



SWASIA

NORTH AFRICA

a weekly digest of southwest asia and north africa news focusing on the israel-palestine conflict, the persian gulf, and great power policies. with translations from the hebrew and arabic press.

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April 18, 1975

A Palestinian Strategy for Peaceful Coexistence

by Said Hammami

London Representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization

NOTE: The following paper by the PLO's London representative, Said Hammami, was presented at a March 20-22 seminar in London on "The Future of Palestine," sponsored by the Council for the Advancement of Arab-British Understanding. Hammami's paper has occasioned articles in a number of European newspapers, including the London Times, the Jewish Observer and Middle East Review, the Jewish Chronicle, and Le Monde, as well as Israel's Jerusalem Post. Because of this attention, we depart somewhat from our usual format to publish the full text of "A Palestinian Strategy."

In discussion at the seminar, Mr.

Hammami said that he believed the views expressed in his paper represented the majority view among the Palestinians. He noted that the paper had been presented to the political department of the PLO which had agreed, after some modifications had been made, that he should present it at the seminar as his personal view of how Palestinian policy was developing.

SWASIA is grateful to the Council for the Advancement of Arab-British Understanding for permission to publish "A Palestinian Strategy," and for furnishing, at our request, a copy of the paper and the seminar record.

"I have come bearing an olive branch and a freedom fighter's gun. Do not let the olive branch fall from my hand."

—Yasser Arafat, at the U.N. General Assembly, November 13, 1974.

We Palestinians believe that the creation of the State of Israel was a grave political error, one which has done grievous harm to the interests of all concerned—the world community, the Great Powers, the Jewish people themselves and, of course, our own Palestinian people. But it was not merely an error, it was also a crime. A crime perpetrated against the natural, fundamental and inalienable rights of the Palestinians. There is really no need to argue this. The facts speak clearly for themselves to anyone who listens with an open mind. And it seems to me that now at last—though far too late—the reality of this error and this crime is fairly well recognised and accepted throughout the

world, as the UN debate on Palestine in November 1974 clearly shows—except of course among those whose minds are closed to any facts or arguments which do not suit the demands of political Zionism.

I say "political" Zionism because it is this that has caused all the trouble in Palestine. With the original objective of providing a refuge for those Jews genuinely in need of one, we Palestinians had no quarrel. It was only our apprehension that this concept was to be distorted into a political dominion at our expense—an apprehension which was to be so tragically justified by events—that led us to oppose the Zionist colonization of our homeland and the violence with which it was forced upon us.

Holding as we do this view of the creation of Israel, it is entirely natural that we should wish and hope that one day this interloper state will disappear

from the scene in the Middle East. Most of us believe that some day, sooner or later, Israel, as it exists today—a racist, exclusive Zionist State—will indeed disappear. We will rejoice when that happens, but we would prefer it to happen peacefully and by mutual agreement, rather than amid violence and recrimination. Meanwhile we will do whatever is in our power to further that happy day—a happy day not only for ourselves and our Arab brothers and for the world at large, but also for the Jewish people throughout the world, and not least, for the poor benighted citizens of Israel who have been so corrupted and misled by their Zionist rulers. Everybody will be better off when this racist, colonialist anachronism has gone.

This does not mean that we, the Palestinians of my generation, are determined to "drive into the sea" the Jews now living in Israel. That is a myth propagated by Israel and the World Zionist Movement in order to reinvoke the spectre of genocide and to excite world sympathy for Israel and world antipathy towards Palestinians.

Jewish Immigration

As Yasser Arafat stated in his speech at the UN, we believe that all Jews who are living in Israel must have the right to remain there. And in principle, we are prepared to accept that Jews living abroad who are really in need of a refuge and a new home should continue to be permitted to come and settle in Palestine. There was never any objection on our part to the immigration of such *bona fide* refugees until political Zionism sought to make use of them as the advance guard for the establishment of a settler state. But in practice we would maintain that on grounds of justice and relative need the "ingathering" of our exiles, the Palestine refugees, ought to take priority.

