians in Israel, Shipler cites data from the early 1980s which show that 65 per cent of the Israelis surveyed indicated that they could not trust an Arab (a similar proportion of the Arabs expressed an identical attitude towards the Jews).

the majority of the Jews, close to 70 per cent, endorsed the proposition that Jews should be given preference in education, jobs and welfare benefits. When broken down, the data revealed that 84 per cent of the Jews in the sample endorsed discrimination against Arabs seeking high government positions, and 77 per cent thought that the Government was doing more than enough for the Arabs. These findings are in line with Gilmour's (1982) observation that 90 per cent of the jobs advertised in the daily newspaper Yediot Aharonot state that the applicants must be "army leavers", which effectively excludes most Arabs. Shipler grasped the essence of institutionalized racism in Israel by noting the following on two separate occasions:

"Much of the discrimination is built into law. More generous child welfare payments, subsidized government loans for housing and other benefits are available to those who had at least one family member in the army, thereby excluding all Arabs, who are exempt from the draft ..."

And on another occasion, in the aftermath of the massacre of Palestinians in the refugee camps in Lebanon, he remarked:

"In all the soul-searching provoked by the war in Lebanon, the Beirut massacre, and the State inquiry commission, the foundations of one Israeli attitude have gone relatively unchanged. This is the national consensus on the illegitimacy of Palestinian nationalism ... It stands at the centre of Israel's concept of itself in the region, reflects the emotional content of Zionist ideology, and illuminates the rejection by most Israelis across most of the political spectrum of the notion that the Palestinians are also a people laden with a history and a dream." (The New York Times, 20 February 1983).

Finally, a survey conducted in 1980 (Tsemah, 1980) showed that 65 per cent of the Jews sampled thought that it was impossible to trust Palestinians in Israel, 64 per cent endorsed increased surveillance over them, 42 per cent support "preventive arrests" of the Palestinians, and 77 per cent rationalized the need for all this on the basis of national security. It is significant to note that when broken down by region, the highest level of intolerance against the Palestinians came from the Jewish population in the Galilee with the largest Arab concentration: 72 per cent agreed to limit the number of Arabs in the country so that they don't become a majority; 57 per cent endorsed the idea of encouraging the Palestinians to leave; and 78 per cent approved of increasing surveillance over the Palestinian population (Ha-Aretz, 30 March 1984).

The racist ideology of the ruling circles in Israel does not seem to suffer from any inhibitions when it comes to their treatment of the Palestinians. Sharon's murderous schemes in invading Lebanon, which culminated in the systematic destruction of the Palestinians in Sabra and Shatila by the Israeli-sponsored Christian Phallange gangs, to his

sponsoring of torture practice on the West Bank in his capacity as Defence Minister, to Begin's reference to the Palestinians as "two-legged beasts" who fell outside the pail of the human race, to the obscene utterances of the previous Chief of Staff of the Israeli Army, General Rafael Eitan, who rejoiced in the fact that, as a result of the settlements on the West Bank and Gaza, the Palestinians would be squeezed and forced to behave like "drugged cockroaches inside a bottle". Of course these 1980 vintage racist outbursts against the Palestinians find their roots in the dehumanizing policies of an earlier generation of architects of Zionism, whether it is in Golda Meir's denial in the late 1960s of the existence of the Palestinian peoplehood or the crass manifestations of Israel Koenig who, as senior official in the Israeli Ministry of Interior, excelled by producing his infamous memorandum in which he advised that the Palestinians in Israel should be urged to emigrate through denial of appropriate job opportunities and, should this not-so-subtle method fail, outright expulsion should not be ruled out.

Turning to the socio-economic profile of the Palestinians the evolution of Palestinian class structure, both in the occupied territories and in Israel proper, reveals the colonized nature of Palestinian economy. Again to refer to Shipler's articles in The New York Times, he concluded: In Israel's universities there are about 6,000 Jews in academic positions and about 20 Arabs: one out of 300. There has never been an Arab Supreme Court Justice. No large economic institutions in Israel headed by an Arab -- no bank, industrial enterprises or agricultural undertaking. And I might add that Arab university students comprise around 2.5 per cent of the entire university student population, at a time when the Palestinian minority in Israel amounts to close to 16 per cent of the population.

In the face of continued confiscation of Arab land and appropriation of water resources, the emerging pattern of economic relations reveals the nature of the dual labour market in Israeli society: the Jews are concentrated in the professional, skilled and military-related industries, while the Arabs are to be found in the secondary economic sector where unskilled and service-type jobs predominate. Over the years, the outcome of this process has been occupational segregation accompanied by further de-proletarianization of the Jewish labour force. It is this phenomenon which has prompted the Israeli sociologist Rivkah Bar-Yosef to note as early as a decade ago that the Jews in Israel have become "a nation of bosses".

For the Arabs in the labour force the leading "industrial" sector is furniture-making, woodwork and upholstery; in contrast the Jewish labour force is concentrated in managerial, industrial and strategic sectors of the economy, such as the diamond, electronic, scientific and professional occupations. Faced with shortage in the technical-industrial sector, where specialized training is needed and in conformity with the duality of the labour market, Israel is turning to importing foreign, non-Arab skilled labour, and/or accelerating the absorption of trained Western Jewish immigrants (Makhoul, 1981).

A typical feature of Palestinian work experience has been its migratory nature. Since all industrial enterprises are located in the Jewish sector, Arab workers have found it imperative to travel long distances from their places of residence in search of employment in the Zionist metropolises. It is estimated that close to 80 per cent of Palestinian workers commute from their villages to places of work.

The low professional profile of the Palestinians is expected to be reflected in their income. When adjusted on a per capita basis, official figures show that the income of Palestinian workers (urban and rural) in Israel is less than one half of that of Jewish workers. Arabs fall in the lowest tenth percentile of the income spectrum. In specific terms, the most recent data show that a Palestinian makes 51 per cent of what an Israeli-born Jew earns.

Taking other indicators of standards of living into account, we find that the Palestinians come out consistently behind Jews. Arabs spend in proportional terms more on food and shelter than Jews -- a clear sign of a depressed economic status. They own substantially less in terms of durable goods such as cars, telephones, televisions, etc. But above all the most dramatic contrast is in the area of housing. More than one third of all Palestinians in Israel live between three and four persons to a room. The corresponding figure for the Jewish population is less than 2 per cent. Fifteen per cent of the Arabs live in one person to a room, compared to the close to 60 per cent of the Jewish population.

It is legitimate to ask in the light of all this what would be the reactions of the Palestinians to this state of affairs? As a sociologist, I am struck by the ethnocentric methodological approaches adopted by Israeli researchers in their social studies. For example, the numerous public opinion surveys conducted in Israel invariably exclude Palestinian respondents from their samples. And the few attempts that were made to include Palestinian respondents suffered from lack of vigour and demanded extreme care in their interpretation. In particular one should attempt to situate the data in the context of the prevailing atmosphere of suspicion and mistrust. To put it mildly, Palestinian respondents, unlike their Israeli Jewish counterparts, feel threatened and harassed if they voice publicly either their criticism of Israeli policies or depiction of their circumstances in a manner that might portray their lives in bad light. Bearing in mind these serious constraints, it is still possible, I believe, to construct a general picture of the feelings and aspirations of the Palestinians under Israeli control.

According to one study cited by Gilmour, half of the Palestinians sampled in Israel in 1979 do not recognize Israel's right to exist, while two thirds believe that Zionism is racist. A highly publicized nation-wide study conducted in 1980 by researchers from Haifa University (Smoocha and Peretz, 1982), sought to compare Palestinian attitudes (the so-called Israeli Arabs) to their Jewish counterparts on a cluster of issues having to do with Palestinian nationalism, the PLO and statehood. A summary table of the relevant results is reproduced in the annex to this paper. Suffice it here to

highlight the main findings in point form:

1. 80 per cent of the Palestinians advocate Israel's recognition of Palestinian nationalism, while 16.3 per cent support such a position in a qualified basis under certain conditions. Of the Jews in the sample, 53.7 per cent reject this idea, 35.3 per cent espouse it in a conditional manner and the remaining minority of 10 per cent approve of the idea without qualifications.
2. Close to 70 per cent of the Palestinians in Israel advocate Israel's recognition of the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people without any reservations, 23 per cent do with some qualifications, and 9 per cent oppose such a recognition. Among the Jewish respondents, close to 85 per cent reject totally the recognition of the PLO.
3. 76.9 per cent of the Jewish respondents polled opposed outright a Palestinian State on the West Bank and Gaza, compared to 64.3 per cent of the Palestinians who endorsed it without any qualifications, and 20 per cent under certain conditions.
4. It is interesting to note that 78 per cent of the Palestinians in the study agreed that the Palestinian refugees should be repatriated to their original homes in pre-1967 Israel, whereas 74 per cent of the Jews rejected this proposal.
5. In the light of the above, it is not surprising to find that 84 per cent of the Palestinians in the sample are against settlements in the occupied territories, compared to 27.8 per cent of the Jewish respondents.

In conclusion, the authors of the study discover that on the basis of an ideological scale which stretches from a hawkish to non-hawkish position, Jews were skewed toward the upper (hawkish) end of the continuum, whereas Arabs were slated toward the lower (non-hawkish) section of the scale.

The relevant question to raise here from the point of view of the Palestinians is this: "To what extent are Palestinian aspirations shared by both constituencies across the 1967 Green Line?" On the question of the PLO, various polls conducted on the West Bank in the last two to three years, before and after the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, have demonstrated an unshakeable identification with the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people. One such poll, commissioned for Time magazine in April 1982, showed Palestinian support for the PLO reaching the upper 80 percentage points. In the face of various attempts that were orchestrated by the Israeli government, be it through the brutal invasion of Lebanon or the continued suppression in the West Bank, including its feeble attempts at cultivating a quisling local leadership, the results of these polls must have come as a great disappointment, particularly to Israel's Arabists who, like Professor Milson, thought they had finally grasped the essence of the Arab mind.

The data on the question of Palestinian solidarity across the Green Line show a pattern tinged with a sense of realism, yet with an unwillingness to succumb to the dictates of the Zionist régime. In fact, 65 per cent of the Palestinians in the Haifa study saw their fate intimately connected with that of the Palestinian people and the reaching of an equitable solution to the self-determination issue which, in their view, was ignored by the Camp David accords.

A more detailed comparison, though based on a much smaller sample, concerning the political and national aspirations of the Palestinians on both sides of the Green Line was conducted by West Bank researchers in association with Bir Zeit University. The sample was comprised of two sets of élites and wage-earners, with each set chosen from the West Bank and Israel. The élite groups consisted of 24 respondents from each region, while the 75 wage-earners from the West Bank were matched by corresponding 73 wage-earners from the Palestinians in Israel. Again, I will summarize the results in point form:

1. Among the Palestinian élites living in Israel, 66 per cent agree that Israeli occupation of the West Bank has contributed to a heightened sense of Palestinianism, and 75 per cent agree that it is important for the Palestinians in Israel to contribute in assisting the West Bank Palestinians in coping with military occupation and possibly putting an end to it. While the feeling of Palestinianism has not translated into convergence of future plans, close to one half of the Palestinian élites feel that as Israeli citizens, their immediate problems are of a different nature and that they should assert their Palestinianism through securing better treatment from the Israeli authorities; 37 per cent defined their solidarity with West Bank Palestinians in terms of unity and common destiny.

2. The majority of West Bank élites, 63 per cent, felt that the 1967 War heightened the common destiny of the Palestinian people, 67 per cent felt that the 1967 War increased the sense of Palestinianism and 58 per cent thought the War unified the Palestinians, although it was agreed that the problems faced by each group were different in their nature and as such required different solutions. However, 79 per cent saw a role for the West Bank Palestinians in assisting those Palestinians in Israel to tackle their problems.

3. When asked to forecast the future of the occupied territories, the two groups of élites gave not-too-dissimilar responses: 37.5 per cent of those from Israel felt that the PLO would succeed in establishing a State in the West Bank and Gaza, 21 per cent saw the West Bank reverting back to Jordan, and 4 per cent envisaged a Reagan plan-type solution in terms of a federation with Jordan. Among the West Bank élites, 42 per cent forecast that the PLO would succeed in setting up a State in the occupied territories, compared to 17 per cent, who saw a Reagan plan-type solution emerging; it is interesting that a minority within each group, 8 per cent in the case of the West Bank élites and the Palestinian élites from Israel, felt that the occupation would continue in the foreseeable future.

4. There was no desire on the part of the Palestinian élite from Israel to emigrate to such a State if and when it came into being. They saw their place in Israel (46 per cent) and their stated aim was to assert their steadfastness in the land and to fight for equality of treatment in all spheres of social, political and above all economic life. This contrasted drastically with West Bank perceptions, where 54 per cent of the élite sample thought that the Palestinians in Israel would join the new State.

5. Among the workers' sample, 66 per cent of those from the West Bank and 46 per cent of those from within Israel thought that a sovereign Palestinian State would actually come into being in the occupied territories in the coming decade. 11 per cent of the former and 28 per cent of the latter anticipated that Israeli military occupation would continue well into the near future.

6. 43 per cent of the Palestinian workers in the West Bank thought that Palestinians from Israel would choose to join such a State, compared to a minority of 12 per cent of Palestinian workers from Israel who thought similarly.

7. If the 1967 War did not physically contribute to the unity of the Palestinian people, 71 per cent of wage-earners from the West Bank concluded that it enhanced their national consciousness. This view was equally shared by 73 per cent of the sample of Palestinian workers from Israel.

Annex

Attitudes of Israeli Jews and Palestinians
to the PLO and Palestinian Statehood
(percentage)

	<u>Palestinians</u>	<u>Jews</u>
1. Should Israel recognize a Palestinian nation?		
Yes	80.1	11.0
Under certain conditions	16.3	35.3
No	3.6	53.7
Total	<u>100.0</u>	<u>100.0</u>
2. Should Israel recognize the PLO as the representative of the Palestinians?		
Yes	68.0	2.7
Under certain conditions	22.9	12.5
No	9.1	84.9
Total	<u>100.0</u>	<u>100.0</u>
3. Should there be a Palestinian State in the West Bank and Gaza?		
Yes	64.3	5.4
Under certain conditions	20.0	17.7
No	15.7	76.9
Total	<u>100.0</u>	<u>100.0</u>
4. Should Israel recognize the Palestinian refugees' right to repatriation to pre-1967 Israel?		
Yes	77.9	5.8
Under certain conditions	17.9	20.1
No	4.2	74.1
Total	<u>100.0</u>	<u>100.0</u>
5. Should there be settlements in the Occupied Territories?		
In favour	2.2	45.7
Have reservations	13.5	26.5
Against	84.3	27.8
Total	<u>100.0</u>	<u>100.0</u>

	<u>Palestinians</u>	<u>Jews</u>
6. Borders with which one is prepared to compromise for peaceful settlement:		
(a) All Palestine in which new State will be established	11.8	1.2
(b) 1947 partition plan	25.7	.3
(c) Pre-1967 borders, return of East Jerusalem	41.0	1.0
(d) Pre-1967 borders, with some modifications	8.9	8.0
(e) Present borders with some compromise on West Bank	7.1	32.5
(f) Present borders with certain modifications	<u>5.5</u>	<u>56.9</u>
Total	100.0	100.0
	=====	=====

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B. The Role of the North American Churches
on the Question of Palestine

Dale Bishop

On 21 July 1948 the following cable was addressed to Mr. Charles Taft, President, Federal Council of Churches in the United States:

"The appalling facts of the Palestine Arab refugee problem during the last six months. Virtually half of the non-combatant Arabs of Palestine have become displaced persons, houses wrecked beyond repair and whole communities reduced to destitution. It is estimated that 200,000 Palestinian Arabs who have taken refuge in the adjacent Arab countries are penniless. These countries have met the demands of the guests generously and resourcefully only to find that their slender resources are approaching exhaustion. Still more obvious is the lot of the 200,000 or more refugees who have remained within the borders of Palestine. If the truce ends in a final peace they will go home to bare fields, looted houses and a shattered economy. If the truce ends in a renewal of war their miseries will be multiplied. Whatever happens, they now possess but the clothes they stand up in and a courage that will respond eagerly to any promise of a return to a normal life. This drifting multitude, close to half a million in number, is in desperate need of organized help. An international agency suitably equipped and liberally supported must take charge at once. Can the Federal Council take immediate steps to spread the knowledge of this need and to promise the required aid? Reps. Presbyterian, American colony, American Friends' mission, Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States."

A month later a telegramme from a similar group of American expatriate Church representatives went to the World Council of Churches. It read in part, "(we) importune the World Council of Churches to examine Palestine problem in light of principles of Christian justice with the view to recommend rectification of obvious wrongs."

These two cables, sent by representatives of American churches indicate the frame of reference for the churches' response to the concern for the refugees, whose plight was graphically described in the cable to the Federal Council of Churches. This concern was embodied in creation of relief, and eventually, development structures that continue their work today, almost 40 years after their creation. Today the American churches still contribute generously to the Department of Service for Palestinian Refugees, an instrumentality of the Middle East Council of Churches, whose area committees administer development programmes in Israel, the West Bank, Gaza, Jordan and Lebanon.

The second major thrust of the telegrammes, however, envisioned something more than humanitarian relief. The writers urged the churches "to examine the Palestine problem in light of the principles of Christian justice." Although the churches' response to the humanitarian needs was swift and generous, there was great caution in dealing with political - what many termed moral -

dimensions of the problem. In September of 1948, for example, the World Council of Churches, in a resolution dealing with the Palestine issue, made what one observer has called a clear-cut refusal to take a stand on the political issues, stating "on the political aspects of the Palestine problem and the complex conflict of 'rights' involved, we do not undertake to express a judgement."

Over the years, and especially after the 1967 war, the dichotomy between humanitarian aid and a discussion of political rights has closed. My colleague from the Middle East office of the National Council of Churches has noted the distinctly political-moral dimension of the National Council of Churches Middle East policy statement, which was approved unanimously by the Governing Board of the National Council of Churches in November of 1980.

In that statement the following affirmation is deemed essential for a beginning of the resolution of the Palestinian issue: recognition by the Arab States and by the Palestinian Arabs of the State of Israel with secure, defined and recognizable borders; and recognition by Israel of the right of national self-determination for the Palestinian Arabs and of their right to select their own representatives and to establish a Palestinian entity, including a Palestinian State.

This policy statement has been affirmed by the national meetings of several individual denominations, including the two I represent: the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Why have the churches spoken to the Palestinian issue? One motive suggested by the churches' critics in this regard is that the churches are merely "protecting their interests" in the Middle East. While it is true that what are called "main-line denominations" have had sizeable mission enterprises in the Middle East, including such a well known institution as the American University of Beirut, the churches' willingness to take on the moral and political aspects of the Palestinian issue has increased while their involvement with mission institutions has decreased. Most denominations have now turned over responsibilities for former mission institutions to indigenous partner churches in the area. On the other hand, the presence of missionary personnel in the area did play a role in the shaping of the churches' attitude toward the Palestinian issue. Missionaries experienced the events of 1948 as the cable I have cited indicate and have been present during the intervening years.

Such a critique also overlooks the role of the ecumenical movement. As the churches' relationship to the Middle East has shifted from a unilateral missionary relationship to a multilateral ecumenical relationship, we have increasingly benefitted from the insights of Middle Eastern Christians, for whom the lack of a just resolution of the Palestinian issue has been an unmitigated and continuing disaster. This is true not only for Palestinian Christians, but also for Christians in neighbouring countries, especially in Lebanon.

As we look ahead to the future of the churches' relationship to the Palestinian issue, we can perhaps see a twofold role of advocacy and constituency education in addition to the continuation of humanitarian assistance. There are obstacles. The churches' role as advocates is limited both by their lack of resources and by the general political climate. The task of education is made difficult by the persistence of anti-Arab, anti-Muslim and anti-Jewish stereotypes current in American society. The reinforcement of these negative stereotypes in the mass media and popular novels constitutes a real challenge to those who wish to see a human face put on Middle East issues.

And finally, we are constantly challenged by the complexity of Middle East issues. Many church people, encountering such complexity, are content to rely on inherited wisdom, a wisdom often shaped by the biases and negative imagery I have just mentioned. But the churches will continue to work for a just, a peaceful resolution of the Palestinian issue, one which guarantees self-determination to Israelis and Palestinians alike.

Charles A. Kimball

My name is Charles Kimball. I serve as the Director for the Middle East Office of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. (NCCC). I am an ordained Southern Baptist minister and a candidate for the Doctor of Theology in Islamic Studies and Christian-Muslim relations at Harvard University. I appreciate this opportunity to participate in the panel discussing the role of the North American churches on the question of Palestine.

The National Council of Churches is an agency of 31 Protestant and Orthodox communions in the United States, which together have a total membership of approximately 42 million persons. Its member communions have charged NCCC "to study and to speak and act on conditions and issues in the nation and in the world which involve moral, ethical and spiritual principles inherent in the Christian gospel". While the Governing Board does not claim to speak for all the members of the 31 member churches, it does express the considered judgement and position of the representatives of those churches sitting for that purpose as the Governing Board.

As Christians in the United States, we are deeply concerned about events in the Middle East because of our mandate to work for justice and peace in the world. In addition, the Middle East exerts a special hold on our attention since it is the cradle of our religious faith. The importance of the Middle East imposes a responsibility for prudent and persevering action. What United States Christians say, do and think about problems of the Middle East or what we fail to say and do may effect profoundly our own future and the future of the world. It could make the difference between the achievement of justice and peace or continuing conflict and world-endangering war.

Our concern as the National Council of Churches grows out of the history of the Christian religious tradition as well as our close relationships with the contemporary indigenous Christian community in the Holy Land. While we cannot speak for Middle Eastern Christians, it is important to note that the positions taken by NCCC have been decided in the context of a long-standing dialogue and working relationship with them.

On 6 November 1980, after an extensive two and one-half year study process by a distinguished panel of church leaders, NCCC Governing Board adopted unanimously (162 votes) the "Middle East Policy Statement". This Policy Statement and subsequent Council statements and resolutions provide the basis for my comments regarding the role of NCCC on the question of Palestine.

The question of Palestine and the future for the Palestinian people is a major concern throughout the Middle East Policy Statement. There are, for instance, sections dealing with self-determination and the rights of minorities in the Middle Eastern cultures, the arms race, security and justice. The final portion of the policy statement concerns "Israel and the Palestinian people". This is the heart of NCCC policy related to this symposium. Therefore I wish to quote several paragraphs:

"At the heart of any solution of the Israel-Palestinian conflict is a recognition that the struggle is between two peoples over the same territory. Conflicting promises were made to both Jews and Arabs at the time of World War I by the great Powers set the stage for the struggle of these two peoples. Palestinians feel they have been deprived of their homeland and denied the right of self-determination. Israelis feel they have legitimately acquired their homeland for rebuilding a Jewish national life. Attempts at solution are complicated because within each society there are differing concepts of the nature of religious identification with the State and the degree to which pluralism should prevail.

"Numerous proposals have been put forth and forums suggested in which a solution to the conflict could be achieved. In 1967 the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 242 which includes 'respect for and acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force, as well as 'withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent June 1967 conflict. The resolution has been generally regarded as providing an acceptable basis for resolution of the conflict between Israel and the Arab states. However, various parties to the conflict have found this resolution insufficient in itself, in part because it deals with the Palestinian people only as refugees...

"Further, the Palestinian people themselves have not been party to negotiations, nor is there an agreed-upon mechanism to accomplish this. At this time, the Palestine Liberation Organization functions as the only organized voice of the Palestinian people and appears to be the only body able to negotiate a settlement on their behalf. Steps towards peace which would make possible direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians must include official action by the Palestine National Council, the deliberative body of the Palestine Liberation Organization, including either an amendment of the Palestine National Covenant of 1968 or an unambiguous statement recognizing Israel as a sovereign State and its right to continue as a Jewish State. At the same time, Israel must officially declare its recognition of the right of the Palestinians to self-determination, including the option of a sovereign State apart from the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and of its acceptance of the Palestine Liberation Organization as a participant in the peace negotiations. Further, each party should refrain from all hostile acts against the other. As long as each party demands that the other takes the initiative, successful negotiation seems unlikely. These reciprocal initiatives will remove doubt about the acceptance by the two parties of each other's right to a national existence.

"Cease-fire and recognition do not come easily for either party. The Israeli Government cites evidence that the Palestine Liberation Organization seeks the destruction of Israel, and, in some formulations, denies the existence of Jews as a people. The Palestine Liberation Organization cites evidence that Israel seeks the destruction of the Palestine Liberation Organization and, in some formulations, denies the existence of the Palestinians as a people. Whether or not the critical steps in resolving these historic enmities can be achieved depends in large part on the ability of the international community to communicate its commitment to the survival of both peoples and to a broad vision that encompasses the aspirations of both peoples as compatible rather than mutually exclusive.

"Whatever formula for the peace process develops, there should be reciprocal recognition of the right of self-determination. The Jewish people have claimed and exercised their right to self-determination in the State of Israel. The Palestinian people claim and seek to exercise the right of self-determination by creating a Palestinian entity, including the option of a sovereign State.

"In order to build upon the existing, but partial, beginnings of a resolution of the conflicts between Israel and the Palestinians and the related Arab-Israel conflicts, the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. considers the following affirmations essential, recognizing that their sequence and timing will be matters of negotiation:

"(a) Cessation of acts of violence in all its forms by all parties.

"(b) Recognition by the Arab States and by the Palestinian Arabs of the State of Israel with secure, defined and recognized borders; and recognition by Israel of the right of national self-determination for the Palestinian Arabs and of their right to select their own representatives and to establish a Palestinian entity, including a sovereign State. In the meantime, unilateral actions in respect to such issues such as settlement policy and land and water use in the occupied areas can only inflame attitudes, and reduce the prospect of achieving peace;

"(c) Agreement on and creation of a mode of enforcement of international guarantees for the sovereign and secure borders of Israel and of any Palestinian entity established as part of the peace process. This would mean the implementation of the principles enunciated in United Nations Security Council resolution 242 (1967);

"(d) Provision for solutions to problems of the refugees and displaced persons, Palestinian Arab, Jewish and other, affected by the Israeli-Palestinian and related conflicts dating from 1948, including questions of compensation and return;

"(e) Agreement on the future status of Jerusalem, a focus of the deepest religious inspiration and attachment of three faiths, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Existing international treaties (Paris, 1856, and Berlin, 1878) and League of Nations actions regulating the rights and claims of the three monotheistic religions to Holy Places should remain unaltered. At the same time, the destiny of Jerusalem should be viewed in terms of people and not only in terms of shrines. Therefore, the future status of Jerusalem should be included in the agenda of the official negotiations including Israel and the Palestinian people for a comprehensive solution of the Middle East conflict. Unilateral actions by any one group in relation to Jerusalem will only perpetuate antagonisms that will threaten the peace of the city and possibly the region.

"The National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. has a particular responsibility in the United States which plays key role in the resolution of the conflict. In helping create a responsible public discourse in the United States on the conflict of Israel and the Palestinians and other Arabs, the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. should seek to uphold a perspective that is holistic rather than partial. It is essential that United States Christians recognize that peace and justice for both Israelis and Palestinians require peace and justice for each. This will depend upon bold initiative by all parties seeking new options, risking courses of action which, while at one time appearing impossible, may provide a basis for a common vision of peace and justice. The National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. and its member communions should remain open to such initiatives and seek to develop understanding and support for them within the United States Christian community and society at large.

"Further, the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. should use every available means to make possible constructive communication among the parties involved. The National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. has an important responsibility to promote understanding and discussion because of its associations with Christian institutions, with the churches of the Middle East through the Middle East Council of Churches, and with the Muslim and Jewish communities both in the Middle East and in the United States. These relationships are a precious gift that must be nurtured, preserved and used to enhance a future of peace and justice for the peoples of the Middle East and to ensure that opportunities for peace not be lost."

The policy of NCCC has meant an active involvement in political, developmental and humanitarian realms in terms of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In the final minutes I wish to make a few comments on our ongoing and historical role in these areas.

Most recently, there has been considerable debate within the United States on the question of where the United States embassy in Israel should be located. Consistent with our policy on the status of Jerusalem, a policy noted above, NCCC has been active in opposing proposed legislation that would require the United States embassy to be moved. This has included some efforts in the area of constituency education and visible presence in Washington testifying before the House and the Senate on this matter. The status of Jerusalem is, of course, of central importance in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The importance of Jerusalem for Jews, Christians and Muslims worldwide is also a significant dimension of this particular debate.

The decision on where the United States embassy is located should not be portrayed as a test of the measure of one's support for Israel. To present this question in these terms is simplistic and, therefore, misleading. It is important to note that NCCC's position is clear and consistent in support of Israel, calling upon the Arab States and Palestinian Arabs to recognize the State of Israel as a sovereign, Jewish State with secure, defined and recognized borders. At the same time NCCC has been consistent in support of the rights and security concerns of the Palestinians, both Christians and Muslims, as well as other Middle Eastern people. We believe that justice and peace for both the Israelis and Palestinians require peace and justice for each.

If the United States is to continue to have a leadership role in the difficult search for peace in the Middle East, it must be in the area of diplomatic initiatives. The prospects for a comprehensive peace in the Middle East, a hope shared by all people of good will, will not be served by the passing of legislation now before the United States Congress. Rather, such a unilateral action will exacerbate tensions and heighten frustrations in an already fragile situation.

I will, of course, be happy to discuss in detail dimensions of NCCC position as it relates to this current debate during the question and discussion time following the presentations of the panel members.

For over 30 years, Christians in the United States have been actively involved in relief and development work with the Palestinian people. Churches in the West were instrumental in founding and developing what has become the Department on Service to Palestinian Refugees (DSPR). This organization, which has programmes in five countries of the Middle East as well as the West Bank and Gaza district, continues to be one of the most effective programmes working among the Palestinian population. DSPR is actively involved in areas of health, education, and community development. DSPR programmes help Palestinian refugees to continue life under difficult conditions. Through vocational training, family service centres, educational loans and health-care facilities, DSPR is involved in a variety of self-help projects which are of great importance for the thousands of displaced Palestinians in the Middle East. NCCC, working co-operatively with the Middle East Council of Churches, has been a strong and consistent supporter of the programmes of DSPR since its inception.

Other programmes of work of NCCC also benefit Palestinians in the Middle East. Our emergency relief and reconstruction work in Lebanon, for instance, assists all people in Lebanon with emergency medical and health care as well as reconstruction needs where appropriate. Given the large population of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon today, many are assisted through this programme again conducted in co-operation with the Middle East Council of Churches.

There is a great deal more I could say about NCCC commitment to Middle East peace education, constituency awareness, and inter-faith understanding. In all of these areas the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is one element of our overall programme of work. We are, in a word, deeply committed to a peaceful resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as well as other conflicts in the Middle East. It is our hope and prayer that our efforts, however limited, will continue to contribute positively towards a resolution of this long standing and difficult conflict.

The Reverend Betty Marmura

(This paper reflects my own views as a Christian and a Canadian citizen. Neither the Canadian Council of Churches nor the United Church of Canada should be held responsible for any of my remarks.)

If the basic frame of reference for Christian thinking is not the nation but the ecumene, i.e. the whole of mankind as made in the image of God, then it is necessary to deal with our subject on two levels. The first is what the role of the churches would be if we were all faithful to our calling to love our neighbour as ourselves; the second is the role the churches are actually playing now. Under this second heading I can only reflect upon the Canadian scene, as I am unfamiliar with what is happening in the United States.

