



SWASIA

NORTH AFRICA

a weekly news digest of southwest asian and north african events plus translations from the hebrew and arabic press focusing on the israeli-palestinian conflict, the arabian/persian gulf, and the great power policies

Vol. IV, No. 5

February 4, 1977

from *LE MONDE*

January 11, 1977

The Story of the Secret Meetings Between Israelis and PLO Representatives

by Amnon Kapeliouk

PLO leaders and members of the Israeli Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace have scheduled meetings in Paris for the last half of January. This will be the sixth and probably the last of a series of meetings prior to the February meetings of the Palestine National Council in Cairo.

This series of contacts has led to some agitation among extremists of the Palestinian "rejection front," but it appears that the PLO leader, Yasser Arafat, has calmed this faction. With the approach of the Palestine National Council meeting, moderate currents in the Arab world are lobbying for a realistic approach among Palestinians, as a January 3rd article by Ahmad Hamrouche, editor of the Egyptian newspaper *Rose El-Yusef* indicates. While rejoicing at the contacts between moderate Israelis and PLO representatives, Mr. Hamrouche calls on the PLO to change its strategy and recognize the fact of Israel.

In Israel the meetings between Israeli personalities and PLO leaders are seen as a very important event, "the most important perhaps in Israeli-Arab relations in 1976," according to the "dove" socialist deputy Arie ("Lova") Eliav, former secretary-general of the ruling Labor party; for while private meetings have taken place in the past between members of Israeli opposition and PLO delegates (especially with the London representative of the PLO, Said Hammami), the higher level of the participants in the recent meetings has given them an entirely different character.

Two States

The recent discussions have most importantly totally destroyed the Israeli "hawks" argument according to which one cannot hold discussions with the Palestinians for they aspire only to destroy Israel. The official PLO representatives explained to the Israelis that the PLO can accept the existence of two states in the Palestinian land: one an Israeli state and the other Palestinian, which would be a realistic solution to the conflict. One can thus conclude that the creation of a single secular democratic state is no longer considered a realistic solution among the Palestinians. For their part, the Israelis recommended a return to the boundaries of June 4th, 1967, with minor and mutually agreed upon rectifications: the creation of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and the opening of negotiations with the PLO — three conditions which the Israeli government categorically rejects.

Thus, 1976 saw the beginning of a new stage, with the Palestinians having decided to widen their contacts which previously were limited solely to anti-Zionist Israelis. The Palestinians sought to develop relations with Israelis who are not opposed to the Palestinians' right of self-determination nor to the creation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip of a Palestinian state. They approached a political organization which was created during December 1975 on the initiative of three Israeli personalities

(former Knesset member Uri Avneri, the writer Amos Kenan and the Arabist Yossi Amitai, a member of Kibbutz Gevulot). This organization called itself the Israeli Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace.

The first steps were effected by a group of French leftist Jews acting as intermediaries who simultaneously support the existence of Israel and the creation of a Palestinian state. In the spring of 1976, a representative came from Paris to meet the reserve General Matti Peled, president of the above-mentioned Peace Council and professor of modern Arabic literature

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at the University of Tel Aviv, in his residence at Motza Ilit, near Jerusalem. The intermediary from Paris announced that members of the PLO leadership wanted to meet General Peled and his colleagues in order to begin discussions. Peled agreed even though he knew that contacts with the PLO were considered by the majority of Israelis to be "an anti-Israeli act."

The first meeting took place several months later on July 21st in Paris. General Peled met with PLO members. The conversations lasted two days and dealt with methods of reaching a peace based on the existence of two states in Palestine. This first meeting and all the following meetings took place without any intermediaries present, though it was through intermediaries that the hospitality and meeting places were furnished. On returning to Israel, General Peled noted that the conversations had been very positive. "If this is to have been the only meeting, it was a pleasant episode, but, if there is a follow-up meeting, the political consequences will be important," said Peled to his friends. A few weeks later in September the discussions began again this time with several representatives from each side.

Meetings took place in October, November and December. Each one lasted about two days and in total there were about 100 hours of discussions. The talks took place in English. The participants sometimes spoke Arabic (which some of the Israelis speak) and on one occasion Hebrew (which one of the Palestinians speaks fluently).