We make no apology for our opposition to the Zionist State as it exists today. We have every right and every reason to oppose it and we shall continue to do so, so long as it retains its present

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OTHER REPORTS OF INTEREST

ISRAELI DEFENSE MINISTER SHIMON PERES HAS DRAWN UP A PLAN FOR WEST BANK-GAZA AUTONOMY that calls for the staged transfer of all administrative power to the Palestinian residents of the occupied territories, Israel's *Yediot Ahronot* reports. The move, discussed several times in the recent past by Israeli leaders, would be aimed at undermining the appeal of the Palestine Liberation Organization in the territories (WP 4/10-23).

EVICCTIONS OF ARABS FROM THE JEWISH QUARTER OF JERUSALEM'S OLD CITY ARE NEARLY COMPLETE, but have slowed recently, the *New York Times* reports, because authorities have reached what Jerusalem Mayor Teddy Kollek describes as the "hard core" of Arabs who have lived for generations in the quarter and have papers to prove it (NYT 4/10-15). In the past four years some 5,000 to 6,000 Arabs have been evicted from their homes in the Old City's Jewish Quarter to make room for the quarter's reconstruction to house 4,000 Jews. Some 2,000 Jews were forced to flee the 25-acre area when Jordan's Arab Legion captured the Old City in the 1948 Arab-Israeli war. For centuries the quarter has been a center of Jewish life and scholarship and has been predominantly but not exclusively Jewish, according to the *Times*. The head of the corporation renovating the quarter, Erwin Shimron, has said only a few dozen Arabs will be left in the area when the project is completed, while Mayor Kollek estimates that several hundred will remain. The eviction of Arab residents is being carried out under a British Mandate law retained by Israel that permits evictions and land seizures for undefined "public purposes." The application of the law in this case and the direct substitution of populations, Jewish for Arab, has provoked some controversy. One prominent Jerusalem lawyer has been aiding Arabs facing eviction, while the American Friends Service Committee has established a legal-service office for the same purpose. Court cases have focused on the amount of compensation evictees are entitled to, rather than the legality of the evictions.

TENSION GROWS
BETWEEN SYRIA
AND IRAQ

Tension between Syria and Iraq has increased sharply with Iraq's request for an Arab League meeting to deal with a dispute over Euphrates River waters, and Syria's arrest of 120 pro-Iraqi members of the Syrian Baathist Party. Damascus and Baghdad radio broadcasts are attacking each other with a ferocity unheard in recent years.

The dispute over the waters of the Euphrates River dates back many years and involves Turkey, where the river's source lies, as well as Syria and Iraq. But the problem has been aggravated by the completion last year of the giant Syrian dam at Tabqa. The Tabqa dam will permit a doubling of Syrian farmland and will make the country an exporter of electricity, but it has reduced the amount of water available to Iraqi farmers. Iraq's Irrigation Minister Makram Talabani has charged that the dam has reduced the flow of the Euphrates in Iraq from 920 cubic meters per second to 197 cubic meters, depriving Iraqi towns of enough water to meet their industrial, agricultural, and even in some cases their drinking needs.

Syria has arrested between 100 and 200 journalists, trade unionists, military men, and members of farming cooperatives on charges of plotting to undermine state security at a time when "imperialism

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SYRIA AND IRAQ
From page 2...

and Zionism are allied to split militant Syria in two and liquidate the Palestinian cause by capitulationist solutions." Most of the persons detained at Damascus' Mezze prison are supporters of the "historic leadership" of the Baath Party now exiled in Iraq. *Le Monde* correspondent Edouard Saab reports that "the Iraqi Baath has never lost interest in Syria and in recent months has made efforts to return the 'historic leaders' to power" in Damascus (LeM 4/11-3).

Syrian radio has attacked Iran's recent accord with Iraq, charging that the "fascist Iraqi right" was submitting to "the plans of imperialism" and sacrificing Arab national rights and territory in Arabistan [the Arabic-speaking province of Khouzistan in Iran]." Radio Baghdad, while generally more restrained, has accused the Syrians of "jeopardizing the lives of millions of our people in the towns and countryside of the Euphrates basin," and called on the Syrian people to "inform themselves" about the "dangers for which the Syrian regime is alone responsible." (BBC 4/11-5).

The deterioration of relations between Damascus and Baghdad coincides with the dramatic improvement of Iraq's ties with Iran that has allowed Baghdad to end its year-long war with Kurdish insurgents. Syria is expected to aid Kurdish remnants carrying low-level guerrilla activity from mountain strongholds (LeM).