It is unquestionably a fact that the vast majority of Canadian church-goers are largely ignorant of the history of the creation of the State of Israel. They know that there are Palestinian refugees, but they are very hazy and often badly misinformed as to the underlying causes of the problem. The word Palestinian is for many people in the pews synonymous with "terrorist". Given the widespread and vicious racial stereotyping of Arabs in many western newspapers and films, the Palestinian is portrayed as a bloody-handed hater of the Jews. Israel is perceived as a beleaguered but efficient and industrious little democracy, fighting valiantly against great odds for its very survival.

If the church is as interested in human rights as it continually claims to be on other political fronts, and if its members are not to continue to bear false witness against their Palestinian neighbours, then it follows that the most important role the church could play on the question of Palestine is to honestly strive to present the historical facts - to its own people and to the world. It is a fact that the land of Palestine was given by a foreign Power to another people for the creation of a new, racially exclusivist State. In 1948, driven by the threat of further massacres on the scale of Deir Yassin, 730,000 Palestinians fled from their homes, thus furthering by another notch the Zionist goal articulated by Herzl: Palestine without Palestinians.

It is very important indeed that the churches understand the manner in which the land was emptied of a large part of the indigenous population. It is important that Christians know that since 1948, three quarters of the 475 villages that existed in Palestine have been completely destroyed by the Israelis. Even the cemeteries and the tombstones have been bulldozed away, and the names of the villages eradicated. Palestine is to be wiped from the history books and atlases of the world.

If the church informed its members, honestly and courageously, of the facts, going back to the first Zionist dream: to the establishment of the Jewish National Fund in 1901; to the Balfour Declaration; the findings of the King-Crane Commission; and the gross inequities of the United Nations

partition plan, it would soon become obvious that the question of Palestine is above all else a moral question. It involves primarily a political struggle between the long-established population of a region and hundreds of thousands of foreigners pouring in from all over the world with the object of displacing and dispossessing that population. It involves the recognition that for 36 years, North Americans have been financing and applauding an injustice.

In trying to deal with our collective bad conscience concerning the horrible crimes that have been committed against the Jews, we have - sometimes unwittingly, and sometimes quite cynically - condoned similar crimes against another people. Nothing must happen to the Jewish people again. Not because we will feel guilty if it does, but because they are God's people, and they are precious. But the Palestinians too are God's people; they too are our brothers and sisters. We cannot go on leaving them to live and die in the squalor of refugee camps, denied their homes, livelihood, and the most important basic freedom; their right to self-determination. We cannot do that if we really believe that they too are loved by God.

What is happening in Canada at the present time? The Canadian Council of Churches (CCC) is an organization consisting of 12 member churches who voluntarily co-operate through its agency. If there is some Christian venture that all or even a small number of the member churches wish to undertake together, the Canadian Council provides these churches with the means to confer and consult, and may initiate programmes on their behalf.

Some years ago the various denominations comprising the Canadian Council initiated a programme of humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian refugees, mainly by providing funds to MECC. In 1971 the Committee on International Affairs of CCC published a discussion paper called Search for Understanding: A Study Booklet on the Middle East. This booklet is fairly typical of many efforts made by the Canadian churches to discuss the Middle East upheavals. The Palestine problem is always presented as being "highly complex". The statement is made that "Even yet, it is impossible to get agreement on the relative merits of the rival claims to Palestine." The evidence is said to be "contradictory".

And yet, it is not so difficult for anyone searching for understanding to avail himself of the statistics. While the land of Palestine has rarely been free of great-Power domination, it has been peopled for many centuries by Muslim and Christian Arabs, and a tiny minority of Jews. At the time that Lord Balfour was promising their land to the Jews of the world, in 1917, the Arabs made up 93 per cent of the population of Palestine. The Zionists, by 1948, had purchased less than 6 per cent of the total land area. The land now incorporated into the State of Israel has been acquired by forceable seizures and the dispossession of the people who had lived there for unbroken centuries.

That is documented; that is factual, and it is not really so very complex. Every year since 1948 the United Nations has been calling upon Israel to allow the Palestinians to return to their homes, or to receive

compensation. Every year Israel has been allowed to violate the Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

One of the final statements in the CCC study Search for Understanding reads: "The State of Israel is a fact. The Palestinians who have lost their homeland exist. The endless claims about who was there first are useless."

They may be "useless", but if the Christian Church has any interest in the truth, if it has any courage at all, it cannot regard such matters as unimportant or irrelevant. It cannot go on talking about "parallel legitimacy", about "balance" and "mediation" and pretend that nothing immoral took place.

It is very important indeed for the North American churches to see and to say that when the great Powers of the world arbitrarily take the land of one people and offer it to another, it is wrong. It is very important for us to see that when Zionists from North America and Europe and other parts of the globe took by force this land from the indigenous population, it was wrong. If we do not recognize this and admit it publicly, Israel will go right on, with impunity, doing what it seems to do best: expropriating Arab land and harassing the Arabs within its borders and in the occupied territories in the hope that they will go away. The Palestinians will not receive justice and the Israelis will have no security.

Whenever Canadian church people get together to discuss the Middle East, the security of the State of Israel is often the first item on the agenda. And yet, if the churches have a commitment to human rights, the order, in terms of moral principle, does not start with Israel's security. A commitment to human rights means collective rights - everybody's rights. In a state of war, if the first principle is the security of one State, that ignores the rights of the others. If we, the church, care about all God's people, we cannot urge the security of a racially exclusivist, militarily powerful and politically expansionist State above the rights of a dispossessed people. The security of Israel, while it is very important, is neither more nor less so than the security of the people it displaced.

Canadian church people are concerned about the volatile situation in the Middle East, but there are many factors that work against their education concerning the morality of political Zionism. Most people in Canadian cities have Jewish colleagues, friends and neighbours. Many of our churches are actively engaged in dialogue with our Jewish brothers and sisters. Our people visit synagogues, where the political propaganda very quickly get mixed in with the faith dialogue, and it sometimes becomes difficult to sort out whether we are talking about the God of Israel or Israel the god. We co-operate on many levels with Jewish organizations; on human rights issues, on work with the mentally handicapped and the disabled, and so on.

Most of us know and are close to many Jews. Few of us know any Palestinians. The churches organize tours to the Holy Land, in co-operation of course with the Israeli Government. The clergy who take their

congregations on such tours have no time for the indigenous Arab church in Jerusalem, though the Palestinian clergy would welcome even the slightest sign of interest.

My husband is a Palestinian Arab and an Episcopalian. His father was a clergyman in Jerusalem, where my husband was raised. When the rector of his church in Canada took his congregation on a tour of the Holy Land a few years ago, my husband gave him the name of the Arab Anglican bishop in Jerusalem. The hope was that at least the leaders might take a few hours out of their two weeks to talk to the Christian Arabs about their situation. No contacts were ever made.

The Secretary for World Concerns, CCC, Tad Mitsui, remarked in his report after a trip to the Middle East in June 1983 that when Christians visit the Holy Land, the churches should "make use of such an opportunity and educate their people about good Christian tourism ... One small attempt to include some sort of exposure about the conditions of the local (indigenous) people will make such tourism tremendously meaningful".

It is, of course, not "in" to say anything critical about the State of Israel. The late editor of the United Church Observer, Al Forrest, was one of a very few churchmen who had the courage to say publicly that what Israel had done and is doing to the Palestinians is wrong. He was labelled anti-Semitic, even by some of his fellow clergy. The price one pays for speaking out is high. But the price of remaining silent, as one Toronto rabbi remarked after losing his job for criticizing Israel's invasion of Lebanon, is even higher.

As on many other issues, the national policy of the mainline churches in Canada and the policy of CCC on the Middle East is considerably more enlightened than anything that is likely to come out of our local congregations. The United Church national policy position has been for some years that we urge the implementation of the United Nations Security Council resolution 242, unanimously adopted on 22 November 1967, which urges, among other things, the withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from the occupied territories. CCC submitted a most enlightened document entitled "Palestinian human rights and Israeli settlement policy in the occupied West Bank and Gaza" to the Canadian Ambassador to the fortieth session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. Under closing remarks it reads:

"The Canadian Council of Churches, on behalf of its member churches, presents the following recommendations, ...

1. The strong assertion of Israel's status as belligerent occupier of the West Bank and Gaza. This fundamental assessment of the situation is necessary before any subsequent positions can be established.

2. Canada should, much more forthrightly than we have up to this point, affirm the right of the Palestinian people to a homeland within historical Palestine.

3. Arrangements leading to such a homeland can only emerge from negotiations in which legitimate representatives of the Palestinian people are full participants.

4. Canada should make its position on the above points more forcefully, and should consult with like-minded nations, to increase international understanding and to begin to be more forthcoming on this matter."

This would be a wonderfully hopeful statement if one could believe that the congregations of the member churches, on whose behalf it was written, really knew of the existence of the submission and actively supported it. In fact, it is obvious from discussions that the CCC Middle East Task Group have had recently with the Canadian Arab Federation that not even all the members of the Task Group would support this statement.

Few Christians in Canada are aware that the PLO, both publicly and privately, has stated its willingness to recognize, at least de facto, Israel's right to self-determination, provided Israel reciprocated by recognizing the right of the Palestinian people to the same. The Palestinians are always portrayed as the intransigents, and such news is not widely publicized in our media.

We really come full circle; back to where we began: the need for the facts. The need to know and to state the truth. The North American churches are Western churches, with all that that implies in terms of priorities and bias; sometimes quite unconscious bias. We are faced with a growing body of fundamentalists on the right, haranguing us over the television networks to support Israel no matter what it does, in order that we may help "bring in the Kingdom". And we are still largely guided in the main line churches by liberal Christians who are deeply suspicious of anyone who criticizes Israel because Israel itself insists on equating anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism.

This particular hold that Israel has on us, we must work hard to break. We must show the Jews of Israel and the Jews of North America that we can love them and care deeply about their dignity and their security, without condoning what they are doing to another people.

We are so quiet in the Canadian churches. We quietly send funds to the Middle East churches to help the Palestinian refugees; we just as quietly avoid their clergy when we go on our rapturous tours of the Holy Land, and admire the Israeli high-rises that have been built on the rubble of Palestinian villages. We quietly visit synagogues, and listen in horror as the rabbi describes the plight of Jewish political prisoners in the Arab world (nobody speaks about what is happening to hundreds of thousands of Arabs under military occupation). We very quietly issue statements that 98 per cent of our church-going population never see, about the de facto annexation by Israel of more and more Arab lands. And we quietly dialogue with the members of the Canadian Arab Federation, telling them that we can't really say anything because we don't represent anybody.

If the security and human rights of both Israelis and Palestinians really do interest the church, then we have got to stop tip-toeing around and speak out, locally, nationally and at the United Nations. Then, and only then, can we honestly portray ourselves as reconcilers and peacemakers.

Don Wagner

This presentation will be somewhat different from those we have heard. It will deal primarily with historical material and some overview of the contemporary organizations which I have titled "The Evangelical Christian Zionists". It is also the tradition in which I grew up as an American fundamentalist. So I speak both from personal experience as well as some study. Allow me to introduce the subject by quoting from an internationally known political leader whose statements some of you may have read in Christian publications but which have escaped most of the national media. The quotation was reported after a conversation between this figure and the leader of an American Zionist organization. I quote, "You know I turn back to your ancient prophets in the Old Testament and signs foretelling Armageddon and I find myself wondering if, if we are the generation that is going to see that come about. I don't know if you've noted any of those prophecies lately but believe me they certainly describe the times we are going through." You may wish to speculate as to the author of that statement. Certainly Reverend Jerry Falwell of the Moral Majority could have said it. The televangelists such as Pat Robertson certainly have said things like it. Or Hal Lindsay, author of "The Late Great Planet Earth" which has now sold 18 million copies has stated things such as that. Others such as former President Rios Montt of Guatemala, Major Said Heddad, another born-again Christian, the late Saad Heddad has said it. But in this case it was none other than President Ronald Reagan who made the statement to Thomas Dine, Director of AIPAC, the Israeli lobby, in a telephone conversation in September of last year. The unfortunate part about it not being commented upon in the major press is that its ramifications have been overlooked, that the President of one of the super-Powers who in Christianity in Crisis, a liberal Christian magazine, has stated he holds in his hands the power to bring about Armageddon, himself holds such views. The ramifications of that apocalyptic statement by Ronald Reagan were made deliberately to signal his Christian Zionism in the year of an election. And to signal both to the Christian Zionist networks, lobbyists and organizations and to the Christian and to the Jewish Zionist organizations that indeed he is speaking their language. But Ronald Reagan was hardly the first United States president or international political leader to hold such views. Several United States presidents going back to President Harrison on to Woodrow Wilson and others were influenced by evangelical Christian Zionism. Numerous United States Congress persons and senators today espouse the same views. What I would like to do now is to simply give a brief historical overview of the roots of evangelical Christian Zionism, move on to a brief survey of some of the current organizations and leaders and then propose three or four directions in which we can go forward.

First, a historical overview. Until now critical scholarship has overlooked or perhaps relegated at best to the footnotes of history, the unique phenomenon called evangelical Christian Zionism. A new book by Regina

Sharif titled "Non-Jewish zionism" begins to open the subject for discussion. Although the development in terms of the evangelical dimension and particularly the American component needs further study and research, evangelical Christian zionism can be traced to the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century and particularly to figures such as Martin Luther, John Calvin and the second generation of reformers such as the Anabaptists. The particular theological emphasis of the Reformation such as individual salvation, individual interpretation of the Bible and the centrality of the Bible as a norm of faith and practice are the theological components for the rootage of this zionism. However, as has been noted by Sharif, Luther and others hold simultaneously anti-Semitic views towards the Jews and the Arabs and a pro-Zionist position. And this interesting phenomenon holds true today for most of the leading spokespersons of organizations in America. Also the significant focus upon Old Testament scriptures led to a Judaisation of theology during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries which flowered during the Cromwellian era in Britain and had many proponents of the arts including John Milton right down to the author George Eliot. Christian zionism came in cycles in European history. It often emerged after an economic or war type of crisis. One such occurrence was after the night of the 1611 issuance of the King James version of the Bible in England. And it was followed by a very significant rise of a movement called Christian millennialism which is the emphasis upon the thousand-year rule of Christ at the end of history. During this period, approximately 1615 onward, English theologians developed a primitive form of Christian zionism based upon this millennial reign of Christ at the end. And in 1615, it had a profound impact upon members of Parliament who were found calling for the restoration of the Jews in Palestine. One member of Parliament, Sir Henry Finch, in the year 1621, wrote "The Jews shall repair to their own country, shall inhabit all the parts of the land as before, shall live in safety and shall continue in it forever". This clear statement in 1611 of a restoration of an exclusively Jewish State certainly predates the rise of the Zionist movement. A similar convergence occurs in Cromwellian England and Elizabethan England. The arrival of Christian zionism occurred again after the turn of the 1800s following the French Revolution. In England, Rev. Louis Way took over as the director of the London Society for Promoting Christianity Among the Jews. He established three goals for the organization. First, Jewish restoration as an element of fulfilling biblical prophecy; second, analyzing cataclysmic events which predict clearly the second coming of Jesus Christ; and third the restored Jewish State in Palestine would make no provision for the indigenous Arab population. This was again in the year 1825. The Society had a profound influence in British politics, theology and culture in general. By the year 1840, these views began to spread to the United States where there was already a ready audience. One of the great analysts of American evangelicalism, Ernest Sandeen, said that "at the turn of the century, 1800 and following, Americans were drunk on millennialism", again the view of the coming of Christ at the end of history. One who came from Britain directly and spread his views about the millennial rule of Christ and Jewish restoration was one John Nelson Derby. He made six separate visits to the United States between 1840 and 1875. His particular brand of theology is called "pre-millennialism" which is very important; it means that, amidst cataclysmic events at the end of history,

Christ will return before establishing his millennial rule. And the most significant function or event in that history at the end is the establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine. Derby's view of "pre-millennialism" in fact elevated the role of the Jews above the role of the Church in fulfilling God's plans. And he is the forefather of the present millennialists such as Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson and Hal Lindsay.

One of the outgrowths of this history, to give you simply one illustration of its political dimension, was the work to seek conferences and pre-millennialist positions. On 5 March 1891, he delivered a petition to President Benjamin Harrison signed by most prominent Americans in major cities across the United States. He urged the President to consider the plight of Jews in Russian pogroms and to settle them in Palestine. In part the petition stated as follows:

"Why not give Palestine back to the Jews again? According to God's distribution of nations, it is their home, an inalienable possession from which they were expelled by force. Why shall not the Powers under the Treaty of Berlin in 1878, which gave Bulgaria to the Bulgarians and Serbia to the Serbians, now give Palestine to the Jews?"

Blackstone organized a network around the country which gained signatures of such names as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court Melville Fuller, governors of 25 states, hundreds of Roman Catholic, Protestant and Evangelical clergy and representatives of the business community which included John D. Rockefeller, J.P. Morgan, Russell Sage and Charles B. Scribner. The United States press picked up and gave prominent coverage to this initiative which took place again six years before the Basle Conference organized by Hertzfel. The influence grew, had profound effect upon the likes of Lord Arthur Balfour in England, David Lloyd George, those who shaped the Balfour Declaration in British policy. Lord Balfour and Lloyd George themselves came from evangelical British Zionism and espoused those views. Woodrow Wilson was the son of a Presbyterian minister but on his mother's side was an evangelical fundamentalist influence which shaped his views of the role of the Jews at the end of history. I can go on and on with those from the 1920s right up until 1948 at high levels in United States and British political decision making who were influenced by evangelical Christian Zionism.

Let me turn now to sketch some of the contemporary organizations and leaders in the revival of evangelical Zionism in America. Beginning with the 1967 war, there was a convergence between the American Zionist organizations and the evangelical Zionist movement to give prominence to the evangelicals which were by then the fastest growing communities in North American Christianity. After 1967 many evangelicals saw the victory of Israel as a clear signal that we are indeed in the end times. L. Nelson Bell, Billy Graham's father-in-law and editor of the influential magazine Christianity Today, wrote in 1967 the following:

"[The fact that] for the first time in more than 2,000 years, Jerusalem is now completely in the hands of the Jews, gives the student of the Bible a thrill and a renewed faith in the accuracy and validity of the Bible."

After the 1967 war, evangelicals were under tiptoes expecting the return of Christ imminently. The pre-millennialists' wing within evangelical christianity which is separate then began to grow in leaps and bounds. Among those who came into prominence was Pat Robertson, the Director of the 700 Club or the Christian Broadcasting Network. Looking back on the significance of the War of 1967, Robertson stated the following:

"Jesus Christ gives us the key to modern day events. Jesus was saying that the termination of Gentiles' spiritual privilege and the power that results from it would take place when the Jews took control over Jerusalem. June 1967 therefore becomes the prophetic benchmark for the rapid disintegration of the Gentile world. Consider these events - a humiliating United States loss in Viet Nam, the first military loss in our history, virulent world-wide inflation, the fall of the dollar as a great world currency, a world-wide oil crisis, communist advances throughout Africa, upheaval in Iran, Russian troops and planes in Cuba, the Afghan invasion, impending world-wide depression, and now the potential for a Middle East war, even World War III."

Robertson and others like him look with glee upon the potential for war to bring on the return of Christ, the establishment of Christ's rule. And again, the victory of Israel in 1967, is the hallmark for that beginning.

1976 marks another significant leap forward. This bicentennial celebration in America represented the evangelical boom. Time magazine declared the year, the year of the evangelical. There was no surprise that major American Zionist organizations began to mount a campaign with the evangelical right. There are three strategic reasons for that:

(a) The election of Menachem Begin in the Likud coalition in Israel gave rise to a parallel religious extremist movement within Israel and direct linkages were fostered within the United States with American fundamentalist Christianity;

(b) President Jimmy Carter, himself a born-again Christian, called for a Palestinian homeland which drew fire from both American Zionists and evangelical Christian Zionist organizations who then mobilized their activities following Carter's significant statement;

(c) The American Jewish Committee and other organizations found in the evangelicals their natural ally and shifted again their major emphasis to them and away from the mainline churches and their bodies.

The series of initiatives undertaken by evangelicals in 1977 were represented by several factors. We saw full-page advertisements in the The New York Times, Washington Post and others. One was signed by prominent American evangelicals such as the then editor of Christianity Today, Pat Boone, and others. Interestingly, the campaign was financed from Jerusalem through an organization titled "The Institute for Holy Land Studies". The

political statements of evangelical leadership targetted the Carter Administration as having turned their back then on Israel, having ignored the Palestinians for so long. The statement by Carter sent shock waves to Begin and the others. The person who organized the campaign in the United States was one Jerry Strober, a former employee of the American Jewish Committee, who told Newsweek magazine the following, "We are talking about Carter's constituency and he'd better listen to them. The real source of strength that the Jews have in this country is now from the evangelicals." So 1977 then saw an increased acceleration for these reasons.

A parallel grass-roots factor organized by most major evangelical right coalitions and organizations is the Holy Land tourism which was mentioned by Rev. Marmura. During the 1970s El-Al and Israel's Ministry of Tourism noted the numerous Christian travel agencies that made Holy Land tourism their business. In the 1970s, Holy Land tourism grew to be the single most popular tourism of all North Americans. Holy Land tours have been strategic investments by Americans in the Israeli Government and with American Zionist organizations. The numerical and financial benefits which Israel has reached in Holy Land tours can hardly be estimated. Chaya Fischer, Director of the Pilgrimage Promotion Division in Israel's Ministry of Trade and Tourism, said that, out of 250,000 American visitors to Israel during the year 1980, well over 100,000 were United States Christians, the majority being evangelicals. He added, "Their itineraries reflect an attitude of wanting to meet, get to know and understand Israelis and Israel with the positive and friendly outlook." I would add that most of these tours totally ignore the Palestinian community including all the Christian communities in the Middle East.

Some comment now on the evangelical right. One of the most prominent leaders of the evangelical right is Jerry Falwell and the Moral Majority, an evangelical writer and I might add here that the evangelical community is far from monolithic. You might think of it as having its own centre which is the establishment, its left represented by groups like sojourners and others like that, and its right, and here we come only to discuss the right. Wes Michaelson noted that Jerry Falwell is perhaps the first American political figure to argue that the United States must support Israel not simply for Israel's own sake but because the United States must act on its own self-preservation by supporting Israel. Falwell is clearly one of Israel's most consistent advocates in the United States and the Moral Majority organization sees support of Israel as one of its key planks in its eight-point programme. The American Zionist organizations and the Israeli Government have expressed their collective appreciation for Falwell when Prime Minister Begin presented him with the first Jabotinsky Award and this was followed recently by giving Falwell his own use of an Israeli jet. Falwell's Christian Zionism is rooted in his pre-millennialist theology. In his book Listen America, Falwell devotes an entire chapter to Israel and his Christian support of Zionism. He calls up all the essential biblical texts which support this primarily from the Old Testament and the Book of Revelation. His message can be summarized in one phrase: "To stand against Israel is to stand against God". The statement draws wide application naturally. Falwell's brand of Christian Zionism is proclaimed through numerous outreach vehicles: his own Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Virginia, has now over 10,000 members; he is the Chancellor of Liberty Baptist College which claims 5,000 student

body members and is now the fastest growing campus in the United States; his television programme, the old-time "Gospel Hour", is said to reach 40 to 50 million viewers each week and a network of 4,000 television stations; his daily radio programme is heard on 500 United States radio stations; his monthly newspaper The Moral Majority Report now reaches two and a half million Americans. (The Washington Post has a circulation of one million.)

In November of 1983, Falwell and chief aide, Cal Thomas, led 700 pilgrims on a Holy Land tour. We happened to send a participant on that tour who was able to report totally missing any contact with Palestinians. Members were told once they left Nazareth to close their eyes as they drove up the West Bank for they would see nothing of significance. In their meeting with Moshe Arens, who is a hero of the fundamentalists, the talk of the United States-Israeli invasion of Lebanon drew a standing ovation from the tourists. While in that tour, Falwell found time to organize a parallel Moral Majority organization within Israel. The organization is called and identified by the title the New Israeli Right. Its goals are to create a polling sector and information centre to impact public policy within Israel and Falwell is reported to have financed its initial grant. Its director is one Avigdor Eskin, a recent immigrant from the Soviet Union, and a close affiliate of Rabbi Kahane. In 1983, he was arrested for attacking Arab homes in Hebron where he lives in Gus Emunim settlement. However it is understood that there is a counter-reaction within some of Falwell's constituency for this close affiliation, with this extreme right-wing within Israel.

I could go on to illustrate what the 700 Club was during the Israeli invasion. It called for American Christians to pray for Israel's victory over the Palestinian terrorists and to write to the President in support of Begin's policy against the Palestinians. Televangelists used the airwaves in America to espouse their clearly Zionist rhetoric and to enable a lobby effort on behalf of Israeli interest. As well as the 700 Club, groups like George Otis and High Adventure ministries send financial backing to the Free Lebanon enclave organized by the late Said Heddad in Israel itself. These Christian Zionist networks are not only growing but their efforts are multiplying and they are focusing their efforts upon the present November election.

Let me turn now as we have established the significance of these groups which reach the highest levels of United States policy-making to note some possible things that might be done to bring some balance. First, we as NGOs and as Christian organizations, and I would say both Jewish and Muslim organizations, need to face the seriousness of this challenge. Often we either overlook it as being beyond our understanding or belief or as being to massively financed and organized. The latter is true. However, these people can be impacted and the most important direction we can move initially is on the level of information, through theological debate, through serious political and historical publications and primarily, by taking the leadership of some of these movements and primarily of their publications to the Middle East to meet with Palestinian leadership with the Christian communities in the

Middle East and with progressive Jewish forces are essential. Our organization, the Palestine Human Rights Campaign, with others, a group called Mercy Corps, an evangelical relief organization, have now taken five tours of evangelical leaders. Each one has come back and has been profoundly moved and significant work is being done both in their journals, in their local churches, and now slowly in their organizations. It is important that we direct our work to forge networks of information with the evangelical leadership. The vast reservoir of evangelicals are either poorly informed or misinformed by the work of the Falwells and others. The evangelical Christian community is said to be comprised of 45 to 50 million adult voters in this year's election. They can not be overlooked. A second effort must be in networking the mainline churches in the United States with the evangelicals. This again is a dimension that has been missing either from talking different theology and languages, of having hostile relationships in the past, or having virtually no contact and not knowing who is at work, but American organizations in the evangelical community such as Lausanne for World Evangelism now perhaps the broadest umbrella under which international Christians can put their name to a theological statement. Now has begun interest in the question of Palestine. One of its co-ordinators is a board member of our organization and has recently testified in the United States Congress against the move of the Jerusalem Embassy. He is making a gradual impact within this organization which is Billy Graham's pet organization in terms of international evangelism. It is comprised primarily now of third world evangelicals who are the sons and daughters of American and British missionary work. Next, there must be linkage with progressive American and European Jewish and Muslim organizations. The racist attitude held by the evangelicals must be exposed and brought to balance and I mean anti-semitism against both Jew and Arab. This is the history of evangelical Christian zionism from its founding growing from the Reformation. We find that many of these people are open for change which comes difficult but if argued on solid theological, biblical and justice issues, it can come. Next with some organizations, there must be direct confrontation, i.e. with organizations such as the Moral Majority or the International Christian Embassy in Jerusalem which now is organizing 35 embassies in major United States cities over the next two years to espouse a clear Christian Zionist pre-millennialist position in support of Israel. These organizations are illegally using the airwaves and illegally the United States postal system for lobbying efforts. Such issues as this must be challenged, direct confrontation is necessary and evangelical groups are those who can do it best. Finally, we are finding that there is a quiet political backlash among the evangelicals. As a reaction to the pressure since 1976 of the Israeli, of the American Zionist and the Christian Zionist organization, many organizations and their leaders are quietly asking new questions. Many of them see this out of racist or American patriotic concerns. This must be guarded carefully. However, there are new movements afoot. Our organization has now created a evangelical coalition for justice in the Middle East, working quietly with many of these groups. And then we will call upon the

director in a moment of a new movement for a third party in the United States which now is feeling that they have over 18 million evangelical supporters who do support Palestinian self-determination and many of the issues which concern us all in Israeli-Palestinian peace. So I close by stating the urgency of the situation in the United States that with the sign of hope, that evangelical Christian Zionists are not a monolithic body that should be ignored, but it should be addressed, dialogued with, confronted and nurtured to support the clear justice of the Palestinian people to safeguard their rights and the rights of the Jewish people.

C. Factors Determining Policy-Making in North America
on the Middle East and the Question of Palestine

James G. Abourezk

More than a century ago, Henry Thoreau, a famous American writer and individualist, was visited by a friend while he was in prison for refusing to pay his taxes.

His friend asked, "What are you doing in there?"

To which Thoreau answered, "What are you doing out there?"

It is a question which I changed slightly when I was constantly asked why I left the U.S. Senate. My answer has been that a more proper question is, "Why is everyone else staying in the Senate?"

It's really all a question of perspective. When I am asked, as I was just last week by a group of journalists in Washington, "How can Israel feel secure if it allows a Palestinian State to be established next to it?" It is an interesting question by itself when one thinks of the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

I once introduced a resolution at a NATO parliamentary conference which called for condemnation of Israeli settlements on the West Bank. The French delegate rose to denounce the resolution on the ground that it was too one-sided. It mentioned, he said, only "Israeli colonies on Arab land". Again to try to bring it into perspective, I offered to amend the resolution to condemn all Arab colonies on Israeli land. But unfortunately, the French delegate had no sense of humour.

The arguments from those who support Israel are full of references to "Arab terrorists" as opposed to "Israeli commandoes and freedom fighters"; "swarthy Arabs versus blond, bronzed Israelis"; the "morality of Israel" stacked up against "Arab greed". It is as though 40 years of history did not exist, and that all that counted was the history written by those who support Israel.

But all this was not just an exercise on the part of Israel's propaganda to practice their trade. It has been done consciously and deliberately to build images in America -- the image of a good Israel and of a bad Arab world. It is not just games they are playing, because the outcome of this propaganda effort means billions of dollars each year given by the United States to Israel -- given no matter what it is used for and no matter who suffers as a consequence.

The truth of the matter is that the Arab-Israeli war is won or lost in Washington, DC, and not in the Golan Heights, or in the West Bank.

Looking at it in sequential terms, Israel does what it wants to do because it is militarily strong. It is militarily strong because it receives unlimited military and financial support from the United States Government. It receives this support both in direct grants from the Government and in tax breaks for individual contributors. It is able to do all this because it has built, over the years, one image for itself, and one for the Arab world, that plays right to the viscera of the American electorate.

Americans like an underdog, and Israel has, somehow, made this country believe that it is the victim of the Palestinians, despite the reality of just the opposite.

Americans apparently prefer blond, bronzed, European-looking people, over swarthy, dark "Middle Eastern types". Thus, the press and the literature somehow manages to continue to create these images, most of which are racist in nature, and misleading in actual fact.

But it has worked. Until now, image-making by the Israelis has reinforced the other methods of political control used by the Israeli Government to keep the money and the support flowing. The American press, by and large, and with some exceptions, play the game just as they are expected to.

I will never forget, a few years ago, when a famous reporter from the Washington Post wrote a major story which disclosed that an Arab country was getting American CIA money under the table -- some \$7 million to \$8 million over a 20-year period. I learned by accident that Israel had also received the same kind of CIA money over the same period of time. I asked for an explanation by the State Department, who sent over two CIA agents along with their own man, to fulfill my request. I was told that Israel had received some \$70 million to \$80 million from the CIA during the same period of time. I asked why they were being paid the money. I was told that it was specifically for the purpose of buying votes in the United Nations from black African nations.

When I confronted the reporter with that information, he admitted that he knew it at the time, but that "it seemed to him to be under different circumstances". He was unable to explain why that particular judgement could not have been left up to his readers to sort out.