Advice from Pierre Mendes France

The discussions took place in Paris and the suburbs and on one occasion (in September) in the south of France at the summer residence of Pierre Mendes France. Both sides approached him for advice, and he encouraged them to continue their discussions while recommending utmost prudence. This was the only occasion on which Mendes France participated in the talks. News reports according to which he had a part in initiating the talks are completely without basis.

The PLO representative at each of these talks was Dr. Issam Sartawi, a member of the Central Committee and one of Arafat's closest advisors. He was accompanied by one and sometimes two aides, also accredited by the central leadership of the PLO.

While the PLO representatives came with the official blessing of their organization, the Israelis were from the Israeli opposition, at least with respect to the Palestinian problem. General Peled, a hero of the Six Day War, participated in four of the five separate meetings.

He was the sole Israeli representative in two of these meetings. In another meeting, the sole Israeli representative was Knesset member Eliav. Other Israeli participants in discussions were Y. Arnon, president and director-general of the National Electric Company and former director-general of the Finance Ministry; Uri Avneri, former Knesset member and director of the weekly *Ha'Olam Haze*; Meir Pa'il, a Knesset member representing Moked (of the Zionist left); and the Arabist Yossi Amitai. All are Zionists, and almost all are leftists.

An Atmosphere of Confidence

The Israelis imposed only one condition on the talks (which was accepted by the PLO representatives). Only members of the Israeli Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace were to participate in the discussions. During the Lebanese war, the Council had declared its opposition to direct Israeli aid to the Phalangists and to indirect aid to the Syrians. Instead, the Council favored a fraternal initiative toward the Palestinians. This background helped to create an atmosphere of confidence in the talks.

Taking the position that the internal affairs of each country are the sole concern of the inhabitants, both sides avoided discussing ideological questions. The talks also avoided the details of an eventual solution (such as borders, the status of Jerusalem, refugees, etc.) which will be debated by official representatives at the conference at Geneva or elsewhere. The discussions dealt for the most part with the following question: how to influence Israeli public opinion and lead Israelis to recognize that the Palestinian problem is the Gordian knot, and that one can not have a lasting peace without the Palestinians. And, as a corollary, how can the Palestinians be led to abandon their extremist roles in order to create a climate susceptible to favorable Israeli opinion?

In the discussions, joint plans were developed to demonstrate to public opinion on both sides that cooperation and peace are possible. The atmosphere was cordial and the participants worked on a first name basis. Following the fifth meeting, a communique was issued in which the PLO

reportedly acknowledged for the first time its contacts with an Israeli group composed of individuals of several political persuasions (*Le Monde* of January 6). The PLO statement was the result of an Israeli request, repeated since the first meeting, whose intent was to prove to Israeli opinion that the PLO position has evolved.

Allon's Reservations

Following each phase of the discussions, both sides returned home. The PLO representatives reported to their leaders who encouraged continued talks. The Israelis while not official representatives, reported (with the approval of the Palestinians) to several leaders in Jerusalem on their impressions and conclusions with regard to the evolving PLO position. The Israelis underlined the conclusion that it was time to abandon the slogan "the only possible meeting with the PLO is on the battlefield."

Among those to whom the Israelis reported were: Prime Minister Rabin; Foreign Minister Allon; Finance Minister Rabinovitch; Minister of Justice Zadok; Victor Shemtov (Mapam), Minister of Health; Housing Minister Abraham Ofer (who committed suicide on January 3rd); former secretary-general of the Histadrut, Yitzhak Ben-Aharon; and others. Reactions were generally favorable, even encouraging, except for Allon's, whose reservations were based on the feeling that such contacts only "propped up an organization which otherwise was falling apart." Knesset Member Arieh Eliav reported on the meetings to Israeli President Katzir.

The rightists spoke out in opposition to "the traitors of the Council." Minister Z. Hammer, of the National Religious Party, known for his annexationist ideas, suggested to the Cabinet that the Knesset try those who had met with the PLO for "breach of state security." And the Likud (nationalist right-wing party) demanded such a trial. The November 10th, 1976, debate in the Knesset was one of its stormiest, but it was decided that from a juridical point of view the conversations with the PLO represented no infractions against the law.