NRP MULLS
NATIONAL
UNITY
ULTIMATUM

Leaders of Israel's National Religious Party are calling for the formation of a national unity government that would bring the right-wing Likud block into the country's ruling coalition. The NRP leaders are considering pulling out of the present coalition government if their national unity call is refused by the Labor-Mapam Alignment of Premier Yitzhak Rabin (JP 4/11-2).

At an April 10 meeting of the NRP's 51-man executive committee all party faction leaders expressed support for a national unity ultimatum, including Cabinet Minister for Social Welfare Michael Hazani, Party whip Avraham Melamed, Center-faction head Zerah Warhaftig, and Youth-Guard leader Yehuda Ben-Meir. No opposition was voiced to the idea. Arguing for a national unity government, Michael Hazani said that it was the NRP that had helped the government in rejecting the last Egyptian proposal for another Israeli-Egyptian disengagement accord. Hazani added that Egypt was not intent on peace.

Before the NRP joined the Rabin government six months ago, the government could count on only a one or two vote edge in the Knesset. NRP leaders are expected to decide later this month whether they will quit the government if their national unity call is refused. Mapam and parts of Labor are likely to turn down a coalition with the right-wing Likud.

OTHER SUMMARIES APPEAR ON PAGES 4 AND 8 THIS WEEK.

DOCUMENT: MIDDLE EAST SECTION OF FORD'S "STATE OF THE WORLD" ADDRESS

The following are President Ford's remarks on the Middle East in his April 11, 1975 "State of the World" address to a joint session of Congress:

The interests of America as well as our allies are vitally affected by what happens in the Middle East. So long as the state of tension continues, it threatens military crisis, the weakening of our alliances, the stability of the world economy, and confrontation among the nuclear superpowers. These are intolerable risks.

Because we are in the unique position of being able to deal with all parties, we have at their request been engaged for the past year and a half in a peacemaking effort unparalleled in the history of the region.

Our policy has brought remarkable successes on the road to peace. Last year two major disengagement agreements were negotiated and implemented with our help. For the first time in 30 years a process of negotiation on the basic political issues was begun-- and is continuing.

Unfortunately, the latest efforts to reach a further interim agreement between Israel and Egypt have been suspended. The issues dividing the parties are vital to them and not amenable to easy or quick solutions. However, the United States will not be discouraged.

The momentum toward peace that has been achieved over the last 18 months must and will be maintained.

The active role of the United States must and will be continued. The drift toward war must and will be prevented.

I pledge the United States to a major effort for peace in the Middle East-- an effort which I know has the solid support of the American people and their Congress. We are now examining how best to proceed. We have agreed in principle to reconvene the Geneva conference. We are prepared as well to explore other forums. The United States will move ahead on whatever course looks most promising either towards an overall settlement or interim agreements, should the parties desire them. We will not accept stagnation or a stalemate, with all its attendant risks to peace and prosperity and to our relations in and outside the region.

Source: New York Times 4/11-10

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FROM THE HEBREW AND ARABIC PRESS

COEXISTENCE, from page 1...

Zionist structure and denies to the indigenous Palestinians the rights it confers automatically on Jewish immigrants from anywhere else in the world. Let there be no doubt about this. Whatever settlement may emerge from Geneva or elsewhere will continue to be criticised and condemned by Palestinians so long as it envisages the continued existence of a racist state in Israel open to Jews from all over the world but closed to its original Arab inhabitants.

Now, before anyone runs away with the idea that what I am saying is confirmation of Israeli and Zionist allegations about the hopeless intransigence of the Palestinians and their determination to wreck the present hopes of peace in the Middle East, I would like to observe that it is by no means unheard of for a government or a country or a people to have to live with a state of affairs of which it does not approve, while continuing to declare its opposition to that state of affairs and its determination to do what it can to change it. The world cannot expect us to approve the maintenance of the present Zionist state of Israel. But we recognize that we may have to live with it for the time being until "insha'allah" [God willing], a better basis for coexistence emerges between our people and the Jewish people now settled in our land.