It was not until weeks after the beginning of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon that the American press began anything near accurate coverage of the war. It was only after the television pictures could no longer hide the slaughter that the press began a semblance of fair reporting of the blitzkrieg. They stopped their reading of Israeli military communiqués and began something closely resembling actual coverage of Israel's invasion.

Poor John Chancellor of NBC. He made one mistake during 1982. He went to Lebanon, and after witnessing the indiscriminate slaughter by the Israelis, went on television and said so. By the time he left Lebanon and went to Israel, he had repented and had given a more favourable statement there. But it was too late. In this month -- June -- of this year, a team from the Israeli lobby is touring the United States speaking on the subject of NBC and John Chancellor, and what they are calling unfair coverage of the 1982 invasion.

It all has an impact on the press and the public and, of course, on the politicians. A rational mind would wonder why the United States

Government continually acts against its own interests. The United States funnels several billion dollars a year to Israel along with the most modern weaponry known to man. In doing so it has jeopardized its political and economic relationship with over 100 million people in the Arab world. This is hardly rational, but it continues year after year. The reason is clear: the Israeli lobby has found the political "erogenous zone" of American politicians -- campaign money.

Few politicians are willing to stand up to that lobby. They know that it can produce enough money to elect them, or to defeat them, or to cause them enough trouble which is something no politician wants. The stakes for the politician, personally, are much too high to risk his election for faceless Palestinians who have no voice, no presence, and no vote. Those few who have been willing to speak their minds have paid a heavy price -- Fulbright, McClosky, Findley. All have been targets of the Israeli lobby.

In private, most politicians complain about the bullying tactics of the Israeli lobby, but in public they stumble over each other's feet in an effort to be the most pro-Israeli.

Then, there are those, like Jimmy Carter, Richard Nixon and Jerry Ford, and others, who mysteriously get religion after they leave office.

Reading the American press alongside the European press on the subject of the Middle East is another exercise in puzzlement. I have often wondered if both media are talking about the same part of the world.

The picture painted by the American media of the Middle East conflict is one of total historical revisionism. But, of course, it is the only picture seen by the American public. And it explains why members of Congress can work up a lather over \$21 million going to Central America, yet remain silent over \$3 billion going to Israel. The American public, quite frankly, is not aware that Israel receives more than \$10 million each day that the sun comes up, 365 days a year, and as an outright gift. Arabs are dehumanized, made to look greedy, or barbaric, deserving of any punishment they receive, while the Israelis are portrayed as underdogs, weary of war, threatened with being overrun by Moslem hordes who would kill for no reason other than the joy of killing. These are images propounded by not only the print media, but also television and the film industry. And these are the images upon which American policy is based.

I sincerely believe that there will one day be a Palestinian State. I believe that one day the Palestinian people will be able to stop wandering through this earth. I believe they will be able to come to rest on their own soil. It will happen, I believe, in one of two ways. Either the United States, upon which Israel depends for its total livelihood, will impose a peaceful settlement now, or within or three decades Israel fall of its own weight. The inevitability of a Palestinian State requires those who profess to be concerned about Israel to do something about a settlement now. They will prevent the suffering not only of the Palestinians and the Lebanese who now pay the price of Israeli intransigence, but also that of the Jews who will pay for the greed of their own rulers.

Linda Huber

We are all painfully aware of the power of the Zionist lobby in the American political arena. It seems that to even question the wisdom of unqualified United States support for Israeli militarism is political suicide for an American elected official. For the most part, the American news media suppresses the truth regarding Israeli policies and practices in Palestine and Lebanon, so the American people are denied the information on which they could make their own judgement regarding United States policy in the Middle East. In these circumstances, how can concerned Americans attempt to affect United States policy on the question of Palestine?

As attorneys and as United States-based activists for justice in the Middle East, my partner Mark Lane and I are trying a novel approach. We are litigating a lawsuit on behalf of a broad coalition of plaintiffs challenging the tax-exempt status of six United States-based Zionist organizations, including the United Jewish Appeal and the Jewish National Fund, for the reason that the activities of these organizations violate United States law and are contrary to the stated policies of the United States. The case is titled Kareem Khalaf, et al. v. Donald Regan, et al. and is pending in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia.

The plaintiffs in our lawsuit include Americans, Palestinians residing on the West Bank, and Israelis, Jews and non-Jews. Specifically, the plaintiffs include five of the deposed West Bank mayors, Palestinian landowners whose land on the West Bank has been confiscated for the illegal, exclusively Jewish settlements, a member of the Israeli Knesset, the former Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), an American Jew who formerly was an official of the Jewish National Fund, and others.

This remarkably diverse group is united in the firmly held conviction that the "special relationship" that exists between the leadership of the United States and the leadership of Israel operates to the detriment of the American people, the Palestinian people and indeed also to the detriment of Jews residing in Israel and the United States. The very existence of this coalition of plaintiffs is a response to the claim of the United States-based Zionist organizations to speak for all American Jews.

The lawsuit challenges the failure of United States officials to enforce the restrictions of the United States Internal Revenue Code regarding tax-exempt charitable organizations, which prohibits tax exemption for organizations that are not domestically controlled and which are agents of a foreign government. We have presented evidence to the court that the challenged organizations, including the United Jewish Appeal, the Jewish National Fund, and the World Zionist Organization, are in fact components of the State of Israel. The organizations raise an estimated \$750 million each year in tax-deductible contributions from United States taxpayers, supposedly for charity. These funds are channeled directly to Israel, and are used to finance the brutal West Bank

settlement policy and the other human rights violation that comprise the Israeli occupation of the West Bank. The settlement policy supported by substantial sums obtained through United States tax-deductible donations is based upon ethnic and religious discrimination, in violation of fundamental American principles. Moreover, the settlement policy has been condemned by both President Carter and President Reagan as against the stated goals of United States foreign policy. Yet, the United States Treasury is deprived of an estimated half billion in tax revenues each year through the failure to enforce the United States tax laws to deny tax deductibility of these contributions.

We believe that the case is sound in all technical legal aspects, and we are cautiously optimistic about the result in court, although we are of course mindful of the political explosiveness of the issues and the potential for impact on the legal process. However, no matter what the result in court, we strongly believe that it is valuable to publicize as widely as possible the issues and facts that the case has brought into the public record. The violation of United States law by these organizations -- and the failure of United States officials to enforce the law -- has been kept a secret from the American people. If we have anything to do about it, it will remain a secret no longer.

Mark Lane

As has been discussed here in different contexts, the United States-based Zionist organizations have a tremendous impact on United States policy in the Middle East, particularly in relation to Israel and the Palestinian people.

Through the lawsuit filed by my partner Linda Huber and myself, we have developed evidence that these organizations raise money and support from the American Jewish community under false pretences. American Jews who contribute money to the Zionist organizations are specifically assured that the funds will not be used on the West Bank. They are told that all of their contributions will be used in Israel for charitable and educational purposes, to build hospitals, schools and playgrounds. The American Zionist leaders feel compelled to deceive their contributors because a recent survey, taken by the Zionist organizations, revealed that 40 per cent of the contributions would stop if the American Jewish community knew the truth.

We hope to publicize as widely as possible the evidence we have secured that the tax-deductible charitable contributions raised by these organizations are instead used to buy tanks and guns, to confiscate Palestinian land on the West Bank, to defoliate wheat crops and uproot olive groves, and to turn rich farmland into a desert.

We can no longer leave unchallenged the claim of the United States-based organizations that they speak for all Jews and that the militaristic and anti-human politics of the Government of Israel are in the interest of Jews in the United States and Israel.

The Honourable Heath Macquarrie

A superficial and cursory survey of Canada's United Nations voting record on the Middle East resolutions would lead to the conclusion that there is little difference or distance between Ottawa and Washington on the perception of the Middle East situation. Since we are both functional democracies, one parliamentary, the other congressional, it might further be assumed that there is a substantial similarity in the domestic and international factors contributing to our respective Middle East policies.

Throughout their history Canadians have striven to convince other peoples that they are not Americans. It is a difficult task because culturally, socially, intellectually, we Canadians, at least the anglophones, are not all that different from their more prosperous neighbours south of the 49th parallel. In our strivings for "differentness" and distinctiveness we have in the past developed mild cases of anti-Americanism. One of my senior academic colleagues used to say that Canadian nationalism was 90 per cent anti-Americanism.

As we have grown more confident of our identity these fervid outbursts of anti-Americanism seem to have become outdated and unnecessary. Now perhaps we embrace the realism expressed by one of my parliamentary colleagues when he said "Mr. Speaker, the Americans are our best friends whether we like it or not".

But considering the many excellent presentations we have heard about the topic in the United States context, it would be supererogation for me to discuss the matter from a Canadian background unless there were significant and identifiable differences.

While as in many Canadian-American comparisons there are many similarities, our Middle East policies are not mere carbon copies of those emanating from Washington. Realistically, architects of Canadian foreign policy recognize that they cannot widely or frequently pursue important foreign policy objectives antithetical to those of the United States of America. They can and sometimes have differed significantly from American policy.

The United States, homeland of Woodrow Wilson, repudiated League of Nations membership. Canada was a charter member of that international body. In candour it cannot be said that we were great contributors to those noble goals to which that ill-fated organization was dedicated.

In our time Canada's response to the Cuban situation was quite different from that of the United States. We retained diplomatic and commercial contact with Castro's island.

Later Canada decided to establish full diplomatic and commercial ties with the Peoples' Republic of China. In this the United States

followed our example with, I believe, profoundly beneficial effects for all countries concerned. Our wisdom and realism with regard to Cuba has yet to be emulated.

It is quite possible that in the enormously difficult issues of the Middle East we might again break new ground and take at least a few steps towards the attainment of a just and lasting peace.

Unlike Britain with its Balfour Declaration and all the trials and trauma which followed that regrettable document, Canada had little direct involvement in the Middle East until the close of the Second World War.

A Canadian jurist, Ivan Rand, was a member of the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP). He earned the unstinting praise of Jewish leaders. Our then Secretary of State for External Affairs, Honorable Lester B. Pearson, was a strong advocate of partition and was an early member of the Friends of Israel Club. Although some might regard it as a dubious accolade, Mr. Pearson was called the "Balfour of Canada" by some enthusiastic Zionists.

But Canada didn't rush to recognize Israel with the precipitous haste which marked the American move - (the Russians were also quick off the mark in the recognition stakes). Until 1948 our country was governed by a shrewd diviner of public opinion, Mackenzie King. He was in no hurry to carve out new positions and tended to follow the lead of the British on Middle East matters. Public opinion polling was not the favourite indoor and outdoor sport it has now become, but the astute Prime Minister King may have been sensitive to the views of his countrymen which on 9 February 1948 were shown on the Middle East conflict to be 58 per cent of no opinion, 19 per cent sympathetic to the Jews, 23 per cent favouring the Arabs' cause - (a strong pro-Jewish lobby would soon show its success in influencing public opinion on the issue).

While the United States, long a world Power, found itself with super-Power roles in all parts of the world, the Middle East not least among them all, Canada was not a major interested Power. In the late 1940s and early 1950s Parliament, press and public gave a low priority to Middle East problems. 1956 brought a change in the pattern of detachment.

The diplomatic achievement of that year brought a Nobel Peace Prize to our External Affairs Minister, Honorable L. B. Pearson and an international recognition of a special Canadian capacity and expertise in peace-keeping operations. To this day we are generally given early consideration when peace-keeping roles are being envisaged in any area of United Nations responsibility. Almost we are becoming professional peace-keepers. Some young Canadians have served several tours of duty in Cyprus, for instance. Canadians are still in Cyprus. Two hundred and fifty of our servicemen are with UNDOF, the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force on the Golan Heights. I had the pleasure of visiting them last November. Like their colleagues they are doing a fine job. Canadians are also serving with UNTSO, the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization in Palestine.

Although it was a Middle East issue (the Franco-British-Israeli attack on Egypt) which brought Canada to the forefront of the world stage in 1956, our leaders had in mind issues and values not confined to that region. As one of our leading Middle East experts, Professor Tareq Ismael, put it,

"The aim of the Canadian Government remained fairly constant after news of the invasions was received, but a greater sense of urgency and concern was felt about the critical nature of the rifts within the Western alliance and the Commonwealth. Mr. Pearson's aim was to bring NATO and the Commonwealth members together again inside the Western alliance and restore peace in the area on terms which everybody could accept. From the beginning, Canada's preference for multilateral action and a practical solution which would provide for the means of its achievement was evident."

The prime minister of Canada, Rt. Honorable Louis St. Laurent, angered by Britain's failure to consult Canada, made an uncharacteristically undiplomatic remark when he referred to "the supermen of Europe" having had their day. In those far-off 1956 days he and the Government were subjected to bitter criticism for stabbing our best friends, Britain and France, in the back.

Not surprising then is the comment of External Affairs Minister Pearson to his American counterpart, John Foster Dulles,

"We are interested in helping Britain and France. I would like to make it possible for them to withdraw with as little loss of face as possible, and bring them back into realignment with the United States."

In 1956, not for the first time, Canada was described as a chore boy for the United States. But Canadian efforts and Canadian statesmanship did bring about a reasonably satisfactory dénouement of the unfortunate 1956 episode of latter-day imperialism. There was a fairly firm conviction in Canada that we had acted with a substantial degree of objectivity.

It was a surprise when in 1967 President Nasser wanted our peace-keeping forces out of his country. In 1973 some Canadians were distressed that in the oil war we were seemingly not given any better priority than the Americans or the Dutch. Was it that we were not as even-handed as we had thought?

In Canada on the Middle East issue, social and political forces are not dissimilar to those which prevail in the United States. Perhaps we could add "only less so".

We too have an enormously powerful Zionist lobby. Its persistence, aggressiveness, its skill, its wealth, its self-confidence are well known.

Although my most recent and most thorough research on our press leads me to believe there is a growing objectivity, we too have had all the subtle influences of bias and distortion. Professor Thomas Naylor of McGill University, in addressing a United Nations session in 1982, related a revealing incident. Our national radio and television network, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, in its national television news reporting the bomb attacks that maimed the mayors of Nablus and Ramallah along with seven innocent bystanders, announced that speculation held that the attacks were "the work of Jewish ultranationalists". But it went on to note with certainty this time that the bomb attacks took place "very near where six Jews were killed by Arab terrorists". We have grown accustomed to all the Palestinian warriors being terrorists while those who retaliate or provoke are commandos.

Subject as they are to the influences of the mass media of the United States, Canadians have long been exposed to the stereotypes of the greedy, dirty, lecherous Arab. Putting it in an oversimplistic way we might say that most things the American have we have, but usually not as bad!

Canada, like many Western countries, moved slowly to the recognition of the Palestinian question as the core and centre of the Middle East problem. For some time our leaders referred to the "refugees" and viewed the whole issue as a humanitarian matter. In the earlier years one will find that the words "Palestinians" or "Palestine" are rarely used. In candour we must say that this kind of myopia was not confined to our country or indeed the Western world. It was the PLO which gave leadership to bringing the Palestinian question to the fore as a political problem. Until the Palestinian question is settled with justice and equity, there will be no peace in the Middle East.

In appreciating the centrality of the Palestinians, Canada has come much farther than the United States. From reluctance even to utter the word it is a long way to the statement made by our Secretary of State for External Affairs here at the United Nations in 1982,

"Israelis and Palestinians have legitimate rights and concerns which must be taken into account. Israel's quest for security and recognized boundaries, and its right to be fully accepted by its neighbours, can be met only in a political not military framework. The same holds for the legitimate rights of the Palestinians, including their right to a homeland within a clearly defined territory, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip."

Another indication of a growing Canadian interest in the Middle East is the study undertaken by the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs. Under the topic "Canada's relations with the countries of the Middle East and North Africa", the Committee has heard 54 witnesses, the last being Zehdi Terzi, head of the PLO observer group at the United Nations. A sub-committee (of which I was a member) visited Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab Republic, Jordan and Israel. The Canadian Senate

scarcely competes with the Edmonton Oilers for popularity but the excellent quality of its committee work is universally attested. Knowing the committee members I can predict an objective and insightful report. Knowing our political system I can but hope that it will be of some influence on our nation's policy makers.

Two important areas of difference between Canadian and American actions and attitudes are worthy of attention.

Our Government and, I think, our people welcomed the Reagan Plan of September 1982 (I hope it hasn't expired). From this we take it that the maximum of Palestinian sovereignty conceived by the Government of the United States is under a Jordanian State. As our External Affairs Minister Allan MacEachen told the Senate Committee, Canada is prepared to see something beyond a Jordanian-Palestinian State:

"Canada has welcomed President Reagan's initiative and has indicated publicly that it is in accord with the main line of his proposals: they are an elaboration of Camp David and are consistent with it. We believe they merit the most careful consideration by all sides and that they offer opportunities for progress which should be vigorously pursued. President Reagan expressed the conviction that self-government by the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza in association with Jordan offered the best chance for a just and lasting peace. We have no problem with this option since it might indeed offer the best chance of peace but we would not rule out, as President Reagan has, other options open to the parties during negotiations, including the possibility of an independent Palestine."

A continuing sadness of the Middle East is the enormous capacity for rejection. The PLO found the Reagan Plan inadequate, offering no obvious role for the Palestinians whose future it sought to determine. Israel's rejection was flat, complete and almost instantaneous.

Of course the Reagan Plan was not the best solution. It is the best product I've seen with a Washington trademark on it. King Hussein told us he is still awaiting Yasser Arafat's signature on the agreement regarding negotiations with Israel. Surely such a joint effort would be a great step if not a great leap forward. A moderate doesn't like to sound like an alarmist but, having recently seen the proliferating settlements in the West Bank, I am more than ever convinced that time is of the essence.

We all remember what happened to that great American humanitarian Andrew Young. In one of the idiocies of our time we talk about the Palestinians with anyone but the Palestinians. Some people seem dedicated to the impossible task of giving retroactive validity to the nineteenth century Zionist slogan "For a people without land a land without people". In some countries it seems almost a virtue to ignore the chief victims of the iniquitous diplomacy of the Middle East.

Canada does not officially recognize the PLO but we do display a commendable realism on the subject. Again from Mr. MacEachen's evidence before our committee:

"The world has come in recent years to acknowledge the identity of the Palestinians as a people. We recognize that for there to be a just peace, the legitimate rights of the Palestinians must be realized, including their right to play a full part in negotiations to determine their future and their right to a homeland within a clearly defined territory, the West Bank and Gaza Strip."

"We do not officially recognize the PLO. That is, we do not accept its claim to be the 'sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people', and we are giving no consideration to doing so. However, because of the PLO's obvious importance among Palestinians, we have had contacts with it on a range of topics in a number of places. We have tried to counsel the PLO to pursue a political course and to reject violence. We are following closely the meeting of the Palestine National Council, currently taking place in Algiers."

When I last spoke in this building in March 1982 I said:

"As one views the present state of the Palestinian people and the configuration of power and leadership in the world of 1982, it seems clear that the capacity to bring about retribution and justice lies with the major nations of the West, principally the United States of America ... Since the West, by 'their diplomacy, their decisions and sometimes their deceit', created the Palestinian problem, this seemed only fair."

This holds true today. It is most regrettable to have the PLO and the Palestinians they represent cut off from or ignored by the great nations of the West. The same state and fate has befallen the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. It is, therefore, salutary that Canada do something to establish a dialogue and broaden understanding between the PLO and Western leaders and people. I would go farther than our Government. I think the best way to improve contacts would be to grant full recognition. But we cannot always attain all our goals when we wish to. Although Canadian public opinion is much more objective than even a few years ago there is still some feeling of insecurity and distrust about the PLO, kept alive by constant propaganda from the other side and immoderate utterances or violent actions by those who are dubbed as PLO.

If my political party takes office in our upcoming election (many would say "when", not "if") I shall advise the new Secretary of State for External Affairs to bring about Canadian recognition of the PLO. He or she will not be surprised. I shall be told that such a move is not feasible or desirable at this time. I shall not be surprised.

The Canadian scene demonstrates a deepening of interest and a broadening of outlook. Our people and Government have been shaken, if not repelled, by such excesses as the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, the rapid growth of settlements, the crypto-annexation of the Golan and other instances of ruthless intransigence.

Just as Israeli extremism causes loss of their support in our country, so does violence on the part of those who claim to be acting for the Palestinian cause. Every bomb thrown at civilians, every bus blown up, makes it harder for well-intentioned Canadians to advance the cause and advocate closer ties with our Arab friends.

There is still a long way to go and not much time. There is no clear path to peace, no intricate blueprint, but surely there are some pointers of the way. I would say they are negotiation, realism, moderation and an enormous amount of forbearance under prodigious provocation. But the Middle East, a land of trouble and travail, was also a land in which wisdom and faith abounded. Perhaps enough of these remain.

Paul N. McCloskey

My name is Paul N. McCloskey Jr. It was my privilege to serve in the Congress for 15 years.

I would like to open with one brief point and ask that you reflect on this point. We have a special privilege here today as the representatives of non-governmental organizations, and that privilege is the truth. We are neither heads of State, nor diplomats. We have no special constituencies to represent that would require we temper our words. We have no need to decline to offend people as the diplomat must do. And most of all, as private citizens, we are not subject to the assassins' bullet for what we might say. Neither a government leader nor a diplomat. The people that usually assemble in this temple of experiment in world peace and world law have the privilege of truth, and if there is any question about that point, reflect upon the fates of those who have led nations, attempted peace and moderation, from Count Bernadotte to President Kennedy, to King Faisal and most recently Issam Sartawi. With that privilege of speaking the truth, I think goes a duty to seek to speak the truth no matter whom it may offend. Senator Abourezk said earlier that peace in the Middle East will be achieved in Washington. I would qualify that slightly and say peace and justice in the Middle East will be won in the minds and hearts of the Americans, the American people, who every two years, every four years, and every six years, send some 537 people to Washington to represent them. The Arab world does not always understand how democracy works. In the Arab world there is the belief that a leader should lead because the tradition and history of the Arab world is that the village leader, the tribal leader, the family leader is respected and leads. But we had our own experiments some 200 years ago. We created a government where our leaders would represent us, not necessarily lead. That our leaders follow, American public opinion. And if they do not, they are replaced every two, four or six years. And you have seen in America fairly recently a campaign for the presidency of the United States, where here in New York where the electoral votes of one State, the State of New York, were so important to the Democratic candidates for the presidency, that they tried to outdo each other as to who would be the first to move the United States embassy to Jerusalem in violation of all of the resolutions adopted by the United Nations whether in the General Assembly or in the Security Council. Now why, if a person wants to be President of the United States, would he aspire to that high office and say, if elected, I will move the United States embassy to Jerusalem, knowing of the anger and the proper anger that that would inspire throughout the Arab world and indeed the entire Islamic world? Why would a political candidate say that? Why in fact did President Reagan when he aspired to the presidency in 1980 say that the settlements on the West Bank are legal and that if elected he would move the United States embassy to Jerusalem. We are lucky indeed that our presidents campaign for office on one platform and hopefully are educated to the facts and realities of the problem after they take office.

I think the single greatest obligation on the part of organizations and people who would bring peace and justice to the Middle East is to understand

how the American political process works and to take part in that process. In June 1982 I rose in the House of Representatives to suggest that by virtue of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, using United States weapons in violation of United States law, we cut off aid to Israel. You will recall in 1975 when Turkey invaded Cyprus using United States weapons, the Congress moved quickly to cut off aid to Turkey, a NATO ally, and kept that aid cut off for three years. And yet in 1982, when I made that speech in the House of Representatives, some 30 of my colleagues in the House came to me privately and said Pete we agree with you, but we dare not say so publicly. Now why do they not dare say so publicly. It is because of the reality in the American political scene, that if you run for political office, you are not necessarily elected because people agree with you. You are generally elected by one or two per cent of the vote and the power in the American political process at a time when only half of our people participate in the electoral process; the fact of the matter is that political power goes to those who care enough to participate. There is no Democratic candidate for the presidency who dares offend the Jewish vote. There is no Democratic candidate for the presidency or indeed most offices, who would dare give up some 20 to 50 per cent of the money which is contributed by the Jewish community in America which cares deeply. And let us pay respect in all truth, to the Jewish community in America, two and a half per cent of our people and yet a deep family loyalty. There is a sense of guilt over the holocaust and hundreds of years of anti-semitism which makes a focal point of Israel as being the personification of the rights and the dignity of the Jew, and a sense of obligation that when they visit Israel, as has been commented on here, a thousand Jewish leaders assembled by Ariel Sharon after the invasion of Lebanon on the West Bank. And what does Mr. Sharon say to them? As reported in The New York Times, "we are counting on your support. You owe it to us" And that sense of obligation to support Israel has caused the Jewish community in America to involve itself deeply in electoral politics. The Arab-American community has not yet done so. That also is understandable. The Arab-American community generally here in their first and second generation, like all ethnic groups, ordinarily does not participate in politics until the third and fourth generation. In the first or second generation, my forebears, the Irish, we were lucky to get jobs. The Chinese when they came here worked on the railroads in their first generation. The Italians who came here in the first part of this century, were not active in politics in the first two generations. People who come here initially do not want to create waves in the community. They want to put their children through school and through college to succeed in life. It is understandable that politics would be repugnant to them in the first or second generation. Thirty years ago Jews in the United States were not necessarily active politically. The leading Jewish merchant in my area, the San Francisco Bay area, told me once when he was growing up, "Mark" his mother had said "don't make waves, we don't want to raise anti-semitism". But with the founding of Israel the Jews have had a cause and for a Jewish leader to speak out as Mark or other leaders have done is to draw the wrath privately of the Jewish community. They are not giving their full support to Israel.

Today, I want to tell you about one example to focus upon. It is the first election in this country. It occurred less than a month ago in Berkeley California and it is significant how it came to pass. A group of young Jewish

leaders got together with a group of Arab-American leaders and said this is wrong to continue to support Israel. How can we phrase an issue by initiative and put it on the Berkeley ballot. And 15 groups of ordinary people got together, framed an initiative, got the signatures to put it on the ballot, and the question was phrased roughly, "shall we instruct our mayor to write the President of the United States to say that it is the sense of the people of Berkeley that we cut aid to Israel by some 2.6 billion a year, by that sum of money that Israel spends on the West Bank settlement." To understand Berkeley, consider it as one of the great university towns of America. The University of California with 24 departments, once had 23 of them rated as the number one academic department in the country. Since Governor Brown that rating has slipped somewhat, but the number of Nobel prizewinners at Berkeley is enormous. The Berkeley radiation laboratory, the man who worked on the atomic bomb, every field of science, the arts, literature, - Berkeley excels. The community is made up of roughly 20 per cent Jewish population, 20 per cent black population, the remaining 60 per cent essentially middle class. Perhaps 75,000 voters in Berkeley. When this issue was posed, in the Bay area, there existed nearly 100,000 Arab Americans, in Berkeley and 15,000 Jews. Yet the Jews raised six times the amount of money that the Arab-American community and those interested in peace were willing to raise. So when you look at the United States politician, look at the voter, and look at a population that can out-spend its opposition 6-1 because it cares too deeply and has the means to do so, you begin to understand why 30 colleagues in the House who felt, yes, we should cut off aid to Israel, did not dare say so publicly and did not want to vote, yes or no. Another significant factor, the black population of Berkeley which the proponents had counted on, people of poverty, people who did not want money flowing out of the United States that could be used for the poor and the minorities in Berkeley, the black population as election day approached were presented with a placard with black leaders political leaders, saying vote no on proposition E. Heading the list was Mayor Tom Bradley of Los Angeles. A black leader, a fine individual. Governor Bradley had lost the governorship of California two years ago by less than 100,000 votes. There are 500,000 Jewish voters in the Los Angeles area. How would Mayor Bradley expect to be Governor of the State of California if all 500,000 votes vote against him. He lost by 100,000 votes. No politician in America can afford to offend a community with this depth of feeling and this involvement in politics. Now note in that Berkeley election three weeks ago, the vote was essentially 64 per cent opposing the proposition to 36 per cent in favour. I would almost warrant to you that within the 15,000 member Jewish community that community was able to get every single one of its registered voters to vote on election day. In the Arab-American community in the greater Bay area, a 100,000 people, we could not get 200 Arab-Americans to walk the precincts on election day to participate in the process. Senator Abourezk and I asked every Arab organization that we knew of in the Bay area to give us volunteers to come out and participate in the American political process. We could not get 200 out of 100,000. Now a practising politician in America, when he or she looks at the relative will to do combat, will to participate, will to contribute money, must say today that the odds are heavily in favour of the Jewish community. Now the odds that could balance that because it is too much in my judgement to expect of the American Arab

community to participate yet in the degree necessary. The odds that can balance that, the factors that can balance that, are of course in the non-governmental organizations, such as are represented here today. The Presbyterian Church, the Society of Friends, the Methodist Church, people from the intellectual community who are interested in the United Nations, United Nations resolutions, peace under law. There must be to obtain peace and justice in the Middle East, this coalition of political forces that can begin to back up candidates who have the courage to speak out for peace and justice. Political involvement is the key to changing the foreign policy of the United States. Power goes to those who care and those who participate. To date, those of us who have spoken for the Palestinian cause have not forged the numbers of people, the numbers of organizations, the ability to participate in the political process, as has the Jewish community. And I might say in conclusion, I do not think that we will achieve peace and justice by any criticism of the Jewish community. The thing that holds that community together is fear. Fear of dedication to the destruction of Israel as they perceive it. To the extent that fear in the Jewish community can be reduced, we can obtain more and more leaders from the Jewish community as Mark Lane and Linda Huber have said. More and more leaders who say the Jewish ethic, the history of the Jewish community is inconsistent with the treatment of Jews as a chosen race and Arabs as less than human beings as Mr. Begin has sometimes said. Peace and justice in the Middle East in my judgement will be achieved when Jewish leaders speak out for justice and are no longer afraid to do so by the combination of their peers. I am encouraged to say that because the finance chairman who opposed the election in Berkeley last month, a young Jewish lawyer from San Francisco, has told me that if the language had been slightly changed so that it was not a one-way condemnation of Israel, that three quarters of the Jewish community would have voted for the proposition. And I said, what do you mean and I want to read to you the words that he said it should be:

"If the resolution instead of condemning Israel and asking for a cut off of aid had been in these words 'the Mayor of Berkeley is directed to write to the President of the United States that we recognize the right of Israel to exist within its pre-1967 borders, free from force or threat of force' (those are the precise words of Security Council resolution 242 (1967) 'and we further recognize the inalienable of Palestinians to a sovereign State in the territories occupied by Israel since the 1967 war, we ask that the United States reaffirm its commitment to Israel's security, but reduce its aid to Israel by the amount Israel spends on its settlements in the occupied territories. We ask for a Middle East peace based on all United Nations resolutions relating to the question of Palestine."