As a result of the meetings, the Palestinians and the Israelis have reversed their roles. In the past, the Israelis tirelessly sought discussions with the adversary; the Palestinians refused. Now it is the Palestinians who are seeking talks, but the Israelis, for the most part, remain hesitant, although public opinion polls show that the will is growing to begin a dialogue with the PLO.

from HA'OLAM HAZEH, an Israeli weekly, HA'OLAM HAZEH: Jan. 5, 1977
as translated by FBIS FBIS: Jan. 6, 1977

An Historical Statement

The following is the full text of a joint statement which was formulated in Paris by an unnamed PLO representative and Matti Peled of the Israeli Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace.

Another meeting was held between a member of the PLO leadership and Dr. Peled in Paris. The meeting lasted 2 days — 31 December 1976 to 1 January 1977. The PLO leader, a veteran freedom fighter who is believed to be the man in charge of coordinating the PLO peace efforts on behalf of the PLO leadership, has for some time been maintaining regular communications with the Israeli Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace.

He has affirmed to his interlocutor that the PLO is dedicated to the policy of striving for a peaceful solution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on the basis of mutual acceptance of the principle of freedom, sovereignty and security for both peoples.

The PLO considers the principles implied in the manifesto of the Israeli Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace as an adequate basis for solving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

He has reiterated that the PLO is not opposed to attending the Geneva peace conference when it is invited to participate in it. Until this becomes possible, the PLO will do its utmost to enhance the arrival of peace on the basis of mutual agreement. As one of its steps to achieve this goal the PLO is maintaining close relations with the Israeli Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace and other peace forces whose activities inside Israel are greatly appreciated.

The PLO leader has been active lately in the United States where he endeavored together with his comrades to acquaint the public with the PLO's policy as defined by its leadership. He is glad to point out that the PLO's peaceful intentions have been recognized by large sections of the American public, as well as by groups of American Jews. He finds it regrettable that the Jewish presidents conference has taken a negative stand toward developing better understanding between the PLO and the American Jewish community. He hopes that PLO representatives, in cooperation with the Israeli Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace and Jews inside the United States will succeed in persuading American Jews, as well as

all other Jewish communities, of urgent need for peace between Israel and the Palestinian people. Such understanding, on the part of those who wish peace for the Middle East to be achieved, is vital in order to bring an end to the state of war in the area and prevent a further outbreak of hostilities.

Dr. Peled, chairman of the Executive Committee of the Israeli Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace, surveyed extensively the developments in Israeli public opinion relating

to the Palestinian people and the PLO. Dr. Peled has stressed the significance of the Knesset debate on the council's contacts with the PLO and recent polls showing increased willingness in Israel to deal directly with the PLO. He also pointed out that M.K. A. Eliav had recently reported on these meetings in great detail to President Katzir.

Both the PLO leader and Dr. Peled believe that the relations which have developed between the PLO and the Israeli Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace constitute a hopeful milestone in the relations of their peoples. They expect that their cooperation in striving for peace will contribute toward the establishment of cordial and mutually respectful relations between the PLO and people of Israel.

Regular meetings between the PLO leader and members of the Israeli Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace have been scheduled for the future.

[Signed] Paris, 1 January 1977

from MA'ARIV, Israel's Hebrew-language newspaper with the largest circulation

January 7, 1977

My Meetings With the PLO Representatives

by Matti Peled

How does a person feel when meeting his enemy? How does it feel to meet the enemy not in the battlefield, not during a cease-fire, when the talk is about life before war starts again, not in order to submit an ultimatum and to stop the killings but rather in the guest room of a quiet bourgeoisie house in Paris?

The answers are probably contingent upon the quality, the purpose, and the expected outcome of the meeting.

While sitting in a soft, comfortable arm chair unsuccessfully trying to read *Le Monde*, I remembered an impressive scene that occurred in 1952 while I was a student at the Academy of Officers of the British Army in Camberlay.