If it is right for Western democracies to look forward to a day when white supremacy in South Africa and Rhodesia will be replaced by a form of democratic rule under which white, black and colored people belonging to those countries will live together in peace and as equals, it is just as legitimate for us Palestinians to look forward to a day when Zionist supremacy in Israel will be replaced by a democratic system in which Jews, Moslems and Christians belonging to this land will live together in peace and equality. If we continue to proclaim this

as our aim we are *not* sabotaging peace (as the Israeli Government would have everyone believe), anymore than the British Government and indeed the United Nations are sabotaging peace when they call for an end to white racist rule in Rhodesia.

Israeli and Zionist propaganda habitually and, I believe, deliberately, confuses principle and practice in this matter and tries to convince the world that, because all Palestinians condemn in principle the Zionist state of Israel (as they all undoubtedly do), therefore they are all committed to its destruction by violence and force. Palestinian leaders may speak, as Yasser Arafat did at New York, of "living together in a framework of just peace" and of not wishing "one drop of either Arab or Jewish blood to be shed". But whatever they say is ignored or brushed aside. For Israeli Zionist propagandists it is enough that we are opposed to political Zionism and its manifestation in Israel; that must mean that we are hell bent on its overthrow by violence and conflict and know no other way of achieving our end. But of course the one proposition does not necessarily follow from the other—though the *non sequitur* may not be obvious to Israelis, who have more reason than most to fear the truth of the adage that "those who live by the sword shall die by the sword".

Palestinian "Terrorism"

To turn now from principle to practice and method, I must first deal with the vexed question of Palestinian "terrorism", as it is usually called in the Western news media, or, as I would prefer to call it, "counter-terrorism" since it is in fact the product of and response to the state terrorism which Israel has pursued towards the Palestinians since the Zionist state was first established by violence and terror in 1948.

I am myself a man of peace and I deplore violence in political affairs, particularly when it involves innocent people who are not a party to the conflict. But by the normal and accepted standards of patriotic duty I do not

believe that anyone can justly condemn Palestinians for taking up arms against Israeli oppression. One may disagree with their choice of targets and may reject the violence of some of their actions. But in principle they have every bit as much justification for resorting to armed struggle against the oppressors of their people and the occupiers of their country as had the Maquis in France during World War II. Indeed, Israel's prolonged cruelty towards the Palestinians and violations of their rights, coupled with the international community's lamentable failure over so many years to put right the wrongs done to the Palestinians, afford a special justification for the Palestinians to resort to armed struggle. What else were they to do?

Harming the Cause?

As a practical matter, it is often said by Western observers that the Palestinian militants are harming their own cause by their acts of violence, and there is obviously some truth in this in so far as these acts may turn world opinion against them and lose the Palestinians sympathy among their fellow-men. But against this two questions may be put. First, is there any evidence to show that the Palestinians have anything very positive to gain from the sympathy of a world which showed itself so indifferent to their plight during the years before they took up arms on any significant scale? What practical value has sympathy, in the face of Israeli intransigence and Zionist manipulation of the news media? And second, is there not ample evidence that it was only when the Palestinians resorted to armed struggle that the rest of the world began taking them seriously? Seven years ago, when the Security Council adopted its famous Resolution 242, the only mention it made of the Palestinians and their rights was a reference to the need to achieve "a just settlement of the refugee problem". Can anyone doubt that, if the Resolution were being adopted today, it would make much more specific reference to the Palestinians

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(Coexistence from page 5)

not as refugees but as a people possessing their own national rights?

Non-violent and Evolutionary Means

However, having now won a hearing from world opinion (primarily, I believe, as a result of militant action) the practical question for our Palestinian leadership in the context of possible peace negotiations is whether a continuation of the armed struggle against Israel is the most *effective* method to be pursued. In particular, if we assume that a probable outcome of any peace settlement is likely to be the establishment of some kind of Palestinian state on territory recovered from Israel, it seems to me that a very necessary and useful subject for discussion is whether we may then hope to pursue our unaltered, ultimate aim of a "state in partnership" covering the whole area of Israel/Palestine by non-violent and evolutionary means rather than by a continuation of armed struggle.

At the outset, let me admit at once that, even if such a strategy were adopted, it might well not be possible to rule out entirely continued sporadic acts of violence by individuals driven to desperation by continued injustice on the part of Israel under Zionist leadership. I am afraid that this is the penalty which Israel and the Israelis must be prepared to put up with for having taken another people's birth-right and having imposed their state on another people's ancestral land. But the possibility, even the likelihood, of occasional acts of violence by individuals ought not, I suggest, to discourage us from trying to follow a non-violent, evolutionary Palestinian approach to a tolerable form of co-existence between Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs, following on the establishment of a limited or partial peace settlement.