Now note the recognition of Israel. The fear that holds the Jewish community together is that the Palestinians will never recognize Israel's right to exist. That if the recognition is offered it is a tentative recognition intending some day to destroy Israel. The greatest single thing to help politicians to get elected, to speak out for Palestinian rights, would

be an unequivocal recognition of Israel's right to exist within internationally recognized borders. Now unfortunately, the press deny to PLO what to me was the most newsworthy event of the Conference that the United Nations conducted last August and September. It escaped public notice partly because the United States boycotted the Conference and caused our NATO allies to do so, it escaped attention that the Palestinians presented to that Conference a proposal that the Conference reaffirm recognition of United Nations General Assembly resolution 181(II). Mr. Terzi can confirm that resolution 181(II) of November 1947 was the foundation for the creation of an Israeli State and a Palestinian State. The United States chose not to say that PLO by proposing this position has acknowledged Israel's right to exist. Yasser Arafat has told me on two occasions that he believes that he has made it crystal clear PLO recognizes Israel's right to exist and yet when we look at our own conference, we non-governmental representatives that attended it, note the difficulty in obtaining diplomatic or political consensus with the truth. Look in your folders at the resolutions that were adopted less than 10 months ago. There were two resolutions proposed. One, that PLO proposed to recognize resolution 181(II) was not included in the final resolution. There was a proposal to add to the right of all States in the region to existance within secure international boundaries the words "including Israel" but the Arab side could not accept to include Israel in the nations recognized within secure borders. And I suggest to my Arab friends that if we want to win this battle for justice, the first step must be the unequivocal recognition of Israel. When that is done there is no argument the Jewish community can make. In fact, I know of no Jewish leaders today willing to argue that those settlements on the West Bank are legal. If you have noted in the last two years since Lebanon, there has been a dearth of Jewish representatives willing to stand up and debate that Israeli policy on the West Bank or Gaza is legitimate. When you cannot argue the merits of an issue, you attack the people on the other side. We have a saying in the Bar of law, if you have a good case on the facts, try it on the facts. If your case is only fair on the facts try it on the law. And if you have a lousey case, try the other lawyer. And that today is the situation. The one argument that the Israelis and the Jewish community have made to each other is they want to destroy us, if they will concede that we have the right to exist securely, they have no arguments they can make in the forum of American public opinion and we will one day cut off all aid to Israel unless they recognize a Palestinian State on Gaza and the West Bank with East Jerusalem as its capital.

D. Paths to a Comprehensive and Lasting Peace
in the Middle East

Mary Appelman

The path to a just and lasting peace in the Middle East will surely involve the United Nations, and will certainly require greater public understanding of the issues. It is therefore most fitting and encouraging that the United Nations this week is sponsoring this North American symposium for non-governmental organizations on the question of Palestine. Another very hopeful development this June has been the visit to the Middle East of United Nations Secretary-General Pérez de Cuéllar. I assume that all of us here this week support wholeheartedly all United Nations initiatives toward Middle East peace, whether the proposal for an international conference at which all the parties may be represented, or the various attempts in the Security Council to supplement resolution 242 (1967) with a recognition of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, including the right to their own State.

Last December in the General Assembly, there was a series of votes on the five parts of General Assembly resolution 38/58, all of which came under the heading of "The question of Palestine". It is worthwhile to examine the shifting votes on the five separate sections of the resolution. Israel and the United States voted against all sections of the resolution, and stood out in splendid and tragic isolation in a minority of two against the whole rest of the world on two sections, A and D. Canada joined Israel and the United States on sections B and E and Australia joined the dissenting minority on section C, which interestingly enough included the call for an international conference, with all parties to be represented. But on that same vote on the call for an international conference, three Western European nations that had abstained on the earlier votes now joined the majority: Austria, Finland and Sweden shifted over to vote with the world's majority on sections C, D and E. And of great interest is the fact that Cyprus as well as four NATO members -- Greece, Portugal, Spain and Turkey -- voted with the international majority on all five sections of the resolution.

I believe that an examination of these votes on resolution 38/58 is worthwhile because the votes tell us rather clearly where we stand, those of us who favour a just and lasting peace on the basis of the international consensus. I take this global consensus to include the principles that were part of the call for an international conference: the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, the right of the PLO to participate in such a conference, Israeli withdrawal from the territories occupied in 1967, and the right of all States in the region to existence within secure and internationally recognized boundaries.

If we look at the votes in the General Assembly last December, we see that we have behind us in our effort to achieve peace on this basis the entire Arab world, most of Africa, Asia and Latin America, all of Eastern Europe and some Western European nations as noted above. This tells us where our strengths are, and where we still have much work to do.

Do the votes of the Governments of Israel and the United States mean that the people of those countries are necessarily against peace based on the global consensus? I think it would be a mistake to assume that this is the case. Certainly in the case of the United States, various polls

have shown that there is potential support for a Palestinian State and peace based on mutual recognition between Israel and a Palestinian State. In Israel there is a proliferation of peace groups and a growing disenchantment with government policy vis-à-vis the Palestinians - though certainly not all the trends in Israel are in our favour. In any case, it is our job to win over to our views public opinion in Israel and the United States and those West European countries whose Governments are not yet voting in the way that seems sensible to us. Let us therefore neither sound nor be anti-Israeli, anti-American or anti-Western world as such: to indulge in such anger will only retard our efforts to win over the stragglers to our cause. It seems appropriate to note at this point that one of the tactics used by those who oppose our cause is to rely heavily on our anger, in the hope that this anger will sidetrack us from our goal.

Since I mentioned peace groups in Israel, I'd like to explain briefly why we organized the America-Israel Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace (AICIPP) two years ago. AICIPP was established in 1982 in an effort to focus the attention of the American public and Government on the fact that there are in Israel loyal, patriotic Israelis, some of whom insist on calling themselves Zionists, who believe that the Israeli national interest requires Israeli withdrawal from the territories occupied in 1967, and negotiations with the PLO for peace based on mutual recognition. We work most closely with an Israeli group called the Israeli Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace. It publishes a newsletter called The Other Israel (there are copies available here) in which there is news of all the Israeli peace groups. The Israeli Council describes its own specialty as being that of "legitimizing contacts with the PLO".

Today in Israel there is a new and exciting development: a group of Arabs and Jews have come together to form a united, integrated list to run for the eleventh Knesset in the 23 July elections. This list is called the Progressive List for Peace and has 60 Arabs and 60 Jewish candidates for the 120-member Knesset. It is headed by Haifa lawyer Mohammad Miary, with Israeli Reserves General Mattityahu Peled in second place. I'd like to read to you from the statement issued by the Progressive List for Peace on 31 May.

"We hereby announce the formation of "The Progressive List for Peace" which will run for the eleventh Knesset elections.

"This List is the fruit of a long dialogue between Jewish and Arab groups in Israel, who believe in a just peace and equality for both peoples of this land.

"This List is based on equality between the founding groups whereby half of the candidates are Arabs and half Jews. The List is headed by Adv. Mohammad Miary. Second on the list is General (Res.) Dr. Mattityahu Peled. Arabs and Jews follow in equal numbers.

"This List will run for the eleventh Knesset on the basis of an agreed common minimum programme as well as detailed platforms related to relevant matters for both Arab and Jewish sectors.

"The core of the programme, which includes several agreed principles, deals with the basic issue, namely the Palestinian question, which shapes the character of the State of Israel in all its aspects: defence, economy, social, cultural and educational fields.

"The Palestinian question is the crux of the prolonged conflict between the two peoples of this land, and the principles agreed upon outline the means for solving this conflict and paving the way for a just and comprehensive Israeli-Palestinian, and Israeli-Arab peace.

"The following are our principles on the Israeli-Palestinian issue:

"1. Insuring full equality of national and civil rights for the Jewish and Palestinian citizens of Israel in the boundaries of 4 June 1967; conducting a determined struggle against all aspects of national discrimination and racism; and safeguarding this equality of rights by means of a democratic Constitution to be enacted for the State of Israel. This Constitution will insure complete equality among all citizens of Israel, be they Jews, or Arabs, Western or Oriental, men or women, religious or non-religious.

"2. A mutual recognition of the right of both peoples - the Jewish-Israeli and the Palestinian-Arab - to national self-determination. The implementation of this principle requires Israeli evacuation from all the territories occupied in the 1967 War, including East Jerusalem, the abolishment of the occupation and all its implications. These territories should be returned to their legitimate owner, the Arab Palestinian people, for the purpose of establishing there their independent Palestinian State, alongside the State of Israel. The two States will maintain relations of peace and good neighbourhood.

"3. The mutual recognition between Israel and the future Palestinian State; the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the occupied territories, and the peace treaty will be the outcome of negotiations between the Government of Israel and the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, namely, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

"4. Immediate and unconditional Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon.

"Being aware of the enormous obstacles on the road to sincere co-operation between the two peoples, we express our hope and belief that the formation of the Progressive List for Peace will mark the starting point towards deepening and extending the dialogue and co-operation between Jews and Arabs in Israel, as well as between Israelis and Palestinians, as national entities, towards achieving a just and lasting peace.

"We call upon all progressive forces and personalities, Jews and Arabs, to join us on the basis of these principles.

"We call upon all other progressive Lists running for these elections to conduct a decent electoral campaign and debate the issues on their merits."

These are some of the more hopeful developments in Israel of which we need to be aware as we work toward achievement of our goal of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

Our goal is so reasonable that it is sometimes hard for us to understand why it is not universally accepted. And hopefully it will be accepted some time in the future, hopefully not too long from now. But if we know the tactics that are used by those who oppose our goals, perhaps we can better counter them.

I mentioned already the tactic of exploiting anger. This has been used very successfully. Another closely related tactic is the exploitation of any ambiguity in the Palestinian/Arab position. This tactic is also used skillfully by the Israeli and American Governments. These two Governments never respond to the conciliatory statements made by Chairman Arafat or the Palestine National Council. They only reiterate the need for the PLO unilaterally to recognize Israel with no reciprocity of any kind offered by either Israel or the United States as an incentive for the PLO to restate its position more clearly. Naturally this failure to respond to conciliatory moves results in anger. A third tactic of course is the exploitation of divisions among the Arabs. We all know about Henry Kissinger's obsession to sort out the "moderate" from the "radical" Arabs. This tendency is still part of American policy today. When the Arabs do unite and announce a coherent peace policy re Israel, the Israeli and American Governments pretend they have not heard or understood, and continue to do their best to divide the Arabs into the "good" and the "bad" Arabs.

When Western Europe moved slowly toward a recognition of Palestinian national rights and the need to include the PLO in negotiations, all the while continuing to stress the importance of Israeli security, Israel and the United States opposed this development and did their best to break up the new-found European agreement on this issue.

Can we deal with these tactics? We must learn to deal with them. We must not let ourselves be sidetracked to anti-Israel campaigns (such as excluding Israel from one or another international organization). Such campaigns cannot promote the goal of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, and will only provide ammunition to those in Israel and the United States who say that it is the Arabs/Palestinians who reject peace based on mutual recognition.

We referred earlier to the crack in the facade of Western European unity on the Middle East. We need to take advantage of this. The Western Europeans need to be commended for the Venice Declaration of June 1980 and urged to follow it up. We need to commend all the Western European nations that voted for any parts of resolution 38/58 last December, and specifically we should find out from our Austrian, Finnish and Swedish friends why they voted against sections A and B of this resolution. Perhaps there was some ambiguity in those sections that could have been removed. Perhaps Austria, Finland and Sweden can teach us to present our case in a manner that will attract more West European nations to move from the "Abstain" to the "Yes" column in General Assembly votes. And I am not suggesting any deviation from the basic principles in which we believe.

Surely in the long run two countries, Israel and the United States, cannot continue to block the achievement of peace in the Middle East based on the international consensus. Let us work hard to win over the American and Israeli publics to our views, and let us talk to our West European friends to see if we cannot persuade them to move decisively to the "Yes" camp on all future United Nations votes on the question of Palestine.

The path to a just and lasting peace in the Middle East will be hard and long. But we have made a start.

Naseer H. Aruri

In the course of the past decade, an international consensus has developed about the requisites for a just and durable peace in the Middle East, a consensus in the most universal sense of the term. This consensus rests on two main propositions: first, Israeli withdrawal from all the Arab territories occupied in June 1967; second, the recognition of the fundamental rights of the Palestinian people. It has been universally recognized that peace in the Middle East is dependent upon the requirement of Israeli withdrawal from occupied Arab territories. The inadmissibility of territorial conquest by military force, which was reaffirmed in United Nations resolution 242 (1967) has become the cornerstone of a Middle East settlement. Not only has the Israeli occupation persisted for over 16 years now, but additional Arab territory in south Lebanon - the "North Bank", as some Israeli journalists have come to call it - was also added. The Golan Heights was formally annexed by Israel in 1981, and the West Bank and Gaza is already claimed by the ruling Likud coalition as Israeli territory.

The Palestinian dimension of the global consensus on peace in the Middle East rests on four propositions:

1. The Palestine problem is the core issue in the Middle East conflict.
2. The Palestinians are people entitled to self-determination and equal rights. They are not a group of refugees crying out for a humanitarian solution; their problem is that of a nation which requires a political solution.
3. That in any forum for the search for peace, the Palestinian people must be represented on an equal footing with the other parties.
4. That the Palestinian people have the right to designate their own representatives.

The turmoil of seven decades and the wars of 30 years cannot be understood without keeping in mind a basic fact about the Palestinian dimension of this conflict: the Palestinian people, who number 4.5 million, constitute a community which has normal desires for security, dignity, self-respect and statehood. These people have been transformed within the lifetime of the present generation, through forces beyond their control, from a normal people to a people whose every single individual leads an abnormal existence. Every Palestinian in the world today is either a refugee, displaced, dispossessed, stateless without political identity; or a civilian inhabitant of a land under military occupation; or a member of a minority in a land whose people, within his own memory, constituted the majority of the population - a minority, the remnants of a majority subordinated and made to feel in its daily existence that it does not belong to the State that was set up in its own country. Until this abnormality, with all the privations, the grievances and the sense of injustice that it breeds is remedied, there can be no

peace in the Middle East. In the final analysis, peace in the region will revolve around the question of whether the Palestinians will be able to enjoy these elementary rights which people throughout the world have enjoyed, or are deemed entitled to enjoy - the right to self-determination, statehood and return to one's country of origin. That is why the Palestinian perspective on peace in the Middle East is an essential one, and the resolution of the Palestine problem is at the heart of the resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The question of Palestine is central to peace and war in the region.

A formula for the resolution of the Palestine question and the settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict was proposed by the PLO in 1968. It envisaged the reconstitution of Palestine as a geographically and politically unified State where Palestinian Arabs and Israeli Jews would share sovereignty over a common territory as citizens enjoying equal rights. The Palestinian alternative to the zero-sum solution, which the struggle for Palestine represents, is one based on some form of Arab-Jewish co-existence. Unlike the Europeans who fell victim to the Nazi occupation during the Second World War, the Palestinian Arabs proposed to live peacefully within the Jews in a secular, democratic, non-discriminatory State. Their vision for the future is a society based neither on sectarianism nor on differential values attached to particular types or groups - a society based on the principle of one person-one vote.

This plan was offered as an alternative to the principle of inequality and discrimination in favour of Jews. Such discrimination is expressed in the legal structure of the State and administrative practices and deeply embedded in the prevailing ideology. Israel's Declaration of Independence affirms that "Israel is the sovereign State of the Jewish people", and the courts have ruled that there is no Israeli nation apart from the Jewish people. Israel's Law of Return, the Land Settlement Act, the Absentee Property Law are a few examples of Israeli discrimination.

The notion of the secular, democratic State represents the first genuine attempt to reach a settlement based on reconciliation rather than on displacement of one community by another. It was perceived by its authors as an act of civilized and historic reconciliation. Israel, however, reacted instinctively and violently against this pluralistic solution. The total cynicism with which it received the idea eliminated the possibility of exploring it seriously and in depth. And so the Palestinians came to the realization that perfect solutions are not always attainable in an imperfect world. They began to search for a more attainable alternative and in 1974 they opted for a two-State solution and redefined the goals of their struggle to be the establishment of a Palestinian State living side by side with the Israeli State. This is not to say that the PLO has abandoned its vision of a democratic secular State in all of Palestine; such a vision represents itself in terms of a desirable humanist future or a "dream", as Yasir Arafat put it in his November 1974 speech to the United Nations General Assembly.

Since that time, the two-State solution became an integral part of the Palestinian consensus. The major diplomatic moves of the PLO during the past 10 years were aimed towards the fulfilment of that goal. Only the salient features of the PLO peace programme will be cited here: the 1974 Ten Points of the Palestine National Council (PNC) which scaled down the democratic secular State, based on the equal protection of the law, in favour of a Palestinian "national authority"; the 1978 PNC plan for a Palestinian State; the United Nations Security Council resolution of 26 January 1976 accepted by the PLO and vetoed by the United States; the United States-USSR Joint Communique of 1 October 1977; the Security Council resolution of August 1979 which led to the resignation of Ambassador Andrew Young, and Arafat's numerous pledges to abide by all the United Nations resolutions; the PNC decision in 1983 to accept the Fez Plan, which refers to the existence of "all the States in the Middle East"; the PNC 1981 resolution which supported the Brezhnev Plan, which refers to the right of "all the States of the Middle East, including Israel."

During the siege of Beirut, the Palestinian leadership was visited by representatives of the Israeli Council for Israeli-Palestinian peace. A declaration was published simultaneously on 20 January 1983 by the Israeli council and the PLO expressing commitment on both sides to work for peace. In the meantime, Arafat told the Israeli journalist Amnon Kapelink that he accepts United Nations resolution 242 and rejects terror as the sole means of achieving self-determination.

As for the PLO willingness to recognize Israel, sufficient messages had made that clear during the past two years. When Arafat was asked what his answer would be if Reagan asked him about his willingness to recognize Israel, he answered: "I would say to him, OK, but you would have to remember our rights first." Later he made it clear that it was not recognition which he really opposed, but the abrupt and careless use of one of the "few precious cards" in his possession. He saw "some positive elements" in the Reagan plan. He told Lally Weymouth, while on a mission for Parade magazine, that he had sent many signals to Washington, either hinting his willingness to recognize Israel or favouring co-existence, and that all signals have been completely ignored. That "magic phrase" was indeed pronounced when he said the following about article VII of the Fahd Plan, which says that all States in the region should be guaranteed the right to live in peace:

"When we accepted it, it was as if we had done nothing. We had offered something concrete and it was the turning point. If the American Administration wants to ignore the signal, it means she wants to push all of us in a corner."

In fact, not only did the Reagan Administration ignore that signal, it has also ignored an explicit statement of recognition. On 4 May 1984 Yasir Arafat told the French newspaper Le Nouvel Observateur that he "favours mutual recognition of the two States". On the next day, on his

way to China, he said in Bangladesh: "I am ready to work for a just, permanent and lasting peace in our efforts through the Security Council, and I am challenging Israel to do the same."

There is no question that the so-called magic phrase had been finally uttered in the manner insisted upon by the United States Government. While the United States failed to issue a response, Israel, predictably, denounced the offer saying "The PLO is not a partner for us."

It is very clear, therefore, that the path to Palestinian-Israeli co-existence has not been blocked by the Palestinians. Former Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban wrote in the Jerusalem Post: "One of the few countries that has never recognized the 4 June lines as final boundaries is Israel."

Israel, on the other hand, failed to come to grips with the moral dilemma which the Palestine problem presented. Not only did it reject pluralism but it also ruled out a Palestinian State in but 18 per cent of Palestinian territory. Indeed, Israel's policies and behaviour pose a challenge to international legal principles as developed over the last century, and as codified at The Hague, the United Nations and major international conferences. The relationship between the occupying Power and the civilian inhabitants of an occupied territory is governed by well-established rules and principles. Yet the very existence of an "occupation" within the meaning of international law is simply contested by Israel, and euphemisms, such as "administered" and "liberated" territories, are used to deny political rights to the indigenous civilians living under occupation. According to the "Homeland Doctrine" enunciated by the Labour Government and supported by the Likud, Palestinian territories occupied since 1967 form part of the natural boundaries of the State of Israel and are not occupied within the meaning of international law. The Palestinians in these territories are thus considered as people living on sufferance. The security argument for retaining the occupied territories, prevalent between 1967 and 1977, is now reinforced by a religio-historical argument. Menachem Begin's argument for a Jewish sovereignty in the "West Bank" and Gaza was promoted from a rhetorical slogan of the Israeli right-wing opposition to a negotiable item at Camp David. For more than 30 years the Likud expansionist scheme, laden with a parochial and an anachronistic historical perspective, was taken seriously by the very few. The late Israeli historian, Jacob Talmon, complained that he couldn't really be expected to face sophisticated colleagues abroad and tell them that the Jews have a "divine title deed to the land and that this title deed preempts all other legal claims".

Today, however, thanks to former President Jimmy Carter and the late Anwar Sadat, the context of the Camp David proposals render imperative the fact that legal sovereignty is at issue in the West Bank. The three chief executives who met at Camp David in 1978 somehow determined that the rights

of those Palestinians living under Israeli occupation in Eastern Palestine and Gaza are to be confined within the framework of autonomy. Begin, however, limited that autonomy to the people and excluded the land.

With the Likud in power, in 1977, it became increasingly clear that the occupation was here to stay. The Begin Government made use of a variety of laws and regulations to acquire land for Jewish settlements in the occupied areas. There are "waste lands" which the Government can "return to its ownership" even if they were cultivated in the past and are a private possession of the cultivators. Arab landowners customarily receive "orders to sell" by the custodian of Absentee Property. The Government, moreover, decided on 16 September 1979 to permit Jews to purchase land in the occupied territories. After the High Court of Justice ruled in 1979 that the Elon Moreh settlement near Nablus must be dismantled because private land was confiscated, the Government began to consider altering the legal status of the occupied territories in order to avoid such rulings in the future.

After the United Nations General Assembly and the Security Council voiced strong criticism of Begin's settlement policies on 12 December 1979 and 1 March 1980 respectively, Israel's Knesset expressed its contempt in two resolutions on 6 March 1980 affirming Israel's right to settle anywhere in the occupied territories. Both Likud and Labour were associated with these resolutions, which violate the Geneva and Hague conventions prohibiting the transfer of civilian population into or out of territories occupied in war.

The period of the past seven years has already witnessed the most determined Israeli effort to date to make the ongoing annexation of the West Bank irreversible. Jewish settlements in the West Bank have been linked to Israel by roads, infrastructure and political lobbying. A network of highways, which criss-crosses the West Bank connecting Jewish settlements, threatens to atomize Palestinian society. The platforms of the ruling Likud coalition bars the return of occupied territories. Jewish colonial settlements are viewed by the Government as permanent. They already have their own regional councils and their own court systems. The fourth Geneva Convention's provision, which prohibits an occupying Power from deporting or transferring parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies, has been set aside by Israel as having no relevance whatsoever. Israel's settlement policy is designed to seal the fate of the West Bank and to deter the Palestinians from uniting territorially or politically into a coherent entity. A further aim is to prod the Palestinians to accept autonomy on Israel's own, strictly limited, terms. According to Meron Benvenisti, former deputy mayor of Jerusalem, there was an initial attempt after the 1967 war to treat the territorial occupation as temporary. But it was the Labour Party that went to establish the legal basis and facilities for settlements that were "indispensable to the current "sub-urbanization" of the West Bank. Benvenisti's survey of Israel's West Bank policies,

released in late April, reveals that a turning point has already been reached and that the occupation has now reached a state of "quasi-permanence". It cast doubt on the ability of a new Labour government to make any significant changes in the status of the West Bank. Israel is in the process of gaining direct control over 40 per cent of the West Bank and 31 per cent of the Gaza district.

A most disturbing phenomenon, which will continue to inhibit the prospects for Palestinian-Israeli co-existence, is the ascendancy of the radical right in Israel. Its orientation towards brute force as well as its attitude towards Arabs, and contempt for debate and dissent leave very little room for co-existence. Justification of acts of terrorism against Palestinian civilians are rampant among members of the political establishment and common Jewish settlers. Israel's Minister of Science and Energy, Yuval Neeman, Knesset deputy Haim Druckman, former chief of staff Eytan, and Sephardi chief Rabbi Mordechi Eliahu are on record justifying that kind of terrorism. Rabbi Eliahu said that the person who shot and killed an Arab girl in Hablous last December was "not to be considered a murderer". This propensity for violence against Arabs was clearly established in interviews of settlers, young and old, by Israeli and Western journalists.

The radical right nowadays speaks of dispossession and deportation of Palestinians outright. Israeli sociologist Yoram Peri wrote in Davar (11 May 1984) that while Arens and Shamir speak of annexing the West Bank and Gaza and forging a "pluralistic" society, the extreme right advocates deportation, which four years ago no one would dare utter. "Hence", he wrote, "the proximity of the right to the Fascist conception of the State".

Another factor which inhibits co-existence is the cavalier manner in which members of the establishment claim sovereignty over the West Bank and Gaza. So contemptuous of the need to argue and convince was Prime Minister Shamir, that his reply to a question of why Israel lay claims to these territories consisted on one word: "Because!" Israel's chief Rabbi Shlomo Goren remarked that retaining the occupied territories took precedence over the duty to save life in religious law.

The tendency to treat open criticism as an act of disloyalty and even anti-Semitism was revealed by Begin's famous remark after the massacre at Sabra and Shatila, which defined criticism as "blood libel against the Jewish people".

These attitudes towards relations with Arabs, towards dissent in political debate were undoubtedly behind the policy which dictated in 1982 that the fight against Palestinian nationalism must be total. As Jean Daniel had written in Le Nouvel Observateur: "Begin and Sharon have decided that their geographical conception of the State of Israel was best served by a fight to the death with the PLO. There was no room for both; one or the other must disappear." It was to eradicate Palestinian nationalism that Israel moved systematically in the spring of 1982 against

Palestinian institutions in the West Bank such as the universities and municipal councils. The mayors who had not been deported or removed from office were replaced by army officers. In Lebanon, where most Palestinian institutions had existed, Begin and Sharon embarked upon a determined effort to destroy these institutions and to liquidate the PLO. Their notion of Palestinian autonomy as an atomized, exploitable reservation on the West Bank clashed with the idea of Palestine, and that is what drove the Israelis into their attacks in 1982 on refugee camps in Lebanon and on municipal councils and universities in the West Bank.

The re-emergence of the Palestinian national movement in the aftermath of the 1967 war and the world-wide recognition of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and statehood under the leadership of the PLO has created a national obsession in Israel, where the solution is not defined in terms of Palestinian-Israeli co-existence. The zero-sum solution thus inevitably led to the attempt to deal the PLO a crippling blow, hence the Israeli invasion. And hence the Israeli policy of de facto annexation, destruction of Palestinian institutions in the West Bank and Gaza, illegal dismissal of elected mayors, usurpation of land and water resources, encouragement of armed vigilantes, and now dismantlement of refugee camps as a step towards expulsion.

Thus by applying the "iron fist" policy in the West Bank and attacking the PLO in Lebanon, Israel hoped to eradicate Palestinian nationalism and remove all internationally sanctioned proposals for Palestinian-Israeli co-existence from the agenda of the world community. The Israeli invasion of Lebanon must be seen in the context of this ongoing and relentless campaign to pre-empt a Palestinian State-in-formation, to destroy the embryo of this emergent State which has yet to set roots in Palestine. Lebanon was the principle theatre of PLO operations, the mass base and power centre of the Palestinian national movement. It was the principal base of the social, political and military infrastructure of Palestinian nationalism, while the West Bank was the logical site of the emergent State. From the Israeli vantage point, that momentum had to be sharply interrupted in order to erode international legitimacy, to destroy any organized Palestinian voice that might speak for Palestinian rights and to remove these rights altogether from the diplomatic agenda. Israeli plans, however, confronted the reality of PLO legitimacy, which derives not so much from its military character as from its ability to bring together all the Palestinian people within its broad social and political framework. It symbolizes national identification and renders human services to a nation in exile. the PLO is a non-territorial State which caters to the human needs of a community in exile. In Lebanon, the PLO was the second largest employer, after the Lebanese State. It provided the Palestinian people with services that rivaled those of any State in the area. There were 100 PLO schools, 14 kindergartens, several orphanages, 12 hospitals, 33 factories, a radio station, 2 newspapers, hundreds of small businesses and a research centre. These were the "military" targets of Sharon in the summer of 1982.

Outside of Lebanon, the PLO has similar institutions in all major Palestinian camps. Its Social Welfare Department helped the families of more than 20,000 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails. The PLO maintains 120 diplomatic offices in the countries that have officially recognized it.

The PLO is the Palestinian people organized, the political expression of the Palestinian community, the current embodiment of Palestinian nationalism and the Palestinian national will. The PLO is the Palestinian people's instrument for the reconstruction of their shattered society. It is the vehicle which facilitated the re-emergence of the Palestinian people from oblivion, when their struggle lay dormant between 1948 and 1967. It is the institution which established their credentials as a member of the community of nations -- the institution that re-affirmed their political identity and brought them international legitimacy and respectability. This is the real threat which the PLO presents to Israel. This is the Palestinian achievement which makes the PLO an anathema to the State of Israel. Neither security, nor peace, nor an end to terrorism is Israel's root difficulty but rather the assertion by every Palestinian, militant or not, that he or she is committed to self-determination and to the rebuilding of the Palestinian nation.

The path to peace and co-existence seems to be tightly closed today. Israeli intransigence, hegemonial designs and Arab disarray seem to have assumed the removal of the West Bank and Gaza from the active diplomatic agenda. Today, there is virtually no pressure on the Likud Government, internal or external, to reverse its annexationist course in Palestine or even to end its occupation of Lebanon. By Israeli definition and practice the Palestine question has become zero-sum.

Christie Balka

Thank you very much for this excellent overview. I am going to spend my time focusing on a more limited part of the peace process and that is focusing on Israel and the American Jewish community. The title of this panel begs an obvious question and that is who are the partners to a comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East? If you believe that peace in the region requires comprehensive negotiations among all parties concerned, among Israel, PLO as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, the Arab States, the United States and the Soviet Union, if you believe that negotiations must be based on the principle of mutual recognition between Israel and the Palestinians, of each other's rights to exist, then you view Israeli and American Jews as a crucial element in the peace process. Israeli and American Jews do not hold the key to the peace process but they are a part of it. Without Israel's blatantly provocative actions on the West Bank and in Lebanon, without its refusal to deal with the fact that it is a Middle Eastern and not a Western nation and thus must make peace with its Middle Eastern neighbours including the Palestinians, we would still be left with problems in the region. We would still be left with a PLO which historically has pursued a military option alongside its more recent diplomatic pursuits. We would still be left with the reality of the Arab world failing to display a great deal of enthusiasm for the prospect of an independent Palestinian State or for Israel's right to exist in the region. Without Israel we would still be left with a United States policy lacking a clear will to achieve peace in the region, we would still be left with the reality of major Powers upping the ante as they continue to supply arms to all nations in the region. Israel does not hold the only key to peace in the region nor do American Jews. History has shown that American Jews, approximately 1 per cent of the American population, have influence on United States foreign policy only when United States objectives happen to coincide with their own objectives, only when American Jews can offer the United States a vehicle to achieve its aims abroad. Soviet Jews, who fared better under détente and worse, despite a great deal of pressure from the American Jewish community, during the current "cold war" climate where they can be used by the Reagan Administration, are a case in point.

So Israeli and American Jews do not hold the only key to peace in the Middle East - the key lies with all parties involved. But Israel and the American Jewish community are an important component of the peace process - a component which cannot be overlooked.

I would like to spend the time allotted to me on this panel to discuss recent developments both in the Israeli peace movement and within the American Jewish community not as an apologist for Israel's actions but because I firmly believe that policies that will advance us toward a just and lasting peace in the Middle East will by necessity reflect developments in Israel and in the American Jewish community. For the first time in its history, Israel now has a broad-based peace

movement formed around two basic demands: an Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon and negotiations on the fate of the West Bank based on the concept of territorial compromise.

Recent public opinion polls showed that close to three quarters of the Israeli public opposes Israel's continued presence in Lebanon while close to one half opposes continued settlements on the West Bank. Where are these people? They are in the dovish wing of the Israeli Labour Party and in the Mapam Party represented by Knesset members such as Yosi Saried, Haim Rimon, El Azar Granoot. They are in the Peace Now Movement which has proven its capacity to bring 100,000 people into the streets for mass demonstrations. They are organized according to special interest groups such as parents, soldiers, religious doves and oriental Jews, and they are organized into groups which not only reflect a broadening base but also reflect a deeper understanding of the nature of the conflict and the solutions that will require solutions based on security and statehood of both Israelis and Palestinians.