During that autumn, a group of us, officers from several continents, left for Germany to see the NATO maneuvers. One evening, when the rain and the cold winds were fierce, we were sitting in the Officers' Club of one of the British units in Germany. A Canadian officer, whom I later came to like, was sitting next to a German officer that I had not met. They were exchanging impressions about a battle

in Europe that took place near the end of World War Two; during this battle they fought one another. It was a professional discussion that was often interesting. I was, however, amazed to learn that the supposedly professional talk was only a "cover-up" for a far more private and humane experience. They enjoyed recalling the fierce battle; their faces were filled with emotion. While they talked, they seemed happy to be sitting next to one another and to discuss the enjoyment of a peaceful, pleasant life void of threats.

While thinking about this strange experience of observing past enemies talking like friends, I heard the bell ring. The two men, whom I had come to Paris to meet, came into the room I quickly recognized that one of them was the commander, the leader, the more authoritative of the two, whereas the other was his subordinate. The relationship between a commander and his subordinate is easily noticeable; a person who has been both a commander and a subordinate can recognize clearly the gap between the

(Continued on page 6)

CYPRIT LEADERS
CALL THEIR
TALKS A
"BREAKTHROUGH"

Talks between Cyprus' President Makarios and Turkish-Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash occurred on January 27th. Afterwards, the two leaders agreed that, although their viewpoints continue to diverge, the very occurrence of the meeting—their first in more than a dozen years—represents a "breakthrough" in the Cypriot dispute (NYT 1/28-2).

News commentator C.L. Sulzberger, after separate interviews with Makarios and Denktash, said that both leaders "endorsed to me the idea of federation, opposed unity by either sector with Greece or Turkey, and recognized the need for a new federal constitution" (NYT 1/30-17 IV). A primary remaining obstacle is the territorial question. Encouragingly, both men have indicated a new measure of flexibility on this issue. Recently, Makarios privately stated the acceptability of a Turkish zone composed of "somewhat less than 30 percent" of Cyprus; this is about 5 percent more than his earlier figures (Ec 1/22-15). On the other side of the conflict, Denktash reportedly offered to contract his Turkish-Cypriot region from its present 40 percent of the island to 32.8 percent. Interestingly, he added that this figure was negotiable (NYT 1/28-2). Denktash has also stated a willingness to negotiate the issues of return of Greek-Cypriot refugees, freedom of inter-zonal movement and settlement rights of Greek-Cypriots in all parts of the island (WP 1/28-1).

SHEEHAN
PROPOSES
PALESTINIAN
STATE

Creation of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip is both feasible and desirable, according to Edward R.F. Sheehan, writing in a *New York Times Magazine* article entitled: "A Proposal for a Palestinian State" (NYT 1/30-8).

Sheehan's plan, contingent as it is on an overall Mideast peace settlement, could not be implemented until the present PLO-Israeli impasse is broken by some formulation of mutual recognition, until the parties agree upon the nature of their peace objectives, and until Israel withdraws to essentially its 1967 borders. Once these hurdles and others are surmounted, Sheehan envisages a viable state emerging with the help of intense development and capital investment efforts. He cites studies by Dr. Haim Darin-Drabkin, an Israeli land usage specialist, who argues that, with proper planning and development, a West Bank-Gaza state could

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Second Class Postage paid in Washington, D.C.

SWASIA is published weekly by the Middle East and Europe Working Groups, Division of Overseas Ministries, of the National Council of Churches, Room 626, 475 Riverside Dr., New York, N.Y. 10027. Richard Butler, Director of MEEWG. Allan Kellum and Norton Mezvinsky, Editors of SWASIA. Although SWASIA's general business address is 3631 39th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20016, correspondence should be addressed to: SWASIA, P.O. Box 29060, Washington, D.C. 20017. Subscription rates: U.S. and Canada \$15/year for individuals, \$25/year for institutions; Overseas \$25/year for surface mail, \$40/year for airmail.

