

Let Us Rethink Our “Special Relationship” With Israel

By Charles L. Black, Jr.
Sterling Professor of Law Emeritus,
Yale University



The book cover features a dark blue background with a faint, large-scale pattern of the American flag. In the top left corner, there is a small black and white portrait of Professor Charles L. Black, Jr. Below the portrait is his name. The title of the book is printed in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters in the upper right quadrant. Below the title is a small graphic showing the American flag, the US Capitol building, and the Star of David. At the bottom left, there is a quote from Hillary Clinton and a small graphic of the Star of David with an American flag. At the bottom right, there is a quote from Akhil Amar and the author's name.

**LET US RETHINK
OUR
“SPECIAL
RELATIONSHIP”
WITH ISRAEL**

Professor Charles L. Black, Jr.

“I believe that the so-called ‘special relationship’ now assumed to connect the United States and Israel ought to be radically rethought, in all its aspects and clear down to its deepest foundation. I believe such a rethinking would sooner or later put an end to this ‘special relationship’, in anything at all like its present form.

This ‘relationship’, as it now functions de facto, is precipitously and grossly incompatible with our country’s supposed dedication to the cause of human rights throughout the world; it poisons the sheer basic honesty of that dedication, and must more and more be seen to do so, by character and by the whole community of peoples and nations. I have no illusion that our extrication from this involvement, that visibly and invisibly ‘entanglement alliance’, will be easily or soon accomplished – or even that it is certain of accomplishment at any time, but that depends, after all, on the possibility or change in the knowledge and conscience of the whole American people, and we can’t begin to know about that until we try. I think it a duty to try, and to keep trying.”



“We are therefore ourselves fully responsible for the use to which Israel puts the power we place in its hands.”

“Extraordinary ability to blend legal issues into human terms”
Hillary Clinton

“So many of the great moral issues of the 20th century seem clear in retrospect, but were quite controversial at the time. He had the moral courage to go against his race, his class, his social circle.”
Yale Law Professor Akhil Amar

by Professor Charles L. Black, Jr.
Sterling Professor of Law Emeritus,
Yale University

Introduction by Mark Bruzonsky

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MarkBruzonsky.com/books

This 30-page sample of the 80-page book contains:

Contents Page
Introduction by Mark Bruzonsky
Preface by Charles Black
Page 1 by Charles Black
JCOME Information

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CONTENTS

JCOME Advisory Committee in 1989	
Introduction in 2021 <i>by Mark Bruzonsky</i>	1
Original Introduction <i>by Mark Bruzonsky</i>	14
Foreword <i>by Charles L. Black, Jr</i>	15
Let Us Rethink Our “Special Relationship” with Israel <i>by Charles L Black, Jr.</i>	19
Jewish Committee on the Middle East Statement: <i>“Time to Dissociate from Israeli Policies”</i>	67
JCOME Information	72
Photos of September 1989 pamphlet	73

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(At the time Professor Black originally wrote this in 1989
and it was published by JCOME in pamphlet form)

INTRODUCTION

By Mark Bruzonsky

(Washington, DC - March 2021) The "Special Relationship" between the United States and Israel is unique in history. Indeed, it is more than "Special", it is unprecedented, it is *sui generis*. And it is more than a "Relationship", it is such a close connection that there have been many jokes over the years about Israel being the "51st State". With other jokes that "Congress is Israeli Occupied Territory". And so many stories about the extreme pressures brought on everyone by the extensive Israeli/Jewish lobby, including persons in the media, professors and students at Universities, Members of Congress, Senators, even Presidents, to never question that "Special Relationship" in public...or else.

No other country, even those much larger in territory, with far greater populations, and with considerably more natural resources and strategic value, has received such vast flows of money, arms, political support, and covert operations, over so long a period of time, as has the small Jewish State of Israel. Created out of Palestine in 1948 Israel has been expanding in territory, power, and international gravitas, as well as opprobrium, ever since.