Among the oldest groups which have worked to deepen Israelis' understanding of the requirements for a peace settlement and have engaged with Palestinians in dialogue is the Israel Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace. The Committee Against the War in Lebanon, the Bir Zeit Solidarity Committee, Sholamit Aloni's Party of Ratz, as well as others, are part of this trend.

In sum, the invasion of Lebanon in the summer of 1982 was in a sense a moral watershed for the Israeli peace movement. It forced Israelis to doubt their Government's judgement on national security issues for the first time in Israel's history. If the Israeli Government could be wrong on the question of Lebanon, people concluded, then maybe the settlements were not all necessary on the West Bank.

In this Israeli election year, we are witnessing a vacuum of strong leadership in either of Israel's major parties. Oppositions to policies of the current Government has crystallized around specific issues of Israel's relationship to the Palestinians rather than attachment to or disdain for leaders of either of the major parties. In this election year, many Israelis know what they do not want - an occupation of southern Lebanon or an occupation of the West Bank. But fewer know what they want instead - a Palestinian State alongside Israel, a federation with Jordan, or some version of Palestinian autonomy. Israelis are searching and if the Labour Party comes to power next month, all parties to the conflict will be faced with new opportunities to advance the peace process. By the way, I make no guarantees for the Israeli Labour Party which all of us know is not a great champion of the Palestinian cause. I mean only to say that the diplomatic options will be greater under a Labour Party Government than they have been under the present Likud Government. If the Likud Government remains in power, we will continue to be charged with the task of doing damage limitation.

How can Israel be prevented from de facto annexation of the West Bank beyond the point of no return? What can we do to improve the human rights situation of Palestinians in the occupied territories? Roughly parallel to the sea of change which I have described as taking place in Israel has been a change within the American Jewish community, also spurred on by the war in Lebanon. A survey released last fall by the American Jewish Community revealed that 42 per cent of all American Jews and 74 per cent of American Jewish leaders believed that Israel should offer the Arabs territorial compromise on the West Bank in return for credible guarantees of peace. Further, 70 per cent of American Jews and 73 per cent of their leaders believed that Israelis should talk with PLO if PLO recognizes Israel and renounces terrorism. This survey by the way is the third annual survey of its kind and showed markedly more dovish views in 1983 than in 1982 and 1981 when those polls perceived Israel as more vulnerable to attack in the media when we were right in the midst of the war in Lebanon. In addition, this poll revealed that the majority of American Jews are anxious about continued United States support for Israel and about American anti-semitism and acceptance of Jews in the United States. And the survey also revealed that most American Jews do not trust the actions of certain political actors including the Reagan Administration, the State Department and American corporations. Where are all these dovish American Jews? To find them, one must only go as far as the organizations which they belong to. Within the last two years, major American Jewish organizations including the American Jewish Community, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and the Reconstructionist Movement have gone on record as opposing continued settlement on the West Bank. The Council of Jewish Federations, which is the umbrella organization for Jewish life in this country, by its nature a very conservative body, went on record at its last annual meeting as acknowledging that the Jewish community is very deeply divided on the issue of the West Bank. The Central Conference of American Rabbis last week for the second year in a row reaffirmed its position in support of Israeli security and Palestinian self-determination.

Evidence of a change of attitude on the part of American Jews is reflected not only in the statements of well established Jewish organizations but in the proliferation of newer organizations which have appeared throughout North America in response to a deadlock situation in the Middle East. These organizations include those represented by my colleagues on this panel, the American-Israeli Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace and Washington Area Jews for an Israeli-Palestinian Peace, as well as chapters of Friends of Peace Now, New Jewish Agenda and a host of smaller independent organizations which are dedicated to generating dialogue about the possibilities for Israeli-Palestinian co-existence.

New Jewish Agenda is an organization which was founded in 1980 and now has chapters in 40 cities throughout the United States. We work on a number of different issues including Israeli-Palestinian peace. We are dedicated to seeing peace based on self-determination, mutual recognition and co-existence for Israelis and Palestinians. Realistically, what are

the possibilities open to American Jews who are committed to Israeli-Palestinian co-existence? We are not negotiating partners but we do participate in the American political process in the same way as any minority group in this country does. We can work to influence others in the American Jewish community in favour of policies based on Israeli-Palestinian co-existence and we can educate the public at large about these policies. We American Jews can resist being used to justify the United States Administration's policies in the Middle East and we can begin to advance peace policies which are in the interest of the American public at large and of peoples of the Middle East.

What I have set before you is evidence that tremendous opportunities exist. I do not want to deny right-wing tendencies which Mr. Aruri has just described within Israel. The question though becomes what policies can we as NGOs formulate that will draw in this constituency dovish American Jews and dovish Israelis who are searching for alternatives to current Israeli policy? It is incumbent that we formulate policies that will include the broadest numbers of people working for a just peace in the Middle East.

Ellen Siegel

I would like to begin by telling you a little about myself. I am an American Jew and a nurse by profession. My grandparents were Russian immigrants who came to this country hidden in the cargo area of a ship, in order to escape the pogroms. As a child, I attended Hebrew school twice a week, Sunday school, and Sabbath services regularly.

I grew up thinking that Palestine was a barren, uncultivated land, uninhabited except for a few Bedouins who tended camels in the desert. I was taught that the world sat silently by as millions of Jews suffered during the Nazi era and that this tragedy must not be allowed to happen again. When I was Bar Mitzvahed, our class sang a song that German Jews had chanted as they were marched off to the crematoriums.

In the 1960s and early 1970s, I was active in the movement to end the United States war in Viet Nam. In 1972, I took a trip abroad. In Greece, I realized how close I was to Lebanon. I knew very little about the Palestinian people and their situation and wanted to learn more.

Shortly after arriving in Beirut, I visited the Palestinian camp of Bourj el-Barajneh. I was appalled by the living conditions: open, foul-smelling sewers, corrugated tin roofs, overcrowded one-room dwellings, an absence of fresh, running water, lack of electricity and hygienic facilities. Those that I met in the camps spoke of their plight since 1948 and their desire to return home. Many were born in Acre, Haifa, Yaffa - made homeless and dispossessed by the creation of the State of Israel in 1948. For the first time in my life I was hearing the story of the Palestinian, seeing firsthand the result of exile, and beginning to question what I had been taught about the Jewish State.

I then spent three months in Israel, where I met and spoke with many Israelis, worked on a kibbutz, and traveled to the West Bank and Gaza Strip. There, signs of the occupation were everywhere: check-points, military patrols, settlements on Palestinian lands. Many Israelis, some of whom had escaped Hitler's death camps, did not understand that they were occupying another people's land, that they had made refugees of another group. They did not understand why it was wrong to invite me to come and live in Israel, just because I am Jewish, before seeing to it that indigenous people be allowed to return.

I did not return to Israel for 10 years. During that time, I kept informed about the Arab-Israeli conflict and did humanitarian aid work for the Palestinian people. In addition, in 1980 I again visited Lebanon. The Palestinians were caring for their own -- in kindergartens, schools, day-care centres, vocational training centres, handicraft workshops and factories, clinics and hospitals. However, they were still longing to return home.

Then in June of 1982, I sat horrified night after night as I watched on TV the continual bombardment of West Beirut by air, land and sea. I

was stunned as I read how Israel was blockading a besieged population: not allowing food, water, vital medical supplies or personnel into the city.

I volunteered my services. I went to Beirut as a Jew, to help those harmed by my own people, to show that not all Jews believed in Israel's policies. I went also as an American -- for the ammunition which left thousands of Palestinians and Lebanese dead, maimed or wounded was labeled "MADE IN U.S.A."

I shall not go into the details of the devastation of human lives or the destruction of an Arab capital. If I never again see the consequences to the human body of shrapnel wounds and chemical burns, or care for typhoid fever victims, amputees and dehydrated infants, I will not have missed anything. I shall not speak of the horror of those September days in which the massacre at Sabra and Shatila was allowed to occur. Suffice it to say that the images of this massacre, this act of man's inhumanity to man, will be forever etched in my memory.

Since the invasion of Lebanon two years ago this month, many Jews, both within Israel and in the Diaspora, have become concerned with the Jewish State's actions and policies. Many, for the first time in their lives, are becoming aware of both the plight of the Palestinians and the aggressive warlike policies of Israel's current Government. An active and visible Jewish peace movement has appeared and maintained itself both in Israel and abroad. In the United States there is also activity in this direction. I refer to this as "the light at the end of the tunnel".

The organization to which I belong was born outside of the Israeli Embassy in Washington, DC, in June 1982 in protest against the Israeli blockade of West Beirut. We were known as the Washington Area Jews Opposed to the Israeli Invasion of Lebanon. For most, it was the first time that they had ever criticized Israel openly. The original purpose of the group was to express dismay and opposition towards Israeli actions in Lebanon at a time when most Jews discouraged any kind of public criticism of Israeli policy.

Six months later we changed our name to the Washington Area Jews for an Israeli-Palestinian Peace (interestingly enough, WAJIPP is close to the Arabic word meaning "duty"). Our motto is "The Time for Silence is Over". Gradually, we became concerned not only with the Israeli occupation of Lebanon, but with the question of Israeli-Palestinian relations, particularly in the occupied territories.

I must point out that I came to the group with a pro-Palestinian bias. The group itself is composed of Zionists, anti-Zionists and non-Zionists. Some of our members have belonged to Zionist organizations such as the B'nai Brith and Hadassah. Many have visited, worked and studied in Israel, they have friends and relatives living there and most have strong, positive feelings about a Jewish State.

I am pleased to say that after two years, we are still going strong and gaining momentum each day. We consider the Israeli-Palestinian issue to be the heart of the Mideast conflict. We believe that this tragic confrontation can only be resolved if the concerns of each party are recognized and accommodated. The only just and lasting peace will be one based on mutual recognition and respect between Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs.

We support both the right of Israel to exist safely and securely behind internationally recognized borders and the right of the Palestinians to have an independent State in the West Bank and Gaza Strip which would peacefully co-exist with Israel. To this end, we call on Arab leaders to recognize the right of the State of Israel to exist. We call for the Israeli Government to freeze Jewish settlements in the occupied territories as well as negotiate with any legitimate representatives of the Palestinians, including the PLO.

We ask that Israel withdraw her troops from Lebanon and that they be replaced by United Nations forces which will ensure the safety of all inhabitants of the territory evacuated by Israel.

Over the past two years we have been engaged in a broad range of activities intended to further the peace process and to provide another Jewish voice in the community.

We have hosted public dialogues between Israeli and Palestinian peace activists traveling in the United States, sponsored lectures and press appointments for members of the Israeli peace forces visiting Washington, and assisted in sponsoring the recent tour of a leading member of Peace Now and a deposed and deported mayor of a West Bank city. We have obtained Jewish signatures on a petition calling for a West Bank settlement freeze and endorsed the Philip Klutznick/Nahum Goldmann statement calling for mutual recognition.

We have leafleted synagogues, demonstrated and held vigils outside both the White House and the Israeli Embassy during the invasion and protested Sharon's visit to Washington.

We are avid correspondents and have had letters and articles published in The New York Times, Washington Post, Jewish newspapers in the United States and Israeli peace publications.

We have sent open letters to area rabbis, written to both the Israeli Government on issues ranging from the treatment of prisoners to imprisonment of reserve soldiers who refuse to serve in Lebanon to peaceful alternatives. We published an ad in the local Jewish newspaper, after the murder of a Peace Now demonstrator, denouncing the violence and encouraging the right of Israelis to peacefully demonstrate against government policy.

Following a trip to Israel in the summer of 1983, two members of the group produced a slide show which has been shown at a local synagogue, meetings of other Jewish groups, the Institute for Policy Studies, a city

hall, and other public gatherings.

This year we visited the State Department to express our concern with Israel's current policy regarding the expansion of Jewish settlements and with the human rights violations and treatment of the Palestinian population in the occupied territories.

We have hosted two very successful annual Jewish-Palestinian Friendship dinners, with participants from both communities, which featured Arabic and Jewish music and food.

To commemorate our holiday of liberation this year, we hosted a Passover dinner which was attended by leading members of the black, Arab and Palestinian communities in Washington. Readings included poems and writings of resistance by Tawfiq Zayyad, Mahmoud Darweesh, Frederick Douglass, Martin Luther King, Jr., Yevtushenko, Anne Frank and a Warsaw Ghetto survivor.

Currently, we are considering forming a progressive Jewish American lobby which would urge the United States to oppose Israel's settlement policy. This lobby could begin by calling on Congress to adopt a "monitoring" programme as an amendment to the United States Foreign Assistance Bill. The programme would provide that the United States Government, through the State Department, would carefully monitor Israel's settlement policy and provide a detailed report to Congress every six months on the results of its survey. If Congress determined that the money used (which is approximately \$200-300 million annually) could be used more constructively to meet the needs of Israelis within the 1967 borders or to help resolve Israel's growing debt, or that the settlements were disrupting the lives of the Palestinian inhabitants, Congress would direct the State Department to convey its concern about these matters to the Government of Israel.

We have also submitted our agenda to the Democratic Party Platform Committee in hopes that it will be included in their Middle East plank or at least as a minority report. We responded to Chairman Arafat's call for dialogue with Israel under the auspices of the United Nations by sending him a telegram supporting this initiative, we also sent one to Prime Minister Shamir encouraging him to make a similar call.

We have produced brochures, information material and a newsletter which we send to such individuals as the Jewish members of Congress and the members of the Middle East sub-committees of the House Foreign Affairs and Senate Foreign Relations Committees. We distribute this material in order to bring new perspectives on the Middle East to a range of audiences, particularly American Jews.

We have developed contacts with leaders in the Jewish and Palestinian communities as well as with national and international Jewish peace groups. We are in close touch with the Israeli peace forces. Most of us are members of New Jewish Agenda, the American-Israeli Council for an Israeli-Palestinian Peace and the International Jewish Peace Union.

Some of us have received a great deal of coverage from media including local, national and international newspapers, journals and radio and TV programmes.

Many Israelis and much of world Jewry are publicly criticizing Israel's attempt to "solve" the Palestinian issue through military force instead of through political compromise.

In the United States an increasing number of Jews have come to believe that the Palestinian people have the right to determine their own future in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. A recent poll conducted by the American Jewish Committee revealed that a majority of Jewish community leaders believe Palestinians have a right to a homeland so long as it does not threaten Israel.

We believe that the policy of occupation, the violations of Palestinian human rights on the West Bank and Gaza Strip (which include mass arrests, beatings, blowing up of homes, confiscation of property, collective punishment, censorship, etc., illegal use of cluster bombs, and the building and expansion of settlements in the West Bank) are undemocratic and unequal.

Our group and other progressive Jews are disturbed by these issues. They are also disturbed by both Jewish terrorism such as the planting of bombs on Arab buses or the attempted assassination of West Bank mayors as well as Arab terrorism such as the planting of a bomb in a Jerusalem market or the hijacking of a bus. They are bothered by the unwillingness of the PLO to recognize Israel's right to exist. They feel that there is no counterpart on the Palestinian side to the Israeli peace movement. And they worry about anti-Semitic statements made publicly.

It is important to note that these Jewish organizations be seen not as pro-Palestinian but as organizations working towards an Israeli-Palestinian peace.

We do this work because -- not in spite -- of our concern for the future of the Jewish nation and the future of Jewish people everywhere. It is in our best interest that a just and equitable solution be found to the conflict.

In concluding, I would like to say that I have spent the past 12 years of my life alongside the Palestinian people. I have shared much with them, the joys as well as the sorrows.

It has been a great privilege and a great honour for me to have been able to serve the Palestinians. I am proud to be part of their history.

Frequently, I receive letters from my medical colleagues with whom I worked in Beirut. They end their letters with the message "we will meet again one day in Palestine". I hope that one day soon justice will be done and that we will be able to stand side by side in a Palestinian State. I will continue to work for that day.

Rev. Wyatt Tee Walker

It may be immodest of me to begin by citing that my presence here is probably due to my frequency of visits to the region under discussion today. My mission with Mr. Jackson in the latter part of last year to Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic, was my nineteenth trip in the region in the last 17 years. I have been to Egypt 6 times, to Israel 19 times, to the West Bank 19 times and twice to Lebanon, and the two camps mentioned in Professor Aruri's presentation, both Shatila and Sabra, have been points of visits in my fact-finding missions to refugee camps in this region. I probably speak as in parallel to Professor Aruri's statements as speaking from an Arab perspective. I am speaking from an Afro-American perspective and I do think that the Afro-American community, as other communities, have a vested interest in trying to find some non-violent solution to the problems of the Middle East. I want to say at the outset that I am grateful to Professor Aruri for his cogent and lucid overview of what is going on at this moment in the Middle East and some of the determining factors that make it appear to be almost irreconcilable.

I know for the community of which I am a part, we are almost unanimous in agreeing on two fundamental issues: (a) that there should be a withdrawal of Israeli military troops from those areas back to the lines prior to the 1967 war; and (b) full sovereignty of the Palestinian people. On these two issues alone, almost any observer might well agree that on the basis of the United Nations Charter alone, under whose aegis we are gathered here today, that Israel must be considered an international outlaw.

Now there are some constants that prevail that I should like to mention. They are excerpts from a recently published essay that appeared in Freedom Ways magazine entitled "Liberation theology and the Middle East conflict" of which I am the author and I only cite them as a launching pad for the brief remarks that I submit here to you today. There are some constants that prevail in the Middle East:

- (a) Israel insists rightly on recognition and secure borders;
- (b) The Palestinians demand rightly a geographical homeland with full sovereignty;
- (c) The United States is working feverishly to maintain its influence in this sensitive region of the world;
- (d) The Soviet Union is doing the same thing;
- (e) The Arab nations unanimously subscribe to the concept of a Palestinian State but are not united on the strategy for attaining that goal as evidenced by the divergent perspectives of Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the Syrian Arab Republic;

(f) The rest of the world waits with bated breath, fearful that a spark might make the horror of nuclear war a reality.

I mentioned early on that the perspective from which I speak is as an Afro-American and I speak because of the vested interest that we have though there are many strident voices here in the West who suggest that black people have no right or expertise to speak on matters of foreign policy, e.g. the vitriolic attacks on the Reverend Jesse Jackson in relation to the recent statements that he has made in the course of his bid for the Democratic nomination for the presidency. The first thing that I should like to underscore is that Afro-Americans who have any self-respect at all will not be intimidated by the variety of attacks that are made on us because we insist on standing for that which is just and right and moral. I think that record will reveal that in our American community the black clergy were perhaps the first voices that were raised early on nearly a decade ago about the rights of the Palestinian people. Unfortunately here in America, we have been spoon-fed through the media and the full story has only recently been divulged and not by intent on the part of the media. It has been the events and the heating-up of the circumstances in the middle East which have forced the press establishment in the West to tell more of the full story and so the Afro-American community does not deserve any special plaudits for taking an early stand on Palestinian rights. It is only the extension of our persistent and necessary subscription to the struggle for human rights. Our sainted leader and I hope your friend, Martin Luther King, Jr., said on many occasions that "injustice any where is a threat to justice everywhere". It is grounded in our religious tradition and the morality of Afro-American peoples' struggle in this land and our interest in oppression in other lands has a universality. It is certified by the fact that, in our own struggles here in America, every time Afro-American peoples have made strides and progress, more than Afro-Americans benefited. The morality of our struggle is certified by the fact that the results are never in the narrow interest of black people alone. We have been very forceful in taking exception to the morality of the United States foreign policy. It has only arrested the attention of the public in recent days such as during the brief tenure of Andrew Young as ambassador to this body as a representative of the United States. He was as I was chief of staff at one time to Martin Luther King, Jr. and out of the struggle that I have mentioned in this presentation it was only natural that Andrew Young and others of us would be interested in the oppression and the victimization of the Palestinian people. Our foreign policy is rife with immorality. For in this very moment, the dilemma that we face in Central America it is our view that the United States is certainly on the wrong side as it has been on the wrong side for a long time on the Palestinian issue. Parenthetically, it needs to be said that our almost carte blanche endorsement of the policies of the nation of Israel has some strange and yet calculated connection to our foreign policy stance towards South Africa. It is fair to say that in the geopolitics of this world, the United States is about the only real friend that Israel has and Israel is the only friend that South Africa has. This is a strong suggestion

that this is an unholy triumvirate. And so it is black people have a vested interest because of the bottom-line economic concerns. We are critical of the inordinate military aid to Israel. I believe that if the last figures that I looked at are accurate, our military aid to the State of Israel is more than all of our military aid to all of the other countries added together. The dollar figures necessary for that kind of disproportionate military expenditure places a drain on domestic programmes here at home and Afro-Americans with enlightened self-interest understand very clearly that any drain on domestic programmes affects us most deeply. There are some international considerations. The cause of the Palestinians is of such a nature and is so desperate that we understand that, for their full liberation and to secure their full sovereignty, it may be necessary for the Palestinian people and their supporters to use any means necessary. That raises the spectre again of some form of oil embargo. That affects not only big industry in America but it affects anonymous Afro-Americans in the ghettos of Detroit and Atlanta and Dallas and Harlem. When there is a shortage of oil, black people feel the effects of cold more deeply than any one else. And so it is that out of our morality and sense of justice, because of our religious tradition and because of our own enlightened self-interest about our dire economic straights in this land, the Palestinian people can be sure that a large segment of the vocal black leadership community is in full sympathy with a quick and non-violent resolution of the problems that exist in the Middle East and we hope and pray that it will not be long coming because of the dire potential for nuclear war that it forebodes.

E. Women and the Question of Palestine

Tamara Kohns

In addressing an anti-nuclear rally in San Francisco, Alike Walker began by reading an ancient curse-prayer which says, in part, "I pray that their house shall be unroofed and that the rain, the thunder and lightning shall find the innermost recesses of their homeland and that the foundation shall crumble and the floods tear it asunder... I ask you for these things because they have dragged me in the dust and destroyed my good name; broken my heart and caused me to curse the day that I was born. So be it." Explaining to her listeners why people of colour are resistant to the anti-nuclear movement, Alice Walker echoed the ancient curse in her own words, saying: "It would be good, perhaps, to put an end to the species in any case, rather than let white men continue to subjugate it, and continue their lust to dominate, exploit and despoil not just our planet, but the rest of the universe... What they have done to the Old, they will do to the New. Under the white man every star would become a South Africa, every planet a Viet Nam..." But her conclusion -- despite the rage that remains --- is: "Earth is my home-- though for centuries white people have tried to convince me I have no right to exist, except in the dirtiest, darkest corners of the globe. So let me tell you: I intend to protect my home. Praying -- not a curse -- only the hope that my courage will not fail my love. But if by some miracle, and all our struggle, the earth is spared, only justice to every living thing will save humankind... Only justice can stop a curse."

Justice that will stop the curse of one people telling another it has no right to exist; or it has no right to exist on its land; or that it doesn't exist at all. It's the quest for this illusive justice that brings us together to discuss the question of Palestine. Why has it remained so illusive? There are, of course, a number of major factors over which we here don't have direct control. But, in some measure, a fragment of the answer lies in a number of interrelated points that do have to do with us:

- (a) We haven't done our homework well enough and don't fully comprehend the daily human reality and needs;
- (b) We haven't been honest enough with the information we do have;
- (c) We haven't been self-critical enough about our own attitudes -- and our words and actions reflect this: our words have become rhetorical and boring; our actions stagnant while the people we care about continue to suffer.

As I understand it, the title of this panel -- "Women and the question of Palestine" -- was purposely left unfocused, somewhat ambiguous and given to a number of possible interpretations so as to enable all of us to take off in the directions we think vital. I've chosen to focus on the relationship between activist North American women and the question of Palestinian women. Before I begin, though, I'd like to register a word of protest. I have a sinking feeling that this panel is something of an afterthought, a sort of pro forma nod in the direction

of women; the correct, if slightly extraneous thing to do. If this is the case, it underscores the need I spoke of a moment ago for self-criticism. If we take seriously the struggle for self-determination of the Palestinian people, we can't take lightly the backbone of the struggle -- Palestinian women. And if we don't take the struggle seriously, we should not be here now.

Several weeks ago, when Felicia Langer was in New York, she came to speak with our Women's Collective. She told us a lot about the Neve Tirtza prison strike that Audrey has just described. And as she was the lawyer for those Palestinian women, she described them to us at some length, and described the impetus and motivations for the strike. When she finished, one of our members, a sociologist by profession and a woman active for many years in the various movements for social change, asked Felicia whether the women had perhaps refused to cook because they took exception to doing stereotypically female work. There followed a seemingly endless silence in which it was clear that Felicia did not grasp the question, and there was discomfort all around. When someone finally explained the question, she was absolutely stunned. Such a thought would never have crossed her mind and she was sure that the same was true of the prisoners. She said that the women would have been prepared to cook for other prisoners -- even Jewish ones, but that they were not prepared to serve the jailers/occupiers by cooking their meals.

A large portion of us North American women who have been working within the peace and justice movements on this continent have been able to do so out of choice, a choice that stems from a conviction that the world must be made a good place for everyone -- but nevertheless a choice. And this choice is a luxury, a luxury that allows us to go out onto the barricades and even be arrested with comparatively little sacrifice. And it allows us to take time out and explore our lives and wrest our individual rights and freedoms both from our male partners on the barricades and from society at large. And we are so immersed in our own experience that we tend to think and act as if our experience is a universal truth.

Palestinian women under occupation, however, are on the very barricades of life and existence, all the time, whether they want to be or not. No time out. In a moment I will say a few words about what they have to endure daily. But first I'm going to amend the meaning -- accepted by most of us here -- of the term "occupied territories". In its current usage, the term refers to the lands conquered and occupied by Israel in 1967 -- most particularly the West Bank. I'm going to talk here about women under three different occupations: 1948, 1967 and 1982. For an excellent comparison of the first two occupations, I recommend a paper by Khalil Nakhleh (and produced by the Association of Arab-American University Graduates (AAUG) called "The Two Galilees". The similarities between the two occupations are very instructive and the theme uniting them is the fact that Israel has always wanted to Judaize the whole of

Palestine and "liberate" it entirely from its indigenous Palestinian population. Is it any wonder, then, that the Palestinian woman is feared and loathed -- probably much more than her male counterpart? She bears the next generation; she stays on the land; and she resists from within. She is the symbol of the thread of continuity; and she is, in actual fact, the foundation of that continuity. And she pays a high price for being all that.

In the Galilee she is assaulted psychologically and emotionally and sometimes physically even if she does nothing more overtly political than breathe. In the West Bank she is arrested, interrogated, deported, imprisoned, put under house arrest. In the Gaza Strip she is assaulted by enormous economic woe (more so than in the Galilee or in the West Bank). She lives in unbelievable congestion that is the result of predatory land grabs. She is degraded -- treated like a dog -- in every encounter with officialdom. In the Strip lawlessness reigns as in no other territory occupied by Israel. And in the south of Lebanon (fast becoming the third Galilee), the men are dead or imprisoned or out of the country. The economy of the South has been decimated by Israel. So she has neither protection against the assaults of the right-wing militias, the New South Lebanon Army, or the phalange who are being brought south by Israel in ever increasing numbers. Nor does she have any source of income. It is difficult to think about the women in Lebanon. In all three occupations, humiliation is one of the tools Israel employs in its attempt to "cleanse" the lands of the Palestinian people. Sexual threat, harassment and aggression is one of the prevalent forms of extreme humiliation on women.

Only justice can stop the curse.

We can help in justice along by listening carefully to what the Palestinians are telling us they need. The priorities must be based on the realities on the ground and must be set by those who are living these realities. "Earth is my home..." Alice Walker says, "so let me tell you: I intend to protect my home." "Palestine is my home," says the Palestinian woman, "and I intend to be and remain there. And I intend to protect it. With all of us struggling together, justice will prevail."

Cecilia McCall

Though well meaning, I am not an expert on Palestinian women, but I am an Afro-American woman who has experienced poverty and relentless feelings of rootlessness. I know the longing of those who can not be at home in a land claimed by others. The circumstances of Palestinian women are strikingly similar to those of both Afro-American and Native American women. The former having been uprooted violently and the latter dispossessed of the place that had a sacred meaning. The language used to describe Palestinians - lazy, inferior, unintelligent, dishonest and unambitious - is all too familiar. The language of the oppressor of Palestinian women has been borrowed from those who abet and encourage racism with the inevitable consequences of cultural, social, economic and political deterioration.

With a genuine feeling of kinship for Palestinian women, I searched for information that would present an account of what it means to be a woman in exile, whether within or without the national homeland. As I might have expected from my acquaintance with research about women and black women in particular, I discovered that there is too little about the specific situation of the women of Palestine. That which is available, including documents published by this body, presents impersonal statistics and generally subsumes information about women within a larger category so that they are typically referred to at the conclusion of an account of the socio-economic or political problems of the Palestinian people, and usually in one or two sentences which say something to the effect, "and the women and children suffer more than anyone else" or "the oppression of women and children is more severe than anyone else". An exception must be made, of course, of the efforts of such women writers as Rosemary Sayigh, Carolyn Fleur Labbon and some of the women on this panel who have written prolifically and revealingly about Palestinian and Arab women.

It seems, therefore, that if attention is to be directed to Palestinian women, it will be by other women, individuals as well as organized women. My remarks, therefore, will concentrate on the role that organized women, more particularly an international women's organization, can play in support of the struggle of Palestinian women.

The Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF), founded in 1945 at a time when the attention of the world was focused on the countries that had been devastated during the Second World War, has grown to be an organization that encompasses millions of women in 131 national organizations in 116 countries. Among those national organizations are Women for Racial and Economic Equality (WREE), the General Union of Palestinian Women and the Movement of Democratic Women in Israel.

The WIDF is a unique phenomenon in the world, certainly in the women's world. It affords the opportunity for women in both technologically advanced and developing countries to join with women in the midst of national struggles, not just to exchange information and give moral support, but to develop co-operative policies and direct programmes of action. Since women in different areas of the world are at different stages of development, the national emphasis is necessarily different. Our organization accepts as its mandate not only to assist Palestinian women in achieving the major objectives of their people which are an independent Palestinian State and self-determination, but also to encourage and support the particular responsibility of Palestinian women in the Diaspora and the occupied territories which are to guard the Palestinian culture, to bear witness to the crimes committed against the Palestinian people, to nurture and participate in the liberation struggle and to prepare themselves to assume leadership position among their people.

Long before the convening of this conference, the WIDF had accepted its obligation to disseminate information in support of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian women. Through its many directives, communiques, newsletters, journals and conferences, the WIDF has publicized the conditions of women within the occupied territory and in the refugee camps. The most recent communique of May 1984 expresses our indignation at recent Israeli violations of human rights and reaffirms our position of solidarity:

"Within the past four weeks more than 30 towns and villages have been raided, thousands of inhabitants expelled by force and mass arrests have been carried out during cruel attacks on the Ain el Helweh Palestinian refugee camp on the outskirts of the port city of Saida. Palestinian women and youth were killed and injured and many inhabitants were abducted.

"On 20 May 1984, after large-scale raids on several villages in the Bekaa plain in which even children 10 and 12 years of age were arrested and transported to the offices of the Israeli military secret service, the Israeli Air Force bombarded the area around the villages Yanta and Deir el-Ghael situated near the Syrian border.

"The WIDF severely condemns these criminal acts of the Israeli soldiers against the Palestinian refugee camps and the Lebanese people.

"It made an urgent appeal to the United Nations Security Council to bring its influence to bear in order to make Israel stop immediately its disgraceful policy of genocide and to apply the necessary sanctions to make Israel implement the United Nations resolutions.

"The WIDF reaffirms once more its unqualified solidarity with the just struggle of the Palestinian people for the implementation of its right to self-determination under the leadership of the PLO."

And when Lebanon was invaded, with the subsequent massacre of the women and children in the refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila, the WIDF called on its member organizations to action:

"TO

carry out a series of hunger strikes, sit-ins and demonstrations to prevent Beirut from becoming another Lidice or Guernica.