SOURCES AND ABBREVIATIONS: BBC Summary of World Broadcasts (BBC), Christian Science Monitor (CSM), Economist (Ec), Foreign Broadcasts Information Service, Part V (FBIS), Israeleft (Islf), Jerusalem Post (JP), Le Monde (LeM), Le Monde Diplomatique (LeMD), London Times (LT), Manchester Guardian Weekly (MGW), National Observer (NO), Newsweek (Nswk), New York Times (NYT), Religious News Service (RNS), Time (Tm), U.S. News & World Report (USN), Washington Post (WP), Wall Street Journal (WSJ). **ARABIC:** Al Ahrām (Cairo), Al Baath (Damascus), An Anwarr, Al Hurriya, Al Muharrer, An Nahar (Beirut). **HEBREW:** Davar, Haaretz, Haolam Hazeh, Maariv, Yediot Ahronot (Israel). **NOTES** refer to the publication date and page number of Swasia's sources (e.g. JP 1/21-1 means Jerusalem Post, Jan. 21, page 1). Page numbers on notes of the BBC Summary of World Broadcasts refer to Section IV, Part A. "The Arab World and Israel." The letter(s) after the page number denotes the origin of the broadcast as follows: A (Algeria), B (Bahrain), E (Egypt), I (Iraq), Is (Israel), J (Jordan), K (Kuwait), L (Lebanon), Li (Libya), M (Morocco), O (Oman), S (Saudi Arabia), Su (Sudan), Sy (Syria), T (Tunisia), U (United Arab Emirates), V (Vatican), VP (Voice of Palestine), Yn (North Yemen), Ys (South Yemen). For example (BBC 1/19-6-VP) refers to a Voice of Palestine broadcast cited in Section IV, Part A, page 6, of the Jan. 19 Summary.

PALESTINE PLAN,
from page 4...

sustain a population of up to four million people. According to Darin-Drabkin, 700,000 Palestinians could settle in a Palestinian republic in the initial years following its creation.

The state "would comprise hardly more than 2,200 square miles, about a fourth the size of Massachusetts—or of pre-1967 Israel—and not even a fourth of Palestine" (NYT). Sheehan, estimating the development costs during the first five years would range from 8 to 20 billion dollars, contrasts this with the 20 billion dollar cost of the 1973 Arab-Israeli war and the even larger amounts that a new Mideast war might cost; he concludes that the resulting peace and stability would be a bargain.

Sheehan notes that the radical elements in a Palestinian republic would be moderated by several countervailing forces, including: the traditionally conservative West Bankers, the influence of Palestine's financial backers, the bracketing effect of Jordan and Israel. Pointing out that "not only Israel's fears should be assuaged," Sheehan argues that a Palestinian state "might be largely demilitarized, but it cannot be impotent" (NYT). He advocates that it, in conjunction with its Arab neighbors, have the capacity for self-defense.

In his concluding paragraph, Sheehan states: "If Israel can make peace with the PLO, it can more easily make peace with the Arab governments. Far more effectively than any Arab government, the PLO can confer legitimacy upon Israel. Far more effectively than any Arab government, the PLO can function as the ultimate deterrent against Palestinian excesses and can terminate the cancer of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Israel—and the United States—should put the Palestinians to the test, for a Geneva Conference without the Palestinians will be doomed to fail" (NYT).

ISRAEL AND
JORDAN CONFER
ON WEST BANK'S
FUTURE

The *Economist* has categorically stated that Israel and Jordan have, despite their denials, resumed discussions about the future of the West Bank. The *Economist* speculates that Sheikh Jabari's (Hebron's former mayor) three-week visit to Amman is related to those ongoing contacts (Ec 1/22-60).

Sheikh Jabari met with Shimon Peres, Israel's Defense Minister, prior to the Amman visit and following it. Upon his return from Jordan, Jabari made the following public statement: "Although the PLO is the only legitimate representative of the Palestinians (as resolved at Rabat), the people who stayed on the West Bank, and suffered without deserting it, deserve proper representation and the dominant voice in determining its future... The 1951 Jericho resolution is still binding..." (Ec). The Jericho resolution, approved by a gathering of West Bank officials, led by Sheikh Jabari, expressed acceptance of Jordan's annexation of the West Bank (Ec).

HUSSEIN
MAY
MEET
ARAFAT

Jordan's King Hussein, who previously has refused to talk with the PLO, said in an interview with *Al-Anwar* on January 26th that preparations are underway for talks between himself and Yasser Arafat, chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization (NYT 1/27-8).