Basically, the question for the Palestinians, is whether they can afford to pursue a wait-and-see policy in the expectation that sooner or later, the Zionist structure of Israel is bound to disintegrate and give way to some more permanent and more acceptable form of coexistence. This is a speculative field of discussion and no one can be dogmatic about how the future may develop. But let me outline a possible projection of the future if a Palestinian state were established on a part of the Palestinian homeland and if the Palestinian leadership then decided to pursue an evolutionary strategy towards its ultimate goal of a "state in partnership".

Our first task would then be to secure a massive injection of external aid for the economic and social development of the Palestinian State with a view to putting it,

in time, on an equal footing with Israel in terms of industrial, technological and educational progress. I have no doubt that ample funds for an intensive program of development would be readily forthcoming from the Arab World and also, I would hope, from the international community at large.

An essential aspect of this program of development would be the creation of employment opportunities within the Palestine State with a view to maximizing its capacity to support population. For our second task would be to promote the progressive "ingathering" of the Palestinian exiles now living in diaspora and their rehabilitation on their own soil.

Dialogue and Open Borders

Thirdly, we would aim to open and maintain a continuous and developing dialogue with any elements within Israel who were prepared to meet and talk with Palestinians regarding the form of a mutually acceptable coexistence which might in time be developed between the two peoples living in the country to which they both lay claim. We have our own ideas on this subject of course, but we would approach the dialogue with open minds, ready to listen to what Israelis have to suggest as well as to put forward our own suggestions.

To promote confidence and a frank and realistic exchange of ideas, consideration could be given to the maintenance of open frontiers between Israel and the Palestinian State and to permitting, even encouraging, a mutual interpenetration of commerce, industry and cultural activities. Within reasonable limits and having regard to the need to provide for the ingathering of the exiled Palestinians, one need not even exclude the idea of allowing Israeli Jews to live in the Palestinian state (not, of course, in paramilitary settlements, like the existing *nahals*, but as peaceful private individuals prepared to live in harmony with their neighbors) provided they accepted Palestinian citizenship and provided a corresponding concession were made to enable Palestinians to go and live in Israel. In the Middle East of today, these ideas may sound like a dream. But this is the Palestine of tomorrow which the Palestinians dream of, as Yasser Arafat said at the UN.

All of this will take time and must depend on the maintenance of effective security for the infant Palestinian State. This is a real problem. We have heard so much in the past of Israel's need for security, but to us Palestinians and to other Arabs living in the countries adjacent to Israel this seems like putting the boot on the wrong foot. We believe, on the basis of our experience over the past twenty-seven years, that we are more

in need of protection against Israel than Israel is of protection against the Arabs. I know that Western opinion has difficulty in believing this, but the truth is—and this is attested to by international peace-keepers like General E.L.M. Burns and General Carl von Horn, as well as by Israelis themselves—that it has suited the book of Israel's leaders in the past to have conditions of instability prevailing on her borders so that these would be exploited from time to time to provide pretexts for renewed war and renewed opportunities of expansion. If a limited settlement is to survive and gain time for the two peoples to learn to live together at peace and in mutual tolerance, the first necessity is to provide the most cast-iron safeguards possible against a Ben Gurion or a Moshe Dayan or an Arik Sharon contriving in future to manufacture a new crisis and a new conflict to upset the settlement if peace seems to be working to the disadvantage of Zionism in Israel. That will be the real risk once a settlement is reached. For our part, we Palestinians would be prepared to accept and indeed press for the most stringent and effective international safeguards *provided* they were directed not less at Israel than at the new Palestinian State and Israel's other Arab neighbors.

Changes in Israel

It will not be easy—indeed I would say it is virtually impossible—for Zionism in Israel, penned back within the 1967 borders and shorn of its dynamic expansionism, to live in peace with its neighbors and still to survive. Once those conditions have been established, either Israel will have to burst out of them and resume its aggressive role or it will have to change internally and shed its Zionist character. I hope the latter will take place and that is why I have placed such stress on the needs for safeguards against renewed aggression and expansionism by Israel.