"TO

demand that the United States Administration exert pressure on Israel to lift its siege of Beirut and withdraw its troops from Lebanon in accordance with United Nations Security Council resolutions 508 and 509.

"TO

set up national solidarity committees and make the month of August (1982) a month of intensified moral and material solidarity with the Palestinian and Lebanese people.

"TO

continue and intensify the political and material campaign in support of the Lebanese and Palestinian people."

Jacobo Timerman, in his book The Longest War, has referred to the invasion of Lebanon as Sharon's war. Sharon invaded without cause simply because he wanted to. Timerman relates that when the soldiers returned to Israel, they could not rid themselves of the smell of dead women and children. The WIDF in its publication Special Issues, December 1982, cites the account of a 13-year old girl who lost all the members of her large family in the raid on Shatila. Her story:

"On Thursday, my parents, brothers, grandmother, aunt and cousins stayed at home. Going outside to see my friends, I noticed the Israeli soldiers and Falangists running towards the camp. Their eyes were full of anger and death. I quickly returned to inform the people who immediately went out with white flags. The soldiers ignored them and started to shoot everybody, including women, children and old people. I was able to hide in the bathroom where I spent six hours before they discovered me. I saw my nine-month old cousin shot to death and his little body cut into two pieces.

"I spent the night among the corpses and the fire. The lorries came the next morning and took me to the sports stadium. I saw my neighbor's two-year-old daughter buried under bodies. She was still alive. I pulled her out and hid her under a blanket. I was looking around to find the bodies of my family but couldn't find them. I have no relatives to live with. Please, tell me, what shall I do now?"

What is the answer? Stay alive. Survive. Bear witness. Grow. Resist. In our journal Women of the Whole World, a correspondent from the Democratic Women's Movement of Israel tells of the slogan adopted by the Palestinians under occupation. It is Zamud, hold on. She mentions the atmosphere of hope in which Palestinian women are raising their children. Zamud. Hold on. They say:

"Stick to your village, your refugee camp, your piece of land and the olive tree. Resist being pushed around, protect your land, protest colonization.

"The children become active in public life at an early age and the girls become more emancipated, independent and active in work, study and political life.

"Cultural life is dominated by national colours, symbols and patriotic dreams and struggles are given expression in poems, songs and stories."

Zamud. Hold on.

We say that also to the women who have been arrested and held hostage in order to pressure their freedom-fighting husbands, brothers, fathers and sons to give themselves up to the military.

Zamud, Abla Ahmal El-Sheikh Hasson, 40-year-old Palestinian mother of five, arrested for the third time and accused of nothing but a husband fighting for their freedom.

Zamud, Wassfa Hamid Mahmal Frej, 28-year-old mother of a five-month-old baby, arrested and interrogated about her husband who had already been killed.

Zamud, Mariam Abdel Jalil, 30-year-old teacher of handicrafts in the Bourj El-Shemali refugee camp, arrested, imprisoned and interrogated about her two brothers away and fighting.

Stay alive. Survive. Bear witness. Grow. Resist.

As the Palestinian women in the camps and occupied territories confront daily struggle, the organized women of the world lift their voices in unity and protest:

- The National Assembly of Women of Great Britain conducted a successful meeting entitled "Solidarity with Palestinian women and children". They drafted a resolution which was sent to newspapers and women MPs.

- The Democratic Movement of Portuguese Women participated in a protest demonstration in front of the Israeli embassy in Lisbon.

- The Movement of Democratic Women in Israel demanded an end to the aggression against the Palestinian people. Israeli police used tear gas against them and detained hundreds of demonstrators.

- The Czechoslovak Women's Union sent medicine, food and clothing to the women and children who survived the camp massacres.

- A delegation of the WIDF, headed by Freda Brown, our President, visited refugee camps in Damascus and West Beirut. They spoke to representatives of the women's organizations, wounded combatants, women and children and were impressed with their courage and determination. They saw the work being done by the women's organizations in caring for orphans, refugees and combatants. The delegation promised that the women of its affiliated organizations would support the struggle of the women of Palestine, materially, morally and politically.

The WIDF pledged to work for:

- The withdrawal of Israel from all Arab territories occupied since 1967;

- Revocation of the annexation of Syrian territories in the Golan Heights.

- An end to annexation, subjugation and oppression in the occupied Arab territories.

Women for Racial and Economic Equality, in its publication Women, the WREE View of Women for Racial and Economic Equality, prints articles and reports in solidarity with the struggle of the Palestinian people and not long ago, WREE sponsored a tour of the United States by Issam Abdul Hadi, the President of the General Union of Arab Women so that she could tell the story and try to awaken the conscience of the American people.

A month ago WREE invited Linda Mattar, the President of the Lebanese Women's Rights League, to participate in our convention. She related a firsthand account of her movement.

Members of the Peace and Solidarity Committee of WREE work with the Middle East Task Force of the Peace Council, the Palestinian Aide Society and Najda. We have distributed their craft products and shown the film Women under Siege.

Last week I attended the Congress of the Czechoslovakian Union of Women in Prague. I spoke to women from the Middle East and heard once again of the daily struggle just to stay alive. I have felt for some time that what we do is too little. That realization was confirmed in Prague and reaffirmed as I prepared for this presentation and listened to other speakers. I suspect that the little we do appeases our consciences more than anything else. It is a little better than saying we are sorry.

But I am sorry and ask the women to forgive what my country has allowed to happen to them. I beg them to hold on just as Afro-American women have. In spite of the systematic and deliberate assault on our heritage and family, we have held on and are the greatest source of strength for the continuing struggle to gain racial and economic equality. From the ashes of their culture, the break up of their traditional family and the loss of protection, Palestinian women will also become the strength of their nation.

Margaret McCormack

I am and I take some pride in using this term, a paid political hack. There's lots of money in that business. Political elections in this country are a big business. Let us not make any mistake about that. Local elections in California this year are running at an average of \$100,000 to \$200,000 per measly assembly seat that pays about \$26,000 a year to be elected. I can assure you I take my percentage of that - my children spend it almost as fast as I make it. But the point I am trying to make is that elections are big business, that they use all the latest technology of computer analysis, opinion polls are done in a very scientific and plastic manner. On the off years, I believe yesterday we were talking about elections every two years, if that is true, sometimes you try to squeeze a couple in in the middle and some special elections and I know there are people who do this full time. On the off years I frequently go to work for one of the people that I put into office and hope that they will do right by women's constituencies or labour or worker constituencies or the concerns that I may have on the Middle East. I have done some work for predominantly black candidates and labour-sponsored candidates. I am also doing political work for Democrats and I try desperately not to work for somebody that is just too awful. There are not as you can well imagine very many in elected office who do much for our cause. Over the 15 years the one thing that has kept me from trying to be too cynical is that I have approached this as a student. I have worked in the legislature of the State of California and on Capitol Hill for 15 years. During that time what I have tried to do is to make a study of how things worked, what makes this whole operation tick. Why do they vote the way they do, what makes them do what they do? How is United States foreign policy arrived at, what pressures and what forces can be put upon our policy-makers? And with the little help of a few other political scientists from my own laboratory experience of 15 years, I have come to the conclusion that it is possible for change in this country, that the United States is not a monolithic society and that there are certain pressures out of the structure of our society that have a very direct impact on the State and its policy-makers. The most important structure of course is the State, the State in a generic sense, the United States Congress being the most powerful instrument of the State. Corporate business is another aspect of that structure. The educational establishment is another aspect. Organized religion is another aspect. The media or the press is another factor in that structure and incidentally I part company a little bit with some of my political scientist friend. I throw in cultural apparatus, the film, the arts, all aspects of what Jacques Salut calls propaganda into the press and media. Organized labour or workers is another pressure group that works upon policy-makers. And then the mass or base organizations which affect policy decisions, these being black constituencies, Hispanic constituencies, elderly constituencies and women and a few others as time intervenes. And with those eight, nine elements of the society structure is where I try in my political work to direct change and to see where we can get into those elements and so, working with certain constituency bases such as women, we can move into for example the media or the State and affect and move into cracks and open up the way to bring about change. But we do not do this sloppily. We try, if I can take some liberties with some of my favorite worldly philosophers, we analyze in order to change society.

And so to start with I would give you a few figures on what the gender gap means in the United States. The gender gap came out after the November 1982 election when, horrors, the Reagan Administration discovered that the women were voting a 21-point difference than men. They also discovered that they were voting against Reagan and Reagan's policies. And that women were voting across-the-board, Republic or Democrat, very specifically against military budgets, very specifically for peace issues, very specifically for full employment, intervention of United States tax dollars to create employment and for domestic spending and programmes. Another point that they discovered was that there was something called the feminization of poverty. It was not that women were poor, it was women were the poor. And the poor in this country were indeed voting, they were voting with greater militancy on peace issues than at any other time in history, in short, women were acting differently and willing to advertise it. Now there were a number of polls that were conducted in 1982, 1983 and this year. What they are trying to determine is to analyze this gender gap. One poll which was in Public Opinion magazine, which is the magazine in the American Enterprise Institute, was a very comprehensive poll of women's attitude from 1948 to 1970 and I will not go into everything that these polls touched upon. But from 1948 to 1970 their polls showed that women had a growing distaste for war, that they opposed military intervention and they opposed increased military budgets. And between 1948 and 1970, these same polls indicated that women were not necessarily informed on foreign policy issues. But in 1970, this changed and women became more informed actually than men on foreign policy issues and began voting in patterns completely different from men.

Another poll published in the spring issue of Women in Politics which I found one of the most fascinating polls of all the ones that I reviewed, interviewed and reviewed attitudes of women, what they called "women leaders". They chose 4,000 women from Who's Who in America and women elected officials. Then they got a sample group of men who were in that same category. Out of 170 different points that they touched upon, of special interest for this paper were the responses and attitudes towards the United Nations military intervention and the "protection of Middle East oil fields".

(a) Women supported the United Nations as a force for peace by a ratio of nearly 3 to 1 over their male counterparts;

(b) While men thought that the United States used force to solve international problems at about the same, at the correct level, women at an extraordinarily high rate agreed that the United States resorted to force too quickly;

(c) While men thought that the United States had a right to intervene militarily to protect oil in the Middle East oil fields, women at a 76-point disagreement factor overwhelmingly opposed it.

A similar poll reported by Ted Gersel in the Journal of Political and Military Sociology on the gender gap in the spring of 1983 had 40 years of women's attitudes versus men. And again there were a lot of points but there

are three I pulled out: in terms of supporting increased military budgets, 53 per cent of the women said no, 30 per cent said yes, 18 per cent were undecided; support of a nuclear freeze, 72 per cent of the women yes, 16 per cent undecided, and 12 per cent no; go to the war to defend Middle East oil fields, 75 per cent no, 18 per cent undecided and 8 per cent yes. And every poll that I pulled up with regard to Central America or Lebanon, women were overwhelmingly opposed to sending or keeping troops in either Central America or Lebanon.

Other polls showed some very interesting things and surveys that women-elected officials tended to be more honest, there was something that they called a compassion factor and that women who are elected to office on peace issues and compassion issues voted differently than their male counterparts and opposed their own leadership to vote in those manners. Now there is very little evidence about a gender gap and Palestinian issues. I am sorry that many of the academics are not here today but I think this is something that needs desperately to be surveyed.

In the Harris study taken on 28 June 1982 a few weeks after the invasion of Lebanon in a question asked in the dispute between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, which side do you sympathize with more - Israel or PLO? Men: Israel, 68 per cent; women - 54 per cent. In agreement with PLO, men, 13 per cent, women, 18 per cent. Neither - men, 11, women, 10 and there is an interesting disparity of not sure - women, 16 and men, 6. There is an interesting spread there and I think it should be investigated more thoroughly.

In May 1982, prior to the invasion, a Gallup poll polled United States sympathies in the Middle East. They asked a question directly to the following groups to determine whether or not they were sympathetic to groups. The national group, this is United States of course, 51 per cent supported Israel, 12 per cent supported Arabs, 26 per cent neither, 11 per cent no opinion. Men, 53 for Israel, 14 for Arabs, 25 neither, 8 no opinion. Women, 49 per cent Israel, 10 per cent Arabs, 28 per cent neither, 13 per cent no opinion. White, 52 Israel, Arabs 11, neither 26, no opinion 11; black, 41 per cent Israel, 25 per cent Arabs, 26 neither, 8 no opinion. Republican, which was the highest, 56 per cent for Israel, 13 per cent for Arabs, 23 neither, 10 no opinion and Democrat, 47 Israel, 13 Arabs, 20 neither, 10 no opinion. I suspect that the Democrat figure actually is lower because of the black influence in the Democratic Party but I do not know. Women and blacks clearly stand out as having less sympathy for Israel but women do not show a corresponding support for Arab countries as shown by black respondents. Attitudes of American women toward Arabs in general may be different from their attitudes toward Palestinians in particular.

General opinion polls also measuring attitudes of men and women with regard to leftist or revolutionary movements in Latin America, Africa and Asia show women more willing to accept and live in peace with leftist Governments. Again I do not know if this translates to the Palestinian movement.

From the studies and the quick library research I was able to do, it was clear that we do not have enough research and one of the points that I would

like to really stress today is that I would hope that our academics that are in communities that can do this, do try to do some surveys on women versus men's attitudes on the entire range of Israeli-Palestinian peace issues. There is one poll that I would like to mention and I will refer to it later. When the proposition E campaign was run in Berkeley which McCloskey and others talked about yesterday asking the mayors to send a letter to the United States Congress, to Senate, the Secretary of State, the President, requesting that the United States reduce the amount of aid it sends to Israel in the amount that Israel spends on settlements. The poll done conducted by the people running the E campaign showed that people overwhelmingly on every category opposed the settlements. And women in a much stronger attitude opposed the settlements more than their male counterparts, and were more informed on the issue in Berkeley. But their concern for peace and nuclear peace issues outweighed all other concerns and again there was a wider disparity. They targetted the women as voting group in Berkeley on that proposition to send mail and talk about peace.

I think we need to do more local campaigns or at least more attitudinal surveys to determine different sectors of our population and how they feel. I know that the opposition is doing that having worked with these in the valley of the bees for 15 years, you sort of know how their minds work and I am sure that the Reagan Administration is polling daily to find out have the women changed and you know he probably call^s Ed Rollins to find out if there is anything happening out there. 50 per cent of the Republican delegates they are sending to Dallas are women. You keep seeing more and more women appointed to positions. There is no evidence incidentally that that works. Jeane Kirkpatrick hardly represents the thinking of women in this country. They try to appoint Margaret Heckler thinking that she was just going to be wonderful and it turns out, here she is, she is really high on the compassion factor and women tend to like her and now they do not know what to do on how to get rid of her. And so it is for political purposes in this country, it is a very unstable constituency. So they are used to dealing with very organized constituencies and that is why there is another reason why I so enjoyed Jesse Jackson because not only did I support his position but when you get a mass base constituency suddenly moving and moving one whole mass base into some political action, we can not stick that into the computer somehow. And at about the same time we got it into the computer, they buzz off and do something else and so I know that they are working on this constituency and there will be a lot of literature and they will do a few things but they do not do that unless they know what the attitudes of women are out there and then they will reach out an appeal. And a very quick aside, one of the things that makes me very nervous, I know they do not do things out of whim and since Reagan has come into office, he has pounded away at the theme of terrorism. Every month, every two months, every year and it makes very nervous because I know that they are getting the attitudes of the American public and how they would feel about practical elimination of civil liberties. There was one little factor that made me nervous and again if the academics are going to take up my suggestion, they should throw that into the hopper of things to poll. All the attitudes that women had over the 40 years from 1948 to the present, the only attitude that I was ashamed that women held different from

men was that during the great Red scares in the McCarthy era, women were more willing to throw Reds in jail. They were more willing to go along with the anti-Red scare than men. And I would hope that our constituencies are not somehow more manipulable with regard to that issue but it does make me nervous and you can see evidence of work being directed at certain vulnerable constituencies on certain issues.

So our job is to take the same kind of scientific approach. I think we need to take an approach in our organizing and our networking that is carefully designed and scientific. We do too much haphazard mass based work. I think to begin, we need to analyze how people are really thinking, not what we think they are thinking, like the proposition E campaign is a perfect example. We were talking past the women and not to them. Had we as the opposition did re positioned our campaign to talk to women about peace issues, there might have been a different outcome. If for example in this cause, we worked where women think and pulled their concerns toward our issue and we must begin to develop ways of doing that. We need to go into those aspects of a superstructure and work with women in those structures. In the corporate structure of America, the corporate business structure, there are not very many women. But what there are are in the sort of business management levels and those women are organized. The business and professional women in this country is one of the biggest professional women's organizations in the country, sort of the women's Rotary-Lion's Club in every little town and village. They are very political, they have speakers bureau and they are very feminists. Their attitudes on every feminist issue including peace is as high as a women's political left organization. That is a new phenomena. When I was first working in campaigns in California, the BPW was difficult but now they are a very feminist organization and they are in businesses all over the United States.

Education, another structure. Women are concentrated in education. They are concentrated in social services and the education professions. The education association, the National Education Association, the largest teacher organization in the country is headed by a woman, I might add, a black woman who in personal conversations is sympathetic to our cause. I know that because the Arab Women's Council has been doing an outstanding job of working in the educational structure with a series of essay competitions on the Arab-Israeli Conflict Dissolution and they have been working with the educational organizations, National Council of Social Studies, National Council of Teachers of English, etc. The American Association of University Women is a powerful organization and there are campus-based women's organizations all over the country that we could work with.

In labour - women are concentrated in low paying, menial jobs. They are also concentrated in the social service professions. These workers are organized often in the most progressive labour unions. Again ask me - Local 1311 in Berkeley - which is a female-dominated union endorsed proposition E. Coalitions of labour union women should be approached with speakers, etc.

The press and the media. Women are in the media both in journalism and in the arts. They are effective opinion makers. They have organizations and

there is a book of women's publications in this country. Newsletters, there are women's bookstores. There is an entire media out there that is strictly women's media. While I'm on that, by the way, I should also say there are some publications in this country that are so anti-female. If you are trying to get your view across and if you are trying to organize that particular constituency, I think I would try away from them. I was very happy this morning for example to see that there was an interview with Chairman Arafat in The Village Voice. I would be very unhappy if I picked up or looked on the newstand tomorrow - I don't pick up and read Penthouse, Hustler or Playboy - and saw an interview there. I think you would lose more of a constituency than a person would gain if you can remember President Carter going to Playboy and talking about lust.

There are of course women-elected officials. There is a directory of every women-elected official in this country with biographic notes about them. There are only 18 in Congress, there are a thousand women-elected officials around the country and then there are thousands in the local level - county clerks, supervisors, that sort of thing.

The role, and I would close on this, I am missing a number of things, like women in mass-based groups, like the elderly, black women, Hispanic women, these have been excellent places for forums on third world women. But the role that I think that the women play the most important role is in the peace movement. They are not in military, they are in the dialectical side, they are in the anti-military - the peace movement. Women began protesting in this country against slavery. Quaker women were the forerunners of the abolition movement and it was with the abolition movement that we began the women's movement. The women's movement has never been a monolithic struggle. It has always been multi-issue. Child labour laws, better working conditions for women, child care, it has not always just been women's right to vote. All the issues of compassion have been part of the women's movement. Women's peace groups are probably the single most effective group that can get in and religious organizations to members' offices on Capitol Hill. Remember that everything I am talking about is how to effect the State. They can get in. The martyrdom of two nuns in El Salvador has probably done more to stop aid going to that country and the work of Congresswoman Mary Rosolcor who can be absolutely wonderful if she has her teeth into her subject. And so it would be with that group that I would say we should take the forefront in our work. We need to analyze the situation, we need to know where women are and we need to approach them on a step-by-step basis. We need to do careful planning and we need to follow-up. We need to do more in terms of women to women trips, meetings, groups, tours, but do so with a very planned and careful approach. We need to choose issues that are in a sense outside ourselves. I cannot think of a single more important issue to bring people of all attitudes into the Palestinian women's perspective than the stationing of cruise missiles in Comiso, Italy. That is the nuclear link between the United States and Israel, to form a nuclear umbrella, to suppress national movements in Africa and the Middle East. Issues like that can bring us together and we must pick issues that are coalition-building and not divisive. I will just simply close by saying all of our approach need planning, we need some analysis, we need planning, we need follow-up and I think that one of the recommendations in this Conference is that we need to co-ordinate our efforts.

Audrey Shabbas

The topic of today's panel, "Women and the Question of Palestine", suggests many things - the role of women here - there - around the world, as elements in the struggle for Palestinian national rights - that struggle in historical context - its present status - its future prospects?

If we're considering women in the struggle, the Palestinian women themselves have given us many wonderful models. Palestinian women themselves are rebuilding the infrastructures destroyed in Lebanon and daily being destroyed on the West Bank.

It was a year ago, at a time when the Palestine Liberation Organization was involved in a serious internal struggle, that Palestinian women in Neve Tertza prison set aside differences and came together to organize a strike. This was a very brave action. Their nine-month long strike, begun in June 1983 when 38 of their members refused to cook and serve for the Israeli prison guards (a violation of the Geneva accords), was to become a total hunger strike before its end. In retaliation, prison authorities severely restricted visiting rights, denied access to books, radios, newspapers and stopped their mail. They were confined to their cells 24 hours a day. In October these women were subjected to severe and prolonged tear gas attacks in their cells. They were beaten by their guards. Their steadfastness and unity in the face of such hardships is a model for us all.

And here in the United States, during that terrible summer of 1982, Arab-American women came together to form the Arab Women's Council and then to erect tents in front of the White House, and there to go on a prolonged hunger strike to call for an end to the war in Lebanon.

As non-Palestinians, there is little we can, or ought, or need, do to help direct their struggle. But we can do networking here in North America and around the globe, in solidarity with their struggle, providing them assistance and support, and the safety provided by international attention.

I am here as a representative of Najda: Women Concerned About the Middle East. Our name, Najda, is the Arabic for "help in time of need". When we formed in 1960, the "help" was in the form of medicine and clothing to Algerians, refugees in Tunisia and Morocco, during the Algerian war of independence. And we worked here in the United States at educating the American public towards a change in a foreign policy that sided with the French against the Algerians.

Today the burning question is Palestine, and the "need" we feel is most urgent is that of Palestinians living under Israeli occupation. And so it was, that in the midst of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, our Board, swayed most persuasively by a Lebanese member, made a commitment to redouble our efforts at assistance to the people in the occupied West Bank. It was they, we believed, who would ultimately pay the price for the Lebanon invasion, and we were determined that their needs ought not be overlooked as our hearts and attention were riveted on Lebanon.

I've been asked to share with you Najda's concerns and commitment to the very fine indigenous Palestinian institutions on the West Bank, and then to raise some questions or challenges regarding the way we as women in North America can network on their behalf.

The four institutions or organizations which I will briefly describe are but tender shoots that must be allowed to grow. Not all four of them are exclusively women's organizations.

Of the West Bank's legal profession, 25 per cent are women. Law in the Service of Man, a not-for-profit corporation, is the West Bank affiliate of the International Commission of Jurists, headquartered in Geneva. Founded in 1980, Law in the Service of Man, with its office and library located in Ramallah, is under the direction of two full-time practicing attorneys, Jonathan Kuttub and Raja Shehadeh. Full-time administrators, field workers and a steering committee of volunteers carry out the organization's objectives (as embodied in its legal al-Haq - Arabic for justice, law, right, fairness) through its library, publications and current projects.

Their library, the first public law library on the West Bank, contains texts of Jordanian laws, military orders, Israeli laws and precedents, and sources on international law and human rights.

Their publications include documented studies in both English and Arabic, handbooks in Arabic advising local residents of their rights, protections and avenues of recourse - these take the form of "what to do if ...", and studies of new military orders and decisions of the West Bank High Court of Justice.

Current projects of Law in the Service of Man include the just completed (December 1983) critique, Reply to the U.S. State Department Report on Human Rights Practices in the Territories Occupied by Israel, which takes a point-by-point look at the reality of these human rights practices. There are also projects in the works that are studying Israeli racism, with labour as a departure, that are keeping detailed accounts of arrests of school students, while another is documenting town arrests, and yet another is detailing the demolition of homes - with a standardized questionnaire that field workers take out to the sites of such demolitions.

Work of the organization is distributed through the Quaker Law Center, through universities, and through a weekly column in Al-Fajr, "Know your rights".

The second organization I want to highlight is a theatrical troupe, a theatre and an arts center, who's assistant director is a woman, Jackie Lubeck. El-Hakawati began as a troupe organized in 1977. Their name, El-Hakawati, is the Arabic word for the traditional "storyteller", although there is nothing "traditional" about the manner in which El-Hakawati turns a tale.

Not folkloric, El-Hakawati attempts, through its choice of themes, situations and character, to illustrate, lucidly and without complacency, the Palestinian reality at present under the Israeli occupation. Through use of mime, superbly exaggerated flourishes and brilliant cameo caricatures, they have brought this important contribution to theatre to nearly every West European country, Poland and Tunisia.

Their production Ali the Galilean tells of Ali/Eli who is treated for his split personality by a Professor of Arab Israelology, who tries to cure Ali/Eli by forcing him to choose either Palestinian or Israeli symbols in his "treatment". Their original creation 1001 Nights of a Stone-Thrower, their current offering, is a take-off on the Sheharazade theme, in Haroun Al-Rashid period costumes, but with a poignantly modern twist. The Stone-Thrower is obviously the West Bank Palestinian, for whom in reality the maximum penalty for such stone-throwing has just been raised to 20 years in prison, after Israeli settlers argued to the Israeli court that stone-throwing was really "attempted murder".

El-Hakawati, after seven years of existence, is no longer just a theatrical troupe. It is now a Theater and Arts Center as well. El-Hakawati, the first Palestinian theatre in the occupied territories, began to take shape last November (1983) when a seven-member crew began six months of work transforming a burned-out old movie house into a performing arts center, seating 400 people. Located near the Damascus Gate in East Jerusalem, El-Hakawati held its gala opening just a month ago, on 9 May 1984.

The following day, its director was taken into custody and "held" for three days for "questioning". El-Hakawati's overseas mail, being taken out at Ben Gurion airport, was seized and photocopied. What else is in store can easily be guessed. El-Hakawati needs international support, and above all, international attention and visibility. El-Hakawati stands out, in the assessment of Jonathan Kuttub, as "the shining example of the stubborn will not only to survive, but also to excel. In their chosen media, this group of energetic young people are accomplishing a lively, creative, expressive and technical manifestation of Palestinian society."

More wellknown perhaps is In'ash El-Usra, (Society for the Preservation of the Family), the third organization I want to bring to your attention.

In'ash El-Usra grew from one woman, Sameeha Khalil, one rented room, six sewing machines, and eight girls, in 1965, to the major charitable and self-help project in the area. Today, through its headquarters in Al-Bireh, it boasts a Montessori-trained day care centre, a kindergarten, adult education and literacy centres (more than 100 serving nearly 6,000, of whom 85 per cent are women), summer school for youngsters needing extra help, a folklore and research centre, a library, vocational training centres, production centres, and aid programmes of all types,

providing: assistance to students, scholarships, family aid, medical and dental assistance, and children's sponsorship similar to our Foster Parents Plan. In'ash El-Usra's newest achievement is the beautifully constructed and equipped Orphans' Home, and the exemplary programme run there.

While most organizations after 1967 were relief oriented, In'ash El-Usra soon saw need for a new outlook and began experimenting with the idea of self-help - with providing people needing assistance with the means that would allow them to earn income. Vocational training was begun. So also were production centres which were to become successful when they oriented productive efforts towards traditional products that did not face competition from Israeli and imported commodities. So they turned from sewing, food production and chicken farming (early attempts that failed) to traditional embroideries, pottery and woven straw items. And they moved into villages - "going to where the needy were", Sameeha Khalil called it. Attempts at opening centres in the villages failed, however, as Israeli authorities closed them down as quickly as they were opened. So now they operate in villages in their vicinity, without benefit of centres.

Sameeha Khalil, as well as some of the other prime movers within In'ash El-Usra, have been under town arrest for some time. This has greatly inhibited their ability to carry on this village work. But the ingenious young women of the villages soon developed a scheme of their own. They come into the city headquarters with finished embroidered pieces hidden in their shopping baskets, and smuggle back to the village women the cloth and embroidery floss for further production. Such items are dangerous things to an Israel bent on destruction of Palestinian national identity.

The Women's Work Committee (WWC), established in Ramallah in 1978, reflects a qualitative change in the nature of the women's movement in the occupied territories. The Women's Work Committee had a stated reason for its unwillingness to be absorbed into the framework of existing women's charitable societies: the activities and programmes WWC envisioned necessitated the creation of a new type of women's movement that went beyond the gaps in the structure and style of work of previously existing women's groups. But other reasons included the fact that the framework that was newly created and is still being used by WWC today did not require a permit from the Israeli military Government, as the Committee had opted out, out of the "charitable society" framework. They also, of course, had a perspective of their work that was not charitable in nature, but was more directed towards the building of an organized women's movement.

So what we have on the one hand is a superbly run operation like In'ash El-Usra, which provides wonderful services to its immediate area, and is essentially the one-woman show of sturdy and unflappable Sameeha Khalil, and the Women's Work Committee on the other, which aims at

something systemic - bringing more fundamental changes in the roles of women in society at every level, but whose programmes are largely on paper, the realization of which is a slower process.

Of course, there were the standard petty rivalries, the older women's fears of losing control, the difficulty of the older movements effectively absorbing the new radical ideas of the younger women. But, in spite of differences, the Women's Work Committee never passed itself off as an alternative to other organizations, but as an organization that could work hand in hand with them. So it is no surprise to find that Zaheera Kamal (who heads WWC in Jerusalem) and Kamleh Kurdi (WWC's public relations secretary) are both members of steering committees of In'ash El-Usra.

And experience in the field has taught WWC that for much of their work, they require the umbrella and protection of the licensed charitable societies. So a unique bridging of the ideological gap has taken place, a networking that found its impetus in the commitment of all to the national struggle.

Experience in the field was quite revealing to the organizers of the Women's Work Committee in another way as well. They were shocked by the realization of the existing conditions of the lives of rural women and of the urban poor. It was soon apparent that it would be impossible to effectively mobilize women in the national struggle, when they are faced with illiteracy, overwork, poverty, economic dependence and general limited interest given all of these conditions together with their low social status. So, WWC encouraged and assisted such women to organize around their own problems, and this led to the adoption of: 1) programmes of literacy; 2) health projects; 3) production projects aimed at providing them with some means of earning an income; and 4) day care centres and nurseries, allowing women to pursue these programmes.

And WWC has pursued some of these interim goals in very clever ways. For example, the literacy campaign is centred around low-readability, high-interest reading materials. The reading materials created for the beginning reader, for their practice and mastery of their new skill, are materials focusing on elementary health concerns, first aid and nutrition.

The commitment by all of these women's organizations (and I have described only two among dozens) to the national struggle - to steadfastness (Samud - a cultural expression that has become a symbol reflecting a new political awareness and has become translated into a commitment to staying on the land of Palestine as a crucial form of resistance to occupation) was born out of a realization by Palestinian women that they themselves were perhaps the only structures left that were possibly able to inhibit the daily destruction of their society - and to prepare a means for the reconstruction of that society in the future.

The idea of women committed to the national struggle can be seen in the records of registration of women's charitable societies in the West Bank. There was a sudden registration of women's organizations in 1965. It is no coincidence that 1965 was also the year of the creation of the PLO with its various bodies, including the General Union of Palestinian Women. The Palestine national problem has served as a propellant of women's struggle for equality.