(PELED, from page 3)

two; this still does not affect their closeness. The commander gave his name and expressed his pleasure that I came; the other stood aside and smiled with pleasure at the achievement of his commander.

Without many formalities we sat and began to talk. The commander started the discussion. In fluent and accurate English, he explained at length that he had reached the conclusion that all those who want peace must cooperate in order to prevent the next war, which — if it occurred — would be disastrous.

Unlike that meeting in Germany, this meeting occurred while the war was still in process. We could not talk about any battle that both of us had fought at the same time; we rather could talk about the hostility, accumulated for years, that was both separating and bringing us nearer to one another. It was clear to us that the continued, accumulated hostility would some day cover us all with death. There was, then, an atmosphere of urgency.

My duty was relatively simple. The history of my people from the beginning of the repatriation is deeply engraved in my mind. I feel that an integral part of myself is involved in a long, decisive era. Will we be able to live in peace and with security as a free and independent people? Anyone prepared to let us live our lives in this way is a friend. I wondered: "Is my partner in discussion ready to be a friend?"

"Friendship is a reciprocal relationship," he answered. The tragedy of our mutual land has been felt everywhere. He and his friend knew that my friends and I are agreed that two peoples had been victimized by disaster. For this reason, he wished to talk with us. He once believed — groundlessly — that all that had been done in the past eighty years could be reversed; recently, he realized that such is not the case. He has no doubts now and admits that the former was a crude idea, which meant that a future for his people depended upon the ruins of my people.

The man has had an extensive education and is familiar with many aspects of the human experience. "We refused to recognize you for a long time," he explained, "but like Spinoza said, 'non-recognition is also a form of recognition.'" He so wanted to build a new future, for his people on our ruins that he even abandoned his honorable, promising occupation and joined the fighters. But he is not a robot. He has a mind and a conscience,

and he realized that destruction will not pave the way to salvation and even if some salvation could come therefrom, that kind had best not come. Salvation, built on the death of millions, is invalid; he finally refused to define millions of people as enemies. A large group of human beings cannot be enemies and cannot so be regarded. The unidentified individual, who lives his own ordinary life among his people, cannot be considered an enemy. This is inconsistent with the basic principles of life. When he realized that his convictions implied that many innocent people were enemies of one another, he understood that the attitudes must be changed and that the objects must be differently defined.

Is it possible to modify the reality? Those who have ceased to believe this miss a major privilege, granted by nature to human beings. He followed the expressions of my colleagues in Israel and learned from them. "We may not be able to complete the job," he said, "But we must start it . . ."

The "Arabic" expression in English sounded like a very familiar "Hebrew" one.

"How many of you exist," I wondered.

"If I were unique, or part of a negligible minority, I would not be here," he explained. "I am not a Don Quixote. If I were unique in my conviction, I could have practiced my occupation in one of the capitals of the world and have cried there over the world situation. But I was sent by my leaders, whom I represent. It is not at all a simple matter. Such shifts in

opinion and position cannot occur in one day; they take time. The leaders realize that it is 'high time' they coped with the reality rather than trying to evade it. The system, however, is complex, and the process may be long. Yet, it may never be completed, unless we prove now that it is possible to agree — at first, as individuals. Are we ready to begin this 'long trip' together?"

"We have started," I answered. "I am glad that at last a group of peace seekers exist on the other side. We shall surely cooperate so long as the principle of sovereign, peaceful, and friendly coexistence of the two peoples is maintained. Our opinions are known; now, it is your turn to express your opinions publicly."

"We shall do so — be assured of that," he said. "We cannot do it like you did — so freely and so securely. Not yet. But our conviction will be clearly and publicly expressed. This is our first aim. We shall consider the best ways to do this and the best timing to say publicly what we are now saying secretly."

The tension dissipated, when we ate. We learned that we both like Arab poetry. He recited: "If one's dignity is pure, any suit is beautiful." This is a well-known verse, written by Samud, the Jewish leader from the Arabian desert. His poem was enlightened by the conduct of Arabs since that time.

"Do you know the poem?" he asked.

"They said we are few,'" I answered. "'The elite are always few,'" I said reciting another verse from that poem.