Consider what is likely to happen within Israel if a settlement emerges in Geneva which includes the establishment of a Palestinian state and which can be stabilized by the introduction of really effective safeguards against future breaches of the peace.

Up to now, the momentum of Zionism has been maintained by the fear of insecurity, by anti-Semitism (real or alleged), by threats of genocide and extermination and so on. Once stability and peace are ensured the momentum will be lost and the whole idea of political Zionism will lose much of its appeal both for Jews living in Israel and for their supporters outside. In these circumstances there is bound to be a falling-off in the massive flow of external aid into Israel. Even with this aid, Israel has not

found it easy to survive and has had constantly to importune its patient supporters for more. Without it, Israel is certainly not viable and would be quite unable to support the highly artificial level of economic activity which it has had in the past. As before the 1967 war, unemployment and severe balance-of-payments problems are likely to coincide. The level of taxation, already extremely burdensome, will have to be raised even higher. Again as before 1967, it is likely that the rate of emigration will sharply increase and more than offset any new immigration. (The Israeli authorities publish no figures for emigration from Israel, but reliable sources indicate that it is already almost as large as today's much reduced level of immigration.) Meanwhile, as a necessary part of the settlement, Israel will have had to withdraw from her 1967 conquests and to accept back at least a substantial number of the Palestinian inhabitants uprooted in 1947 and 1948. This will mark the end of an era for the Israelis, the end of a heady, intoxicating adventure in which their leaders have taught them to expect continuous success.

Already a growing number of Israelis are alive to the need for a new and more constructive attitude towards the Palestinians; they are aware that, without it, the sands are beginning to run out for them. As a result a new wind is blowing within Israel, a wind of truth and disillusionment. The conjunction of all these factors will drive all sensible, thoughtful people within Israel to re-appraise their country's future and its capacity to survive as an exclusive Zionist enclave—or "ghetto"—in the Arab World.

Cantonal Arrangements

Meanwhile also, the Palestinians will be sitting on the borders of Israel in our own Palestinian State with its embassies in Washington and London, Paris and Moscow, and its representatives seated (as they should have been long ago) in the United Nations. With the rising power of the Arab World behind us, we shall be watching and waiting, developing our human and material resources, gathering strength and drawing in our dispersed people with all their rich talents of industry, intellect and adaptability. And we shall be offering to anyone who cares to listen in Israel the chance to sit down and talk with us like sensible human beings about our future, on the basis not of conflict but of peaceful and mutually advantageous coexistence. We hope that it will be possible before long to work out a form of coexistence which will enable the two peoples to live together within a reunited Palestine, while maintaining through cantonal arrangements and a

constitutional division of legislative and administrative powers the distinctive character of each.

Not in our lifetime? Perhaps—though once the process of change begins within Israel it may proceed faster than anyone thinks. But in any case we Palestinians can afford to wait. We have learned to be patient through many painful years. Time, as well as justice, is on our side. And perhaps power also, in the fullness of time. One day men will be reading in their history books about the episode of

Zionist Israel and looking back on it, will see that it was, after all, only a passing aberration in the course of history in the Middle East.



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DOCUMENT: SENATOR MCGOVERN'S STATEMENT OF "MIDDLE EAST REALITIES"

At his April 4 press conference in Jerusalem, where he called for the creation of a Palestine state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Senator George McGovern read the following prepared statement listing "the realities of the Middle East" as he saw them, "beyond passion and prejudice."

- 1) The fact of Israel as a permanent, independent Jewish state... The recognition of this fact by all the states in the Middle East is essential to any peaceful settlement.
- 2) The increasing power of permanent, independent Arab states-- some of them richly endowed with oil, but all of them rich in historical and cultural values. The cooperation of these numerous Arab states is essential to the peace of the Middle East and to the wellbeing of the U.S.
- 3) The presence of several million Palestinians with their own history, but with an uncertain future and an unsatisfactory present. They are entitled to an independent homeland of their own.

[NOTE: Another version of McGovern's statement, distributed by his Washington office, included a reference to "a 2,000-year history" of the Palestinian Arabs. The reference was dropped before the Jerusalem press conference, though it drew criticism from a number of Israelis McGovern met, the *Jerusalem Post* reported.]

Source: Jerusalem Post 4/6-2



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