In spite of the awareness of the problems of women as a separate yet integral part of the overall struggle of Palestinians for a better life, the national problem dominates political and social thinking today. This is due not only to the hegemony of men over political, economic and social life, but also to the facts of life - as they are experienced by Palestinians - both men and women. There are the systematic attempts to destroy Palestinian society and culture. There are also the very real problems that arise in the absence of a State.

Without a Government, the people have had to attack each problem on a case by case basis, and to provide for themselves services we take for granted the State provides.

For example, three women of In'ash El-Usra took it upon themselves this month to go before the Israeli authorities to plead for a reprieve for the only hospital for the poor in Jerusalem. The hospital, which once housed 120 beds, had been reduced to 100 beds, then to 80 beds, and now the Israeli authorities proposed to reduce it to a 60-bed facility. And the next time this or any other hospital is so threatened, the process of individual intervention and protest will have to be repeated.

In another example, pharmaceuticals are produced on the West Bank, without any Food and Drug Administration to oversee their manufacture. So, college students at Birzeit University have taken upon themselves, as best they can, and on a piecemeal basis, the testing of drugs for content and purity. So also do these same college students conduct the tests to determine if West Bank water is safe for drinking. And college students are also the ones who've taken up the task of testing for the effects of the use of toxic chemicals on food production.

This has led to the university's establishment of a Department of Environmental Science and Toxicology - at the same time that Palestinian universities are not allowed to teach agricultural science. In spite of the fact that the West Bank is largely a farming community, Israel does not allow Palestinian youngsters to study agriculture!

While we have heard before what the absence of a State can mean for the individual's security, safety and basic rights, here too are yet other kinds of examples of what Palestinians must face without a State.

That the work of indigenous Palestinian organizations need assistance and support is a given. Perhaps the easiest form of assistance we on the outside can lend is that of international exposure. Publicity and show of concern for the welfare of such institutions is fundamental to their survival under an Israeli military authority that finds it increasingly more difficult to act with a heavy hand while it knows it is being watched.

To underscore the importance of such networking, I'd like to draw your attention to the case of an important institution that was, for all intent and purpose, harassed out of existence.

Musa Alami's Arab Development Society began soon after the 1948 disaster, on a 2,000 acre concession from the Jordanian Government. Here on 2,000 acres of worthless, salt-encrusted land near Jericho, where despite prophecies of failure, Musa Alami found sweet water, washed the soil of its salt, and created a home for 600 Palestinian boys on what was soon 2,000 acres of productive farmlands, with a prosperous dairy and poultry farm.

After 17 years of occupation, the Arab Development Society looks once again like the "before" photograph - "the land as it was" - in the Society's 1960s brochure. To walk here now is to walk past empty corrals, through buildings filled with ghosts and now maintained by a skeleton staff.

This was no fly-by-night operation. Musa Alami had received a Ford Foundation grant in the 1950s to build the main building. Arnold Toynbee headed the British Friends of the Society. Here was an organization with world-wide backing and credibility that has been put behind the 8-ball - decimated.

In trying to return to what they had before the 1967 War, they were blocked every step of the way. They are now territorially a quarter of their original size. Where there were once 600 boys and 450 employees, there are now only 100 boys and 25 employees. Their 30,000 chickens were destroyed in 1967, so were their 400 dairy cows.

Musa Alami has signed an agreement to turn over the operation to the Swedish Save the Children Society. Literally, outsiders have had to take it over in order to rebuild it, for the simple reason that occupation authorities can't act so arbitrarily and with such callous disregard with an international organization.

If this can happen to an internationally renowned and bonafide group, what can happen to these very new organizations I have just discussed? Law in the Service of Man, El-Hakawati, In'ash El-Usra, The Women's Work Committee are the tender shoots. Look what happened to this sturdy tree!

And lastly, I'd like to close with some questions about networking, some challenges to our notions of networking, which colleagues felt were important to raise and share with you.

1. How can we network with the established feminist movement here in the United States? There is a feminist community and organization here in New York, everywhere across the United States, that is a very active pool of women which we ought to be able to draw upon. The lives of Palestinian women - as mothers, sisters, working women, poor women, prisoners - can be made a mutually understandable issue as we join concerns with their concerns about women around the globe.

It is high time that we came to recognize that women are in leadership roles, that women are effective in leadership roles, and that we should support them. The challenges facing Palestinian women are not totally unique. Their anxieties and pains, successes and failures are models with which women everywhere can find identification. It's up to us to bridge this gap of information and to make this connection.

2. Why not look at another model for networking - that of a single broadly-based issue? Its strength is that it avoids the confrontations and fragmentations that can occur in trying to build a broad consensus. Its added strength comes from the fact that a single humanitarian issue, for example, has broad appeal and can draw in women across a wide spectrum of organizations and philosophies.

In the San Francisco Bay Area, such a networking coalition has generated a new organization, Tadamun, which draws its name from the Arabic word for "solidarity". Members of Najda's Board and members of Jewish Women for a Secular Middle East came together in common concern for the plight of women political prisoners under Israeli rule, including Lebanon.

By publicizing individual cases of women in prison, under town arrest, expelled, confined by curfews, etc. Tadamun hopes to be able to help people in the United States to overcome stereotypes and see Arab people as human beings. Jewish Women for a Secular Middle East, having grown out of the larger Jewish Feminist Movement, in response to the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, has been working, as has Najda, on behalf of women political prisoners. Individual from both groups felt a much broader group was necessary to carry on this work more successfully. The obvious advantage is the strength we draw from unity - unity that is perhaps possible at this point only on a single humanitarian issue. It is an important first step.

3. How can we, all of us, give greater attention to the role that women can play in the question of Palestine? One has to raise the issue of why this women's panel was positioned within this conference, on the very last day? How might its earlier presentation have facilitated follow-up with substantial development on the issues raised here today?

4. What can we do to bring more attention to the role of Palestinian women in the occupied territories? Obviously the lines of communication need to be well worked. Utilize contacts, keep in touch. At minimum, exchange newsletters and prepared texts. Be certain to provide organizations in the occupied territories with assistance to offset their costs in providing mailings to you. This is a beginning.

5. How can we be supportive of the changes going on in the lives of Palestinian women? Yes, Palestinian women are trying to preserve a culture, but not in a vacuum. Life didn't end with the onset of occupation, or with the Palestinian woman emigrating to the United States. The Palestinian-American woman is changing, and women in Palestine are undergoing change too. Men's roles are changing in the process too. How can we support these changes?

A subject of growing interest within the American women's movement is the realization of what has come to be called the "feminization of poverty", and with it, the growing realization that it can't be left to men! Socio-economic policies and foreign policies do affect women differently than men. The vast majority of the poor in this country are women, and this feminization of poverty is no small factor in the feminization of politics.

The American women's movement thinks of itself as a forerunner of such movement elsewhere. And yet, we are only now witnessing the realization by American women that what an administration in Washington does, affects them as women, and their children, differently than it affects men. We can witness the dawning of this revolutionary notion among American women by looking at the voting patterns of women over the years. Women in the United States won the right to vote in 1920. From 1920 to 1960 there was no appreciable difference between the way a woman voted and the way her husband voted. At most, it was a scant 2 percentage points difference. And this was to be the case for the first 40 years of women's suffrage in this country. In 1980 something began to happen. There was now a demonstrated 8 percentage point difference between how women voted and how men voted. And in 1982, precipitated by the policies of the Reagan administration, that percentage difference was 21 per cent! All of a sudden, women are coming to the realization that there is something radically wrong here. And isn't it this same kind of awareness that we are witnessing among Palestinian women on the West Bank? These are notions that we have to grasp, come to terms with, and utilize, as we build a broader network of support on issues of common concern.

Ghada Talhami

No national group of women in the Arab world today has undergone the same radical changes of role and function as the women of Palestine. Whether encouraged and mobilized by the Palestine Liberation Organization in the refugee camps or wherever the political influence of the PLO reached, or engulfed by the powerful political currents overtaking the occupied West Bank and Gaza regions, Palestinian women have begun to assume new roles of political and social leadership. These developments, nevertheless, continue to draw the skeptical attention of outside observers both in political and scholarly circles, particularly in the West. To these skeptics, Palestinian women have been simply mobilized and drawn into the national movement, but without any attempt to debate and reform women's societal roles, particularly within the family. One of the major reasons for this attitude is the historic precedent of the struggle of Algerian women. These women emerged from the war of independence enjoying a great deal of male respect and gratitude, but not necessarily male commitment to social change. Subsequently, instead of sharing the fruits of victory, they dutifully resumed their roles as guardians of the family and Islamic values perpetuated by the family. As Judith Stiehm has written:

"Women (in Algeria) were only inadvertently liberated. Their competent responses earned them respect and commendation But when no immediate danger threatened, traditional norms reestablished themselves." 1/

A closer examination of both the Algerian struggle for independence and the ongoing struggle of Palestinian men and women will show clearly the differences and the similarities between these major episodes in the history of the Arab world. The similarities, moreover, will be overshadowed by the differences despite the predominant Islamic context of both movements. Revolutions, or the exchange of one political leadership for another and the dominance of one class over another, do not necessarily guarantee women's equality. In her critique of Frederick Engels, The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State, Ann J. Lane argues against his thesis that "class exploitation, which developed late in human history, is somewhat identical with or connected to oppression of women". 2/ Marx, Engels and Lenin, she concluded, were wrong in postulating a miraculous transformation in the roles of men and women when the revolutionary process finally produces the new socialist man and woman. 3/ Since the Algerian experience resulted in the emergence of a socialist state but not the ideal and equal socialist man and woman, perhaps there is more to gender stratification than revolutions. Two questions must be answered here. Could the roles that women play undergo significant though gradual transformation without the experience of military violence and the carrying of arms? How revolutionary was the Algerian revolution, and what is the alignment of the social and political issues in the Palestinian revolution?

It has been often observed that voter registration was less significant as an indicator of women's progress in the case of the United States than

the formal opportunities which sanctioned women's political participation in the first place. 4/ By applying the concept of "marginality" to the feminine gender, it would be easy to understand how participation, or the elimination of marginality of the gender, is the key to feminine liberation. Gender differentiation in politics could only be removed through female participation in major causes of the day. It is through these activities, such as the abolition movement, the trade union movement and progressivism, that American women established their leadership in reform and social movements in the United States. 5/ These activities were not electoral activities, but rather opportunities for political participation on the local level long before the extension of voting rights to women. As Michael Lipsky has pointed out, protest, or championing of causes, is "the only effective strategy for political influence among resource-poor groups". 6/

It is precisely in this area, namely the extended opportunity for political participation, that Palestinian women differ from the Algerians. Although the Algerian national struggle preceded the 1952 Revolution, feminine participation was limited to the 1952 uprising. Women enlisted in the war effort spontaneously and without any thought as to the outcome of their enlistment. If there has been any debate on the question of women's liberation before 1952, it was all one-sided. French writers and colonial advocates who constantly denigrated Islamic culture as an apologia for their mastery over Algeria singled out Islamic family law and the treatment of women, particularly veiling and polygamy, as the worst examples of backwardness and retardation. Yet, of all facets of Islamic Law, only family law was left to the jurisdiction of the Shari'a Courts. The constant barrage against Islamic family institutions and the French disinclination to alter these by the force of law led not only to the survival of this aspect of traditional Islamic culture but also to its defence by the majority of Algerians. Indeed, when belated French overtures towards Algerian women were made during the struggle for independence, the women, just like Algerian men, turned a deaf ear. De Gaulle's offer of voting rights to the women of Algeria in 1958, French legislation abolishing the practice of divorce by repudiation, setting the minimum female marriage age at 15, as well as efforts by settler organizations such as the Feminine Solidarity Movement, to encourage the abandonment of the veil, failed to win the support of the female population. The assault on the traditional institutions and age-old practices affecting women produced a backlash and a tenacious resolve to protect and preserve all vestiges of the traditional Islamic culture. 7/

What is significant here, of course, is the psychological factor which produces this response to colonial pressure for change. What needs to be examined is the total effect of situations of colonial and racial dominance on people, particularly women, who are confronted with the necessity of change. Why certain situations produce a defensive reaction against change and others a willingness, either conscious or unconscious, to reform should also be probed. In her analysis of the Algerian response to colonial pressures and efforts at cultural domination, Kay Boals, using Clifford Geertz' terms, has demonstrated how religiousness, or the previous "unquestioning acceptance of the traditional way of life" is replaced by

"religious-mindedness ... (when) faith becomes ideology". 8/ In the case of Algeria, this led to a particular perception of the traditional culture and the role of women as the guardians of its values:

"Algerian male revolutionary consciousness emphasized not the content of the tradition, but rather its function as a symbol of identity and pride vis-à-vis the dominant culture (French). What this meant with regard to male-female relations was that the revolutionaries lauded women and the family for having preserved and passed on the Algerian cultural heritage, accused the French of having tried to corrupt and undermine that heritage, and stressed the need to build a modern society "on Islamic bases". This pull in two opposed directions ... is at the heart of the revolutionary's dilemma, a dilemma that has proved to be particularly painful in the realm of male-female relations." 9/

The French colonial policy of cultural assimilation meant the denial of the validity of the Islamic laws, as well as the Arab-Islamic culture in general. The Algerian response to these powerful assaults was a revolution caused mainly by French take-over of lands, but also expressed in terms of an Arab-Islamic assertion. The need to liberate women and alter their status was not a major issue and may indeed have conflicted with the primary elements of this assertion. Algerian literature, particularly poetry, from the revolutionary era amply demonstrates this sequence of priorities. In a volume entitled The Revolution in Algerian Literature, Algerian poets strongly praised the Islamic religion and the Arabic language as the primary pillars of Algerian society, and only occasionally referred to women and their heroism during the revolution. Muhammad 'Id Khalifah lauded the traditional role of mothers as the pillars of Algerian society and sources of domestic comfort for both husbands and children. He then marvelled at how the Jameelahs of the Revolution (Jameelah Bouhared and Jameelah Boupacha) surpassed the men in their fortitude and capacity for suffering. Muhammad al-Hadi al-Sinoussie, on the other hand, reiterated the theme repeated by all the poets in this collection by asserting that Algeria was unified behind a movement of two fronts, one centered around the preservation of Islam, the other around the preservation of the Arabic language (lughat al-dhad). Muhammad Abu al-Qassim Khimar praised Jameelah Bouhared and assured her that all in Algeria were ready to sacrifice their lives for her. He then claimed that "the daughters of Algeria are no longer lost, in an existence devoid of the rays of the sun". 10/

When independence finally came, women's public role in Algeria began to diminish. Despite Ben Bella's revolutionary slogans and women's numerical superiority to men (by 1962, women were 65 per cent of the population), women's representatives in the national parliament were reduced from 10 in the first Algerian Parliament to only 2 in the second. 11/ Although Algerian women attended some socialist congresses outside of Algeria, none attended the first congress of the Workers Federation (Union générale des travailleurs algériens) or were invited to sit on its Executive Committee on the grounds of their illiteracy. 12/ The Women's Union, Union nationale des femmes algériennes (UNFA) was unable to hold a

national congress until 1966 and remained mainly centered in Algiers and other urban centres. Those women who tried to join the Front de liberation nationale, the national ruling party of Algeria, were spurned. The only visible and successful event mounted by UNFA was a huge demonstration on 8 March 1965 on International Women's Day. Boumedienne's coup d'état in that same year further diminished their chances for liberation. 13/ In a well-reported statement before UNFA on 10 March 1966, Boumedienne dashed women's hopes for equality and a share in power by proclaiming that women cannot be given equality of employment with the males. Women of Algeria, he warned, should not "imitate women of the West ... Our society is ... Islamic and socialist ... morality must be respected". 14/ The unemployment gripping Algeria at the time provoked Boumedienne to exclaim:

"There is a problem of unemployment. When there is a job available, should we give it to a man or a woman? Should we leave the man at home and let the woman work? 15/

For a society with a majority of widows and fatherless households as a result of the war, this was a particularly cruel blow. Today, less than 3 per cent of the working population of Algeria is female, and government support for women does not extend beyond making compulsory free education available to all. Some arbitrary legislation on behalf of women during the French period, such as reducing the sentence for female adultery and abolishing the male right of divorce by repudiation, have been restored. These reversals were possible, as Stiehm has summed up, because when women were mobilized during the battle for survival, the honour code which governs most male-female relations in the Arab world was only suspended, but not necessarily altered. 16/

In the case of Palestinian women, their enlistment in the cause of national survival has been preceded by almost half a century of steady activism. Even though the women's participation gained international attention after the founding of the PLO, women had previously participated in the national struggle against Zionist settlement and immigration. Strictly political and limited to members of the upper classes, these activities by the Palestinian women created a general feminist consciousness and led to the Palestinian perception of women as active members of society. 17/ Those early pathfinders who led demonstrations in the 1920s and 1930s were not necessarily oblivious to the changing consciousness of Arab women in other countries, but they continued to pursue national goals and stress the uniqueness of the Palestinian case. 18/

Furthermore, the Palestinian national struggle molded and shaped the women's movement both as a result of its secular nature and its long time-span. As the national movement developed, a well-defined response to the increasing Israeli assault on what remained of Arab Palestine, and as the goal of national liberation receded further in the distance, significant changes of function and role began to overtake the women of Palestine. These changes, moreover, differed from one area of Palestinian concentration to the next, so that one cannot speak of uniform changes but of different transformations affecting women in the diaspora, women in the West Bank and Gaza, and women within Israel proper.

Unlike the French régime in Algeria, the Israeli conquest and usurpation of Arab lands and the eventual occupation of all of Palestine were not aimed at imposing the dominant culture of the conqueror over the conquered population. The elements of cultural domination and cultural assimilation were totally missing because Zionist settlers sought to replace the Palestinians, and not necessarily to extend Israeli rule over them. Israeli settlers and successive administrations felt no threat from the direction of the Palestinians' religious loyalties but feared the assertion of Arab identity and Palestinian nationalism. In his study entitled Palestine: The Suppression of an Idea, Muhammad Hallaj clearly grasps the significance of this Israeli strategy by first illustrating Israel's denial of the term Palestine as used by its pre-1948 subjects, who were reduced legally to the status of Muslims, Christian and Druze religious communities. In its rationalization of its conquest of Palestine, Zionist ideology has attempted persistently to present its establishment of a Jewish State in historic Palestine as "a land without a people, for a people without a land". The attack on Arab identity and Palestinian consciousness in the occupied West Bank and Gaza since 1967 has taken the form of an extensive plan to vest control of the school system in an Israeli military officer attached to the Military Governor. This officer controls budgets, teacher appointments, textbooks and curriculum, using primarily official censorship as a means of control. 19/

Naturally, the Palestinian response has been mostly a nationalist one, and since Palestine was always a multi-religious society (one third of Palestinians are Christians), there was no attempt to assert Islamic traditional values and the traditional culture. These simply did not come under attack. Palestinian poetry, for instance, echoes a constant theme of attachment to the land and the Palestinian identity. Mahmoud Darwish in his "Identity Card" insisted: "Write down I am an Arab/Fifty thousand is my number." Harun Hashim Rashid repeated: "Palestinian is my name/In a clear script/On all battlefields/I have inscribed my name/Eclipsing all other titles." Samih al-Qassim, on the other hand, expressed love for the beleaguered land: "As long as I own a foot of land/As long as I own an olive tree/As long as Arabic is still spoken in folklore and poetry/I'll wage in the face of my enemies/ ... A scourging war against the enemies of the sun." 20/

This predominant feature of the Palestinian nationalist movement did not pose a severe dilemma centered on the issue of female liberation. On the contrary, the severity and time-span of the national struggle for survival dictated the need to mobilize all segments of Palestinian society, including women. Women were said to be particularly receptive to the idea of participation in the national struggle since the Palestinian revolution offered them a chance to escape the limitations of feminine existence. In an analysis of the poetry of Fadwa Touqan, noted Palestinian female poet, Munther 'Amer, writing in the official organ of the PLO, Filastin al-Thawra, elaborated on this idea by quoting some of her pre-1967 poetry and post-1967 verses. Before coming face to face with the Israeli occupation of her hometown, Nablus, in 1967, Touqan expressed emotions of sorrow and pessimism over purely personal losses. She wrote: "My life is made up of tears/And a broken heart/And yearnings, and a volume of verse, and a lute/...

I resort to poetry to console my sole/And I paint the passions of a slaughtered life." Death was always something that led to a cave of nothingness. This despondency, surmised 'Amer, resulted from leading the life of an Eastern woman, an unfulfilled secret romance, and the loss of two brothers. In her later poetry, death became martyrdom and a milepost on the long road to liberation. 21/ Describing Palestinian freedom fighters who carried on with the struggle from outside the occupied territories, she wrote: "You are the prettiest bird to fly out of captivity/You are the roses growing from within the flame/You are the rain falling despite depression and defeat/You taught us how the drowned can sing." 22/ Thus, Fadwa Touqan changed from a romantic poet to a committed artist, and therefore liberated herself from the confines of a restricted feminine existence. There is even recognition of this change in her own verse in a piece titled "A Letter to Two Children on the East Bank". She wrote: "My beloved children/Across the river/I have many stories to tell./Not the stories of Sinbad,/Not the story of Geni and the Hunter,/Of Alladin and the princess,/But many new ones,/Stories that I fear to tell/Fearing they may/Put out the light in your world,/ ... Horrible stories of the New Nazis/In our land/That may turn your childish hair gray." 23/

Touqan's liberation cum politicization was to be repeated over and over again, particularly in the areas where the PLO sought to mobilize the female population. The General Union of Palestinian Women (GUPW) was among the first institutions to be organized by the PLO in 1965. 24/ Today, not only does GUPW nominate members to the Palestine National Council (the Parliament) but three of its prominent members sit on the Council's Central Committee created in 1973 to implement resolutions of that body. 25/ The role of women in the PLO was clearly spelled out for the first time in the 11th meeting of the Palestine National Council. The aims of the Palestinian revolution were spelled out as the support of workers, peasant masses, and were:

"To promote and develop the role of the Palestinian woman in the struggle at social, cultural and economic levels and to ensure that she plays her part in all fields of struggle." 26/

As one of the major cadres of the PLO, GUPW was charged with overseeing most of the infrastructure of that organization such as schools, hospitals, literacy programmes, orphanages and extensive work programmes. 27/ Those women, who were recruited for the military operations of the PLO inside the occupied territories, were **expected to behave according to a specific code of conduct that did not distinguish between man or woman.** Fatmeh Birnawi, who was the first woman to be arrested by the Israeli authorities after the 1967 War, served 10 years in jail and was expelled after her release. In describing her court trial later on, she explained that she and all the prisoners who stood trial with her, a total of six men, refused to recognize the court and plead for mercy as was the policy of the PLO. 28/

The PLO did not discriminate against the women of the revolution in providing equal education and employment opportunities for them. Women predominated in the ranks of the sewing and embroidery section of SAMED, the PLO's economic and industrial co-operative, and were trained to combat illiteracy among residents of the camps. Significantly, in 1970, the co-operative listed the following items among its objectives: absorbing and training the largest number of the sons and daughters of the martyrs, and giving preference to sons and daughters of the martyrs in employment. 29/ Some embroidery shops were named after female martyrs such as Muntaha al-Hourani. 30/ Courses for the training of female instructors to combat illiteracy often featured such dignitaries as Chairman Arafat at graduation time. 31/

GUPW, headquartered in Beirut, established branches in several Arab countries and wherever Palestinians predominated. Some of these Palestinian organizers occasionally seized the opportunity of annual meetings to launch a serious criticism of GUPW's effectiveness among the female population. At one such meeting in 1980, the head of GUPW in the Syrian Arab Republic warned against the creeping elitism which is affecting many of the branches. Attendance at that meeting, she complained, was visibly controlled by GUPW-affiliated women who were in no way representative of the common people in the camps. Representatives from Kuwait complained against political restrictions on their activities and a social environment singularly inhospitable to women. 32/ GUPW, although expected to take a political stand as befits an official cadre of the PLO, often singled out the women of Palestine for special praise. In 1974 the second conference of GUPW saluted Palestinian martyrs, Arab martyrs and Palestinian prisoners in Israeli and Arab jails, then added:

"We salute the struggle of our sisters in the occupied land and Jordan, and reaffirm that the organization of the efforts of the Palestinian women is a basic pillar in the battle for liberation." 33/

The PLO's leadership was very explicit in encouraging the political involvement of women and their participation in the struggle. Although not focusing on the social problems of women, the PLO often referred to the need for a progressive attitude towards them. Abu Iyad, Arafat's second in command, addressed the Second Conference of GUPW and posed:

"The double challenge of the Palestinian woman - from forces without who wish to liquidate the revolution and from forces within who underestimate the woman - as revolutionary ... For the woman, in addition to her carrying all the responsibilities in the challenging battle, has a special battle, and a special challenge which she faces. This is the battle of all the conservative minds which attempt to belittle the women's struggle and make her only a person restricted to the house." 34/

After the destruction of the PLO's infrastructure in Lebanon, much of which was manged and controlled by GUPW, the women continued their efforts to regroup and reorganize. Relocating GUPW with the other organs of the PLO to Tunis, however, did not mean that the process of change and

transformation ended for the women who were left behind. Those poorer women who remained behind in the teeming refugee camps of Lebanon were to undergo further role changes because most of the men were evacuated. More than ever before, these women became heads of households responsible for the upkeep of families. Reports from Beirut indicated that these women were singled out for punishment by the Phalangists and Israeli forces because they continued to organize acts of political resistance in the camps. 35/

The most radical transformation in the role of women, nevertheless, has taken place in the occupied West Bank and Gaza. Because of Israeli pressure against the emergence of male political resistance, and because of the expanding need of the local population for social services traditionally provided by women's organizations, the women are assuming roles of political and social leadership unheard of prior to 1967. The Arab Women's Union, a linear descendant of the original Palestine Women's Union founded in the 1920s, and its work committees attempt not only to organize women from all social levels but to sustain the local population and stiffen their back. Women find themselves today catapulted into positions of leadership.

In contrast to their nationalist but separate effort against British and Zionist politics before 1948, after 1967 the women participated in acts of political resistance on an equal footing with the men. Women were noticeably absent from the first general congress of Palestinian popular forces which met in Nablus on 1 August 1931 to discuss recent British sanctioning of the carrying of arms by Jewish immigrants. Delegations from every Palestine town and major village failed to turn out a single female. 36/ But when women were faced with the Israeli act to annex Jerusalem in the wake of the 1967 War, they acted differently. Not only did they mount an effort of their own through their own organizations, but they co-signed all the major declarations by various sectors of the Palestinian community. First there was a memorandum from the "West Bank women" protesting "this illegal decision to annex Jerusalem" and declaring "their support for the attitude of the notables of Jerusalem ... in their memorandum and their statement defending the Arab character of Jerusalem. The women of the West Bank express their proud appreciation for the concern of these men for the Holy Places, and call on the Arab people ... to support the Islamic Council (of Jerusalem) and its resolutions". This was signed by a large number of women, including two prominent Christian feminist leaders, Raymonda Tawil and Hilda al-Qarh. There were other memoranda by the women of the towns of Ramallah, al-Rireh, and the women's organizations. 37/ More importantly, a memorandum submitted to Sheik 'Abdul Hamid al-Sayih (President of the Shari'a Appeals Court) on the same occasion by the Muslim clergy and inhabitants of Nablus was co-signed by 'Andalib al-'Amad, President of the Arab Women's Union in Nablus, and 'Issam 'Abd al-Hadi, the future president of GUPW in Beirut. Another memo protesting the annexation was presented to the Secretary-General of the United Nations by the notables of Bethlehem and was co-signed by Sarah 'Annab on behalf of the Arab Women's Union in Bethlehem. Finally, a strongly-worded appeal to the residents of the West Bank by "West Bank

leaders in the Muhafazas of Jerusalem, Nablus and Hebron" calling on the people to resist the annexation act was signed by prominent religious leaders such as Bishop Hilarion Capucci of the Greek Melkite Church, Bishop Najeb Qub'ain of the Anglican Church, the last Arab mayor of Jerusalem, Rouhi al-Khatib, and several women. These included 'Andalib al-'Amad, 'Issam 'Abd al-Hadi and Zuleikha al-Shihabi, who founded the Palestine Women's Union in 1921. 38/ A formal appeal addressed to the President of the Security Council on the occasion of debating the Palestine question by the world organization in 1973 also featured not only representatives of municipalities, religious bodies, labour and professional groups, but women's organizations as well. This latter group included Faiza 'Abdul Majid of the Federation of Jerusalem and West Bank Women, 'Andalib al-'Amad of the Nablus Union, and Samiha Khalil, President of In'ash al-Usra, one of the West Bank's largest social welfare organization. 39/

The most significant development concerning the status and political role of women on the West Bank and Gaza, nevertheless, is related to their growing function as administrators of social welfare institutions. These indigenous and charitable institutions came into being after 1948 to minister to the first wave of homeless Palestinians. Because the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East insists on verification of refugee status as a qualification for receiving aid, the majority of impoverished Palestinians have to resort to these indigenous institutions. Rivalled only by the lesser services of foreign and church-related institutions, these women's indigenous charitable organizations support hospitals, maternity wards, clinics, health and literacy programmes and vocational training. This network of indigenous organizations spent about \$4.5 million in 1977 alone. Their services even include activities of a quasi-political nature such as monthly payments to families of the martyred and the imprisoned, medical services, free education and college scholarships to children of political prisoners. Of a total of 21 such institutions listed in a recent study, 12 were run entirely by women and three branches of the Red Crescent Society were predominantly female-administered. 40/

Most of these institutions were started by genteel women as volunteer social welfare organizations. Women such as Hind al-Husseini who began operating an orphanage for the young survivors of the Deir Yassin massacre in her own home exemplify this upper-class volunteerism. Volunteer activities, as all feminists agree, are the most natural breeding grounds for the development of political and feminist consciousness. 41/ Furthermore, there seems to be a clear awareness of the connection between volunteerism and political consciousness on the part of Palestinian feminist activists. One of the topics discussed at a conference entitled: "Arab Women and Zionist Designs", convened at Aden and attended by an official delegation of GUPW, was "Volunteerism in the occupied homeland and women's involvement". 42/

The best representative of this brand of social welfare activism is Samiha Khalil, President of In'ash al-Usra ("Sustenance of the Family"). Services provided by this institution include aid to families of war

victims and political prisoners, the revival of folkloric studies designed to preserve the Palestinian cultural heritage, and vocational training programmes. The most unique feature of this institution is its self-help programme which develops cottage industries employing between 700 and 800 women. The produce of these women, mostly agricultural in nature, is marketed by In'ash al-USra. Samiha Khalil, moreover, knows well why her programmes are a success: "The need of our people and their determination to stay in their country." 43/ All her projects are designed to sustain the female population and to make them as independent of the Israeli economic sector as possible. Goods produced by peasant women in their own homes enable them to boycott Israeli goods, pursue dignified occupations and receive a decent wage. The alternative would be to have these unskilled women contracted for the most menial and degrading jobs offered by the Israelis. 44/

These charitable institutions, in essence, act as government agencies and departments. Within their departments today are found the embryonic ministerial structure that could easily serve the inhabitants' health, education and welfare needs. A recent study of the West Bank's and Gaza's capacity for self-rule considered the social welfare institutions, along with the municipalities, as the only viable quasi-political institutions remaining after 17 years of Israeli occupation. 45/ The type of experience gained by these volunteer women is incalculable, and, for some of them, it has already led to the exercise of pure political power. Samiha Khalil for instance, became a member of the all-male Committee of National Guidance which co-ordinates national resistance to the forces of occupation. Subsequently, she was placed under town arrest by the Israeli military authorities. 46/

Palestinian women living under Israeli rule since 1948, on the other hand, present a stark contrast to Palestinian women in the West Bank and Gaza and those associated with the PLO. Despite Israeli claims to the contrary, the women remain anchored in the traditional setting of the patriarchal family. This was largely because most Israeli actions on behalf of women were seen as an attack on the values of the traditional system and provoked the same defensive reaction as was the case in Algeria. In an unprecedented move, the Israelis have attempted to reform the legal status of women by official decree. The passage of the Women's Equal Rights Laws, 5711, in 1951, gave women equal rights with men before the law. It stipulated that the minimum marriage age for women be set at 17, abolished the role of the marriage guardian, abolished polygamy and required a woman's consent before the dissolution of marriage. Yet Israeli Muslims found numerous ways of bypassing and circumventing these laws. Moreover, they never accepted the right of Israel to intervene in their religious laws, even when reminded that more sweeping changes, such as the 1956 abolishing of Shari'a courts in Egypt, had been instituted in Arab countries. 47/ In a rare article discussing the changing status of Arab women in Israel, a leading feminist from Nazareth, In'am Zu'bi, enumerated the advantages of a major health and national insurance programmes extended to the Arab areas within Israel, as well as legislative decrees on behalf of women. She also admitted that Arab women living in Israel did not acquire higher degrees and were lagging behind women in other Arab countries.