He smiled. "Yes," he said, "it fits each of us and all of us as a group."

from *YEDIOT AHARONOT*, Israel's Hebrew-language daily newspaper with the second largest circulation

January 7, 1977

The Secret PLO Man in Paris

by Ya'akov Bouz

The above headline, abbreviated due to space considerations, read as follows in YEDIOT AHARONOT'S extensive headline: "The Secret Person Whom the Israelis Met in Paris Belongs to the Terrorist Group That Attacked the El-Al Plane in Munich."

Last Sunday, a "joint statement" by the Israeli Council For Israeli-Palestinian Peace and the PLO was published. It said that the PLO considers the principles of the Council a proper basis for solving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The statement was written by the chairman of the Council and a man who was described as a "PLO leader"; this statement was

prepared in meetings on December 21 and January 1 in Paris.

The PLO man declared that his organization wishes to reach a peace settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; the basis of the settlement would be reciprocal recognition, freedom, and security for both peoples. He added that the PLO will

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Secret PLO Man, from page 6 . . .

not refuse to participate in the Geneva Conference if and when the PLO is invited. Until then, the PLO will strive to contribute to peace on the basis of mutual recognition. One of the steps that must be taken without direction is the establishment of relations with the Israeli Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace and other peace groups.

The statement reads as follows: "The PLO leader was recently active in the United States, where he and his colleague endeavored to explain to the public the policies of the PLO leadership. He is glad to mention that the peace intentions of the PLO have been recognized by a large part of the American public and by groups of American Jews. It is regrettable, in his opinion, that the President's Conference of American Jewish Organizations maintained a negative attitude towards this attempt to reach mutual understanding between the PLO and American Jews."

The PLO leader, who is a long-time "freedom fighter", and the Israeli Chairman of the Council consider the relationship between the PLO and the Council to be "an encouraging milestone". They expect that their cooperation in the search for peace will contribute to cordial relations and mutual respect between the PLO and Israeli citizens. The statement concluded with the statement that the meetings will be held regularly.

In order to avoid misunderstandings, we must understand that the announcement was only made by the Israeli Council, in a press conference in Tel Aviv on January 2. Only the name of the Israeli Chairman was disclosed; the Palestinian's name was kept secret. The Israeli Chairman expressed his hope that the PLO leadership will disclose the name of their man in the near future. The Israeli Council Chairman and the Palestinian added that confirmation of the joint statement was expected to be made by the PLO leadership within a few days. They even said that they were confident that no responsible PLO person would deny the statement.

In his answer to a question, the Chairman said that the joint statement is an historical breakthrough, for it is the first time that the PLO officially recognized the principles of the Zionist movement, which were elaborated in the manifesto of the Council.

It now appears that the historical path was very short. Several hours after the press conference, the

Palestinian news-agency "Wafa" announced that Farouk Kaddoumi, the head of the PLO's Political Department, had explained clearly that no PLO representative had signed a document on Palestine in Paris. It emphasized that such information was "absolutely untrue and that the PLO does not know of such an agreement."

The Chairman of the Israeli Council gave semantic reasons for the "Wafa" statement; Farouk Kaddoumi had only denied the distorted version that was announced by the foreign news agencies, i.e., that a document was signed in Paris. There was only a joint statement. Even this rationale, however, did not stand. On January 2, the PLO office in Paris again denied that any of its representatives had signed any document with Israelis in the search for peace. The Paris PLO officer added, probably in order to avoid semantic misunderstandings, that the PLO will never accept the Zionist entity and will not authorize any of its members to act against the "struggle of our people and the resolutions of the Palestine National Council."

The name of the PLO leader was not publicized, as expected by the members of the Israeli Council. Nevertheless, the name of the freedom fighter is a well-known "secret". The Palestinian is Dr. Issam Sartawi, a cardiologist who studied in the United States and in 1969-1970 headed the "Palestine Operational Liberation Organization", a terror group that — among other activities — attacked an El-Al plane in the Munich airport; one Israeli citizen was killed, and six passengers were wounded.