There are so many statistics that can be pointed to. The vast amounts of federal funding plus special financial privileges along with tax benefits extended to Israel and those who support Israel are paramount. Indeed, if the many types of funds that have flowed from the United States to Israel are added up, even

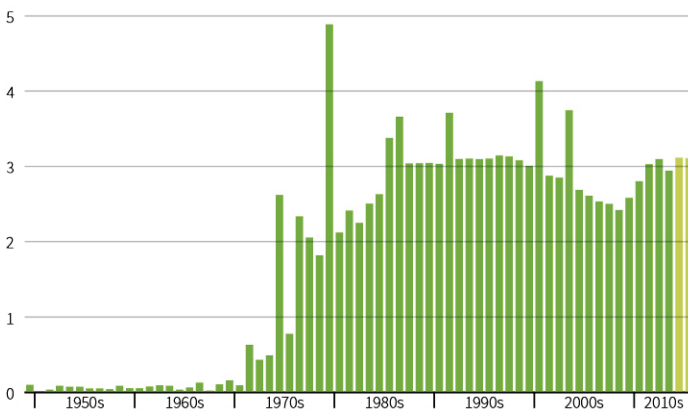
without adding in special military arms "sales" and off-the-books covert funding, the total is approaching \$150 billion, and if adjusted to today's dollars would be considerably more. Furthermore, nearly all past amounts originally passed by Congress as loans to Israel have been converted to grants and never repaid. At present, even with Israel being quite an advanced country with a high standard-of-living, nearly one-third of all U.S. foreign "assistance" goes to the very small Jewish State which has but .001 percent of the world's population and even less of the world's territory (Israel is about the size of Belize or Djibouti).

U.S. aid to Israel since FY1949

The United States has provided more than \$121 billion dollars in aid to Israel since FY1949. Military grants make up most of the aid.

BILATERAL AID TO ISRAEL

Billions of dollars



Note: FY1977 figure includes value from the transition quarter when the U.S. fiscal year changed from June to September; FY2013 figure is after sequestration; FY2014 figure = estimate; FY2015 figure = request.
Source: Congressional Research Service

C.Chan 27/02/2015

REUTERS

When it comes to the military and CIA/Mossad connections, Israel also is quite unique. Indeed, for many years the U.S. had

fulfilled its pledge to provide Israel with the most advanced and deadly weaponry superior to that of all the regional Arab and Muslim countries combined. There are very many joint military programs underway, more and more year each year. In recent years the U.S. has added extra funding for Israel to develop the most sophisticated anti-missile systems, held more joint military planning exercises, stationed military forces in or with special connections to the country. And there is no country in the Middle East which has maintained closer and more intimate relations between "intelligence" services as is the situation with Israel.

Furthermore, all of these uniquely special connections to Israel have taken place while Israel has developed a vast arsenal of nuclear weapons, along with the most advanced land, sea, and air delivery systems far superior to all other regional countries combined and completely contrary to U.S. and international laws. Going back to the 1960s Israel began developing a stealth nuclear weapons capability, all along, we have since learned, with covert help from prominent American Jews coordinated with multiple forms of American assistance with official Washington turning a blind eye to what was going on. Indeed, Israel has refused to join the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty or to abide by all international law and inspection agreements, thus fueling the increasingly dangerous regional arms race.

There are many reasons behind how this uniquely "Special Relationship" began and how it has constantly escalated over the decades.

Originally, in the years of World War II leading up to Israel's creation, the plight of European Jewry so tragically decimated by the Holocaust understandably brought great concern and sympathy. Though American borders were largely closed by law to Jews at that time, the growing influence of the world Zionist movement facilitated Jewish refugees going to Palestine, something increasing opposed and demonstrated against by the

largely Muslim and Christian Arab Palestinians. Then, against great opposition from his own most distinguished Secretaries of State and Defense, President Truman literally forced the United Nations General Assembly to reconsider a negative vote and revote to partition Palestine; then immediately recognizing the Jewish State within minutes of its proclamation.