Arab women have yet to elect a representative to the Israeli Parliament, she added. Zu'bi's defensive tone came out clearly, however:

"To travel safely along that road, we need a long breath, patience and a lot of common sense ... Our traditions are very dear to our people; so we must avoid doing things which are repugnant to them. Our role in that respect is much more difficult than that of the Western woman. We have to develop and live a modern life of our own, while at the same time preserving the good traditions of which we are so proud." 48/

Thus, change in the case of Palestinian women varies according to the peculiarities of time and place. Whether transformed by the harsh political and economic realities of life under occupation, or mobilized and challenged by a national political authority such as the PLO, Palestinian women seem to be deeply conscious of feminist issues yet just as determined to postpone the struggle for feminine rights. 'Issam 'Abd al-Hadi, President of GUPW, expressed this order of priority clearly during the Aden conference on "Arab Women and Zionist Designs":

"The Palestinian woman has been convinced since the 1920s that the cause of feminine development and liberation is closely linked to the cause of liberating her country from colonialism and various forms of oppression and exploitation ... She has therefore placed the general rule of protecting the homeland against Zionist and colonial aggression above any other consideration.

"The Palestinian woman, just as any other woman in Arab society, suffers from certain problems ... but she willingly places national issues above other issues." 49/

Notes

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2/ Ann J. Lane, "Women in Society: A Critique of Frederick Engels", Liberating Women's History: Theoretical and Critical Essays, Berenice A. Carroll, ed. (Urbana, Ill., Univ. of Illinois Press, 1976), p.15.

3/ Ibid., p. 23.

4/ Virginia Sapiro, The Political Integration of Women: Roles, Socialization and Politics (Urbana, Ill., University of Illinois Press, 1983), p. 9.

5/ Ibid., pp. 5 and 18.

- 6/ Ibid., pp. 115 and 120.
- 7/ Stiehm, op.cit., pp. 232-234.
- 8/ Kay Boals, "The Politics of Cultural Liberation: Male-Female Relations in Algeria", Liberating Women's History, p. 195.
- 9/ Ibid., pp. 203-204.
- 10/ Salah Mu'ayyad, ed., Al-Thawra fi al-adab al-Jaza'iri (The Revolution in Algerian Literature) (Maktabat al-Sharikah al-Jaza'iriyah, 1964), pp. 16, 23 and 141.
- 11/ Stiehm, op.cit., p. 236.
- 12/ Arslan Humbraci, Algeria: A Revolution That Failed (New York, Frederick A. Braeger, 1966), p. 250.
- 13/ David and Marina Ottaway, Algeria: The Politics of a Socialist Revolution (Berkeley, Calif., The University of California Press, 1970), pp. 38 and 127.
- 14/ Humbraci, op.cit., pp. 269-270.
- 15/ Ottaway, op.cit., p. 209.
- 16/ Stiehm, op.cit., pp. 230 and 236-237.
- 17/ See author's article "Palestinian women: The case for political liberation", Arab Perspectives, vol. 4 (January 1984), pp. 6-11.
- 18/ Munirah Nasif, "Madame Fatma Nimet Rachid recoit la délégation féminine palestinienne", La Réforme, 9 January 1946.
- 19/ Muhammad Hallaj, Palestine: The Suppression of an Idea, Occasional Papers, No. 8 (Belmont, Mass., Association of Arab-American University Graduates, 1983), pp. 8-9.
- 20/ Ibid., pp. 19-20.
- 21/ Munther 'Amer, "Mawdhou'at al-istishhad fi al-shi'ir al-Filastini", (The Subject of Martyrdom in Palestinian Poetry), Filastin al-Thawra, No. 329 (12 May 1980), pp. 40-42.
- 22/ "From the resistance poets", Association of Arab-American University Graduates Newsletter, vol. XI, No. 4 (December 1978), p. 12.
- 23/ Fadwa Touqan, "From a letter to two children on the East Bank", Ibid., vol. XII, No. 1 (March 1979), p. 11.
- 24/ Amal Moussa, "Israeli and Palestinian women speak out", Palestine/Israel Bulletin, vol. 7, No. 3 (19 April 1984), p. 3.

25/ See author's article in Arab Perspectives, p. 8, and Rashid Hamid, "What is the PLO?" Journal of Palestine Studies, vol. IV, No. 4 (summer 1975), p. 103.

26/ "Aims of the political programme of the Palestinian revolution adopted by the 11th Palestine National Congress, Cairo, January 12, 1973," in Journal of Palestine Studies, vol. II, No. 3 (spring 1973), p. 170.

27/ Moussa, "Israeli and Palestinian Women", p. 2.

28/ "Barnawi speaks of Palestinian resistance, imprisonment", Association of Arab-American University Graduates Newsletter, vol. XII, No. 1 (March 1979), p. 11.

29/ Nabil Badran, "Al-Tajribah al-ijtima'iyah al-iqtisadiyah lil al-thawra al-Filastiniyah," (The social and economic aspects of the Palestinian revolution) Filastin al-Thawra commemorative issue (1 January 1979), pp. 262-263.

30/ Samyah al-Nunu, "Al-Turath al-sha'bi al-Filastini", (The Palestinian cultural heritage), SAMED al-Iqtisadi, vol. 3, No. 21 (October 1980), p. 168.

31/ "Akhbar SAMED", (News of SAMED), SAMED al-Iqtisadi, vol. 3, No. 21 (October 1980), p. 181.

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33/ "The political communiqué of the Second Conference of the General Union of Palestinian Women held in Beirut 5-20 August 1974", Journal of Palestine Studies, vol. IV, No. 1 (autumn 1974), p. 205.

34/ "Woman as revolutionary - Arab reports and analysis", Ibid., pp. 169-171.

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42/ "Qadhiyat al-watan awallan", (First, the National Question), Filastin al-Thawra, No. 493 (28 January 1984), pp. 28-29.

43/ Nakhleh, The West Bank, pp. 35-37.

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45/ Nakhleh, The West Bank, p. 40. Despite Nakhleh's outstanding analysis of West Bank political institutions, he is oblivious to the changing role of women in that context.

46/ "Sameeha Khalil 'Shall Not Give Up' ", ADC Bi-Weekly Reports, No. 24 (16-30 April 1984), p. 7.

47/ Aharon Layish, "Muslim religious jurisdiction in Israel", Asian and African Studies (Annual of the Israeli Oriental Society), Vol. 1 (1965), pp. 59-63, 68-69.

48/ Enam Zu'bi, "The changing status of Arab women in Israel", Kidma (Israel Journal of Development), Vol. 2, No. 7 (1975), pp. 31-33. See also in same issue a view of a Druze woman, Hourieh Sha'ami Bearani, "Druze women on the move", pp. 34-35.

49/ "Qadhiyat al-watan awallan", p. 29.

F. Strategies for NGO Collaboration and Networking

Mr. Hani Sambar

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are, increasingly, gaining importance and recognition. In most cases, such organizations possess the special vitality and spirit which are often lacking in government-run institutions. Voluntary organizations, run by committed and dedicated individuals, reaffirm one's belief in humanity.

Non-governmental organizations are also prospering in Canada. Despite the difficult economic times and the rising unemployment. NGOs are finding it easier to raise money. According to the Canadian Council for International Cooperation, a co-ordinating and information body linking 90 NGOs, the overall trend for NGOs has been very positive. Beside fund-raising, public interest in international affairs is also increasing.

These positive trends make it easier for NGOs to get the support and co-operation of the general public.

The Canadian Arab Federation, which I represent today, is an NGO. In order to better understand the development of the Federation, it is important to understand the development of the Arab community in Canada.

The first Arab immigrant arrived in Canada in 1882. We can discern two distinct periods in the immigration of Arabs to Canada:

1. The formative period extending from 1901 to 1911, which brought the first wave of immigrants. These immigrants were attracted to Canada for reasons such as:

Perceived freedom and economic opportunities in Canada;

Unfavourable economic conditions in their homeland;

Turkish domination of the Arab world;

Religious alienation;

Family and kinship ties;

Search for adventure.

From 1911 till 1946 there was minimal immigration of Arabs to Canada.

2. The post-war period from 1946 till the present brought a greater influx of Arab immigrants. Immigration was specially large in the 1960s and the 1970s. Some of the main reasons for immigrating to Canada were:

The Arab-Israeli conflict;

Radical political and social changes in a number of Arab States in the 1950s and 1960s.

1. Formation: The Canadian Arab Federation (CAF) was established in October 1967 by three Arab societies from Toronto and London as a reaction to the June 1967 setback. In this respect, its origin is similar to that of the Association of Arab-American University Graduates (AAUG) which was founded at the time that there was a pressing need for establishing an umbrella organization that would co-ordinate the activities of the various Arab Canadian organizations.

2. Aims and goals: The objectives of the CAF as stated in the present constitution resembles very closely the ones that were adopted at the founding meeting in 1967. They read as follows:

(a) The unification, co-ordination and co-operation of Arab societies in Canada;

(b) To foster the identity of the Arab individual and community in Canada by creating programmes and activities which provide information about the history and culture of the Arab people;

(c) To maintain and strengthen ties between Arab communities in Canada and the Arab homeland, by promoting the exchange of cultural, educational and social activities;

(d) To encourage mutual understanding and friendship between the Canadian and Arab peoples as well as between Arab Canadians and other Canadians;

(e) To disseminate information in Canada about and encourage support for Arab causes in Canada and the Arab homeland;

(f) To establish relief funds to alleviate suffering in Canada and the Arab homeland;

(g) To provide assistance and information to new Arab immigrants to Canada.

It is evident from the above that the CAF is viewed as a liaison body between various Arab organizations and communities, and as the only representative body that espouses and expresses the views of the Arab community on a national level and safeguards their interests. The objective of fostering mutual understanding between the Canadian and Arab

people is a necessary corollary since any distortions about the Arab people would jeopardize the status of Arab Canadians in the eyes of fellow Canadians and make them easy, visible targets for bigots, Zionists and other racists.

From three societies in two cities in 1967, the number of societies affiliated with the CAF has increased to 23 societies in 13 major cities. However, this progress was strewn with difficulties and crises and has still to overcome many obstacles.

Half of the societies affiliated with the CAF are still in their formative years and are undergoing drastic changes. Most of the societies have their membership made up of new immigrants and have been unsuccessful in involving the Canadian-born Arabs in their activities. Below is a list of the major problems encountered by Arab Canadian organizations:

1. Numerical weakness. The Arab community in Canada numbers around 100,000, that is, about 0.4 per cent of the total Canadian population. This makes it one of the smallest ethnic groups in Canada.
2. Geographical dispersion. The size of Canada and the fact that Arabs do not reside in one neighbourhood in the major cities weaken the links between the Arab communities across Canada and even amongst the members of the community in the same city.
3. Newly arrived immigrants. Most of the members of the Arab community are recent immigrants to Canada and they are still adjusting to the Canadian way of life. Moreover, many shun Arab organizations and stay in family, clan or village circles.
4. Assimilation. Because many recent immigrants possess skills and professions they tend to assimilate into the Canadian milieu quickly, thus weakening their links with community organizations that might not meet their new expectations.
5. Generation gap. A huge gap exists between Canadian-born Arabs - descendants of the first wave of immigrants at the turn of the century - and the recent immigrants. Bridging this gap is a major challenge for most organizations.

In addition to the above internal factors which inhibit the full growth and development of Arab Canadian organizations, there are external obstacles created by the Canadian environment which makes the work of these organizations more difficult. The most acute of those problems is that of the Arab "image" and its related social and political problems.

This slanted image of the Arabs is generated by the following agencies in society:

1. Mass media. As in the United States, the maligning of the Arabs in the mass media is a daily occurrence. The roots of this anti-Arab attitude can be traced to:

Historical prejudice that has its political and religious origins in the Crusades and Western colonialism;

American media influence which accounts for the bulk of the news received by Canadians;

The influence of the Zionist lobby in Canada, which exceeds per capita that of the Zionist lobby in the United States.

2. Education. Canadian school textbooks frequently depict the Arab in a bad light and contain inaccuracies about the Arabs and their culture. This was verified by a study conducted by Professors Kenny and Blackburn of the University of Toronto in 1975, of Canadian social science textbooks. The damaging effects of these education textbooks (combined with the mass media) on Canadian youth can be seen in the results of research conducted by two Ontario high school teachers in 1977. The study which was conducted on behalf of the Federal Government surveyed the attitudes of high school students in Ontario towards various ethnic groups and concluded that the greatest prejudice and animosity was reserved for the Arabs.

3. Church. Biblical stories, pictures and geography continue to provide successive generations of North American children with probably their most prolonged exposure to images of the Middle East. A study of church school textbooks conducted by Professor Sharon Abu-Laban of the University of Alberta in 1973-1974 found that the Jewish people in Palestine are portrayed as an unbroken historic entity extending from Old Testament times to the present. Little distinction is made between the ancient Hebrews and the modern State of Israel. Modern Arabs are seldom discussed in church textbooks and any coverage given them is brief and negative.

As can be seen from the above, the problems facing Arab groups in Canada are tremendous, but I strongly believe that they are not insurmountable. While there are obstacles facing us, there are also special opportunities which are provided by the social and legal fabric which could enable us, if well utilized, to overcome these obstacles. I will now attempt to address these Canadian issues.

These opportunities basically emanate from the fact that Canada is a bilingual country of two founding nations, and has a policy of multiculturalism.

The Canadian "British North-American" Act guarantees that English and French are the official languages of Canada and that they have equality of status in all institutions of the Parliament of Canada and the Government of Canada. In Canada, close to 30 per cent of the population use French as the official language and they are concentrated in the provinces of Quebec and New Brunswick. French Canadians have developed a distinct identity and culture and they have been asserting themselves more strongly in the last 10 years. French Canadians, feeling exploited as a minority in a North-American English sea, have been more responsive to causes of third world peoples. It is no wonder, then, that we find less prejudice against the Arabs and greater sympathy for the Palestinian cause in the mass media and education system in Quebec.

The ruling party in Quebec, the Parti Quebecois, advocates the creation of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza, while we do not find any major party or union in English Canada that even recognizes the national rights of the Palestinian people. A Gallup Poll conducted in Canada in December 1973 illustrates this point succinctly. Amongst English Canadians, 26 per cent expressed sympathy for Israel while only 5 per cent upheld the Arab position. On the other hand, in Quebec only 13 per cent expressed sympathy for Israel while again 5 per cent expressed sympathy for the Arabs.

It can be seen from the above example that support for Israel is twice as high in English Canada as it is in French Canada. This impacts favourable the Arab organizations in Quebec and makes it easier for them to mobilize the Arab community and to develop their programmes in a substantially less hostile environment.

The Federal Government's multicultural policy seeks to ensure:

1. The equality of all members of society, whatever their heritage, in terms of enjoyment of rights and fulfillment of obligations.
2. The freedom of access to public services and facilities for participation in recreation and social intercourse.

3. The right of individuals and groups to maintain and develop their ethnocultural heritage, including language, and to enlist government assistance towards that end, if necessary.

This policy provides an opportunity for Arab Canadian groups to enlist the support of government agencies to develop social and cultural activities which would involve a greater number of Arab Canadians and provide them with channels of communication that will reach a larger segment of the Arab community and the Canadian society at large. This policy also gives Arab Canadian groups the opportunity to be represented on various government commissions and boards which can be used as a forum from which information can be channelled to alter the distorted image of the Arabs.

Both federal and provincial multicultural policies have made it easy for Arab Canadian groups to register as tax-deductible charitable organizations. Two cases in point are the Arab Community Centre of Toronto and the United Holy Land Fund of Canada - two groups that have acquired charitable status, on a provincial and federal level respectively.

Since the Arab community in Canada is numerically small, it becomes doubly important that Arab groups build strong relationships with other non-Arab groups, so that their influence can be extended beyond their community. Special attention in Canada should be devoted to religious groups and other ethnocultural groups. We have attempted in the Canadian Arab Federation to maintain good relationship with other ethnic groups through our membership in the Council of National Ethnocultural Organizations of Canada, which encompasses 35 national ethnocultural groups. These contacts have been useful in making some of our concerns and views understood and heard by other segments of Canadian society and by government bodies. Similarly, by forging close links with the Council of Muslim Communities of Canada, we have been moderately successful in removing or reducing anti-Arab, anti-Moslem references in school textbooks and the mass media.

This, we believe, is one way of making NGOs more effective. Such coalition of NGOs helps to strengthen the international bond of brotherhood.

As you all know, the question of Palestine lies at the heart of every Arab NGO. This is also true of the CAF. Most of our activities centre around the issue of Palestine. The Federation has been invited, numerous times, to submit briefs to several Standing Committees on External Affairs. Our views are expressed to the Canadian Government

on behalf of the Palestinian and Arab community in general. We believe that our role in Canada is very crucial. More than any other country, Canada has been responsive to the needs and concerns of its ethnic minorities. As I mentioned earlier, the multicultural policy is a commendable achievement of the Canadian Government. Our Federation is largely subsidized to run its office by the Government. We feel we are in a better position to influence the Government's policy than our American counterpart.

The Federation, however, has not been very successful in its contact with external organizations. Although we have had some contact with Arab American organizations, such as the Arab American University Graduates and the Anti-Discrimination Committee, these contacts remain weak and lacking. We are just beginning to recognize the importance of linking the Canadian movement with the United States movement. We hope that this Symposium will give us the opportunity to form alliances with the difference NGO Arab organizations.

Eileen Schaeffler

I understood that I would be following Mr. O'Dell who has not yet arrived and therefore my remarks were meant to be the conclusion of the panel. They are of a transitional nature in preparation for what I hope will take up most of our remaining time together. The discussion of the practical ways of implementing the things which we have been speaking about. So, in that vein, I was trying to recall what might be underlying premises for us to bring to mind as we speak about reaching out to each other and to the broader constituencies whom we wish to affect. Perhaps the most fundamental of these is the realization that our real strength lies in our freedom.

Those of us who are in the non-governmental sector are committed to a freedom from certain types of vested interests which must characterize Governments, intergovernmental organizations and certain bureaucracies which must be very careful about formulating policy statements. I think that we have a tremendous range of freedom, and perhaps the first thing we should recall as we undertake dialoguing with each other on a practical level is that freedom is ours to claim and that it is very important for us to act out of that freedom as we make plans for the future. I think something else which those of us who have been rooted for a long time in the non-governmental sector treasure is the style that we have within our ranks. And I think that, at least from my own experience and that of many of my colleagues who have spoken of this, the style is developmental. It is characterized a great deal by respect for process. This is respect for what happens amongst the persons concerned, not agendas to be "laid on" an audience, but rather a way of sowing the seeds for developmental thinking - not predicting the outcome but reaching together, by means of consensus, something which can be subscribed to by the whole body.

Something else which I think is fundamental to us and which I hope will really characterize the way in which we speak this afternoon, is what has been referred to frequently during these days as goal-oriented action. I believe that we should not make artificial distinctions between academics (more philosophical types of people) and practitioners. There is a reflection-action mechanism which is extremely important in today's world. And many of us are privileged by our activist work to be able to reflect upon our experience and to articulate it in a way which is distinctive.

Something else which I certainly have appreciated here is the fact that different groups are respectful of and faithful to the identity of their particular organizations, whether it is a women's group, a peace group, a social action group. There are boundaries of the consensus within a particular group and we will each be acting out of our fidelity to our brothers and sisters in the organizations that we represent and what they would hope us to achieve together in this forum.

Because of this attitude towards process and consensus, I think that we are uniquely suited for the kind of coalition-building which has been spoken of during these days: coalitions which do not weaken our identity, but

coalitions which have their fundamental premises stated in a way which unites rather than divides. In this regard, I have respected the efforts we have been making to really understand each other's meanings, to appreciate the courage of some of the positions taken by people who have spoken to us and with us to have the generosity not to claim anything for our particular organization but to share in our communal working together any resources that we can share. I am sure that as we get more practical this afternoon this will show itself even more clearly. I would hope that what happens amongst us this afternoon will demonstrate that we are people who are rooted in the reality of the Palestinian issue. Some of us are very privileged to come fresh from experience in the region. The most privileged amongst us are our Palestinian brothers and sisters who bear in their bones, in their hearts, their souls and in their spirits the real meaning of this struggle. A sense of the urgency about this question must characterize our efforts to come to a satisfactory conclusion of this meeting.

In that spirit we might want to help the Committee which invited us and received us during these days. We might be able to assist in a process of evaluation as to whether we have been able to play our distinctive role and to achieve the things we think are important so that we can be mature collaborators in this search for peace.

We as peoples of the United Nations are gathered here together today with a unique possibility to speak freely, with a sense of loyalty to our own commitments and purposes coupled with a generosity regarding our resources. May quest for truth, justice and peace continue to motivate what we shall discuss this afternoon.

Donald Will

I would like to preface my remarks this afternoon with two caveats. First, while I am attending this conference on behalf of the General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church, I am speaking in an individual capacity so as to have greater latitude for expression and thus not to bore you by recanting the official position of our church. Second, as I am from the United States and am far too ignorant of the Canadian political scene, I will tend to concentrate on those aspects of this question which are pertinent to the United States. That, incidentally, is hardly inappropriate since United States arms, aid and actions are a large part of those obstacles to peace some of us have already raised.

One unfortunate aspect of being on this panel is the topic. "Collaboration and networking" are hardly the stuff from which to forge a fiery speech. I'll do my best, though, not to let you find these soft conference chairs too conducive to sleep. Also, coming at the end of a three-day symposium, one is always worried that there may be little new to say. If indeed this proves the case, I at least hope I succeed in saying it differently.

Previous speakers have made reference to the international consensus which exists on this issue. This consensus, of course, is one of a just and lasting peace based upon territorial compromise and the realization of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people. The basis of this consensus is not new, although history has altered some of its parameters. Whatever the pros and cons at the time of General Assembly resolution 181(II) of 1947, it laid down the principle of national self-determination for both Israelis and Palestinians. Within the halls of the United Nations, this principle has not been lost. The many nations which have joined the General Assembly since 1947 have by and large tended to adhere to this position. It is, of course, clear to all that the Palestinian half of principle or equation for peace remains unrealized and that only a few, though influential, Member States are obstructing progress toward the fulfilment of these rights -- despite the fact that several of these same States had endorsed resolution 181 (II).

Beyond this international consensus there is emerging as well a similar position in United States public opinion. As yet it is far from overwhelming the halls of Congress -- but it is there and it is growing stronger. This new mood or understanding is reflected in the statements of many American churches, such as we have heard at this symposium. It is also evidenced by the still small, but growing, number of American Jews who are disturbed by the present course of events in the Middle East -- again voices we have heard here. Also outspoken and vital for the leadership they have brought to this issue is the African-American community in this country. We are witnessing a new vitality as well as a new sense of identity in the Arab-American community. Many peace groups are overcoming the paralysis and internal contradictions they have previously encountered when trying to grapple with this issue. We have among us women's groups working strenuously for peace between Palestinians and Israelis. Likewise Hispanic, Asian and Native American groups have spoken out. Most of these voices have been represented right here at this symposium. We know this consensus exists. It is up to us all to mobilize it.

One of the absolute prerequisites for such mobilization is the need for some unity. Greater unity even than has been displayed in this hall. It's obvious that some of us lack enthusiasm for the State of Israel -- given its many oppressive policies. It may also be true that others among us may waver in enthusiasm for the Palestine Liberation Organization or some of its tactics. We all could probably debate at length the wisdom -- or lack of it -- of the General Assembly in opting for partition in 1947 or the issue of what zionism actually is and whether or not it is racist.

Such differences will not simply go away. Indeed, the de facto annexation by Israel of the West Bank, which has been described eloquently by speakers on our first day, as well as being outlined in the Benvenisti report, is certainly likely to sow more confusion. We may find ourselves slipping into arguments over whether the moment for a Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza has passed, leaving both Palestinians and Israelis with the choice between an Israeli-styled apartheid system over all of mandate Palestine or the alternative of a binational or secular, democratic state throughout the same land.

While these matters certainly warrant exploration, I would urge us not to be distracted from the task at hand. That is, in my opinion, to further forge the alliances we have here. Whether we accept the language of relevant United Nations resolutions or whether we use our own organizations' variations, let us begin to work better together.

Having made these general comments, let me put forward a variety of practical suggestions:

1. Increased contact and communication. For instance, tours of Palestinians (especially from the Occupied Territories) and progressive Israelis to visit here in the United States and Canada; study tours to the Middle East; work by the churches and others to see that the thousands upon thousands who take tours to the "Holy Land" take time to meet Middle Eastern Christians and also progressives of the Jewish and Islamic faiths; finally we should build a campaign to lift the restrictions on travel and discrimination regarding visas experienced by Palestinians here.

2. Information about the arms race in the Middle East. We must try to mobilize those concerned about the threat of nuclear war by causing them to realize that world wars do not just pop up. They start with great-Power confrontation in unstable areas of the world -- of which the Middle East unfortunately is one.

3. The chances for a peace are rapidly diminishing as events on the West Bank make territorial compromise more remote. This basic fact has to be driven home to all in the United States and Canada. We must make them

understanding that if they care about peace in the Middle East -- any kind of peace -- then we must get our Governments to act quickly. We should urge on them the proposal for an international peace conference on the Middle East as proposed in the Geneva Declaration of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine held last year in Geneva.

4. Impacting the policy-making apparatus in our Government is something we could all be doing more of. The recent example of the Democratic Platform Committee hearings is a good one. Arab-American groups, New Jewish Agenda, spokespersons for the Jesse Jackson campaign and some representatives of the churches all spoke for a new foreign policy in the Middle East. Each of our organizations, from its own perspective, must make our voices heard.

I could continue at some length with even more detailed, more specific suggestions. I think, however, that the better thing to do is for us all during the time the floor is open to try to share our best ideas and explore how we can improve upon them given the strength or our working together. Let me simply conclude by reiterating that we must work hard and fast or the shifting sands of the political events of the Middle East will shudder once again beneath our feet and events may outstrip our efforts to grasp the olive branch which is before us.

CLOSING REMARKS

Ambassador Massamba Sarré

The fact that after such laborious positive work, I think it is hardly necessary for me to take the floor. I think that the Declaration which has just been read out and adopted unanimously requires no commentary and perhaps just a few words by the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to close this. So I would like to say a few words on this fine work which you have carried out. Thus, the first NGO Symposium on the Question of Palestine is coming to an end. I am convinced that it has been a most enriching and interesting experience in co-operation with the United Nations and NGOs. On this question, as I am sure you will agree, the Declaration which you have just adopted by acclamation reaffirms the views which you support but it should be shared by an even larger number. As I said at the beginning of this symposium, making the fact clearly understood contributes to the gradual acceptance of a just settlement to this problem. By adopting the Declaration, you have further displayed your will to continue to work for justice for the Palestinian people and the people in the region. Making the fact known is a task which is not yet finished. This is a responsibility which you have assumed and which clearly you are willing to continue to assume. The co-operation between the United Nations and the organizations on the one hand and amongst your organizations themselves on the other hand can help you to accomplish this task and to make public opinion better aware of the facts of the situation. The first foundations of this new form of co-operation have been laid. We are sure that the bonds formed whilst tackling this difficult task before us will be close and lasting. This is necessarily a long-term undertaking which we should pursue ceaselessly until our goals are fully achieved. That is the full realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. Your determination displayed here over these last three days to continue to work for this cause augurs well I am sure for the continuation of our co-operation. I thank you all for having participated actively in this Symposium and for having contributed to its success. With a maximum objectivity but always bearing in mind the strong determination and tireless will to defend the rights of the Palestinian people. They are not just Palestinians, they are human beings and they are all sincerely devoted to their human rights. We are also very grateful to the members of the working groups for their communications and particularly to the chairmen of these groups, who by leading these debates, have assumed an additional responsibility. I should also like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Secretariat of the United Nations for their efforts for this event to be a success. Of course I cannot forget the interpreters, the security services and everyone who either within these walls or in the corridors have contributed to its success. With all due modesty, I feel that we have begun well. Your contribution to this colloquium, to the Symposium, will have a positive effect on the future activities within the programme and I am referring of course in particular to the International Meeting of NGOs

which will take place in Geneva in August this year. There again we hope that you will all be willing to attend this important conference. These symposia of course will be held each year and thus reassure that we will remain in close contact in the future. We will always be pleased to hear of your activities and we are willing to co-operate with you and to give you our assistance whenever necessary. With these few words, it really behoves me to thank you for your time and your contribution to the meeting over these last three days. I am sure they constitute an important stage in the developments for a peaceful settlement to the problem of Palestine. A new epoch would begin when the Palestinian people achieve their rights and the people of North America - Canada and the United States - could say that they have been pioneers in that endeavour.

List of participants and observers

America-Israel Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace
American Jewish Alternatives to Zionism
American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee
American-Arab Community Center
American-Arab Relations Committee
Americans for Middle East Understanding
Arab Women's Council
Association of Arab-American University Graduates (New York City)
Association of Arab-American University Graduates (Massachusetts)
Association Quebec-Palestine
Canadian Arab Federation
Canadian Arab Society, London
Canadian Council of Churches
Canadians For Peace Now
Capital District Committee for Palestinian Rights
Christian Coalition and Defenders Publication
Church of Humanism
Church Women United
Clergy and Laity Concerned
Dialogue For Peace
Federation of American-Arab Organizations
Friends Committee on National Legislation
General Board of Global Ministries/United Methodist Church
Grassroots International

International Association Democratic Lawyers
International Movement For Unity Among Races and Peoples
International Oil Working Group
Jewish Women For A Secular Middle East/Tadamun
Le Regroupement Pour Un Dialogue Israel-Palestine
Middle East Fellowship of the Presbytery of Southern California
Middle East Research and Information Project
Muslim World League
NADJA: Women Concerned About the Middle East
National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA
National Lawyers' Guild
November 29 Coalition
Palestine Arab Association of Hamilton, Canada
Palestine Human Rights Campaign (Washington D.C.)
Palestine Human Rights Campaign (Chicago)
People's Anti-War Mobilization
Presbyterian Church - (USA)
Search For Justice and Equality in Palestine
Support Israeli Peace Groups
Taxpayers For Peace in the Middle East (TAPME)
Toronto University Middle East Group (TUMEG)
United Church Board For World Ministries
United Holy Land Fund
US Peace Council
USOMEN

Washington Area Jews for An Israeli Palestinian Peace

Women's Collective on the Middle East

Women for Women in Lebanon

Women's International Democratic Federation

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

World Muslim Congress

NGO OBSERVERS

Baptist World Alliance

Commission of the Churches on International Affairs
of the World Council of Churches

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