Some radical terror organizations feared that he was being used by Fatah in order to harm the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). In

the summer of 1970, Sartawi antagonized the PLO by favoring the cease-fire between Egypt and Israel, which was achieved with American intervention. He quickly retracted this position, especially after fights had erupted between his men and Yasser Arafat's men. As early as June, 1970, Sartawi was appointed representative of his group to the PLO's Central Council, a middle group between the Executive Committee and the National Council, which is similar to a parliament. Sartawi's group has most likely vanished. His present status in the PLO is unclear.

Sartawi, together with Sabri Jiryis, the lawyer from Haifa who had organized a terrorist group in the Upper Galilee before he left Israel in 1970, met some American Jews in recent months; they did not even attempt to keep their identities secret. They only wished to do so when they met the Israelis. The reason they gave is presumably that they fear those PLO members who oppose any contact with Israelis. Besides that reason, (they realize that) it is easy to violate agreements and talks when the participants are not known. Only the PLO representatives requested that the talks be kept secret. "The request and demand were motivated by the concern about their situation in Lebanon and in the world," said one of the Council members in an interview with a daily paper. No one explained why the PLO men are still fearful, following disclosure of their names. If they still fear now, will they not fear in the future?

The argument of fear of the extremists is frequent in Arab tactics towards Israel.

The Israeli Council members have not contributed to peace or to the Israeli people.

*from the JORDAN TIMES,
Jordan's English-language daily*

January 6, 1977

Unravelling Hoaxes

an editorial

Two apparently unconnected events in the past week are good examples of the delicate structure of deception upon which Israel has been built up, but which in time — like all deceptions — shall crumble under the public exposure that Israel tries so hard to avoid. The two things we refer to are the decision of the British government to withhold some cabinet papers on Palestine from the year 1946 because these are said to be still "sensitive"

(the papers would have been made public this week after the normal 30-year lapse), and the still unfolding tale of contacts in Paris between PLO officials and members of the Israeli Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace (ICIPP). The connection between the two is that they are both part of the unravelling of the grand Zionist hoax that has built an Israeli state in Palestine and kept the Middle East

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soaked in turmoil and blood for the past 30 years.

The decision to withhold the British cabinet papers was probably made because release of those papers would show that Zionists in the 40's used "unusual forms of pressure, including assassination threats," according to M.P. Christopher Mayhew, who recounted this week that such threats were used against himself, British ministers and even the then Foreign Minister Mr. Bevin. It would be a monumentally awkward revelation if the people who support Israel so passionately in the West were to have it handed to them in official British cabinet papers that the fellows in Israel who talk so often about peace today, such as Messrs. Rabin, Allon and Dayan, were nothing more in 1946 than leaders of terror units who casually knifed up British soldiers and went about their daily business using the forms of "terrorism" that today they damn so vehemently when they are used against them by others. It would be similarly embarrassing for the friends of Israel to admit that the same people who blew up British subjects and terrorized Palestinians in the 40's are doing the same work today by sending assassination units throughout Europe to kill off the Palestinian leadership they could not kill off in the 40's.

The talks between the PLO and the ICIPP unravel the Zionist hoax

because they are testament to the fact that Palestinians and Israelis can live together in Palestine if they come to an understanding about the nature of essential Palestinian national goals. The unremitting folly of Zionism (and the complementary folly of the people who equip Zionism with hundreds of F-16 fighter jets) have been and continue to be built upon the desire of Israel to be the dominant power in Palestine. The result of this has been and continues to be warfare. The PLO-ICIPP contacts will help the Zionist hoax come crashing down upon itself because these contacts will slowly show that there is a way for Palestinian Arabs and Israeli Jews to live side by side in a Palestine where the common sense, goodwill and the instincts for justice of all will satisfy the

nationalistic aspirations of both Arabs and Jews. This will one day bring peace.

The present Israeli leadership is fighting a battle to cover up the facts of history, and thus to keep the Israeli people wandering in the wilderness of their fortress state for many more years. All around them, however, history is unravelling its deceptions and exposing its hoaxes. It is no wonder that the Israeli answer to this is to ask for more guns from the United States, because the United States today remains the last fertile playground of Zionist mythology. But for how long?

It would be a service to humanity if the American Congress opened its new session this month by a public reading of the British cabinet papers of 1946.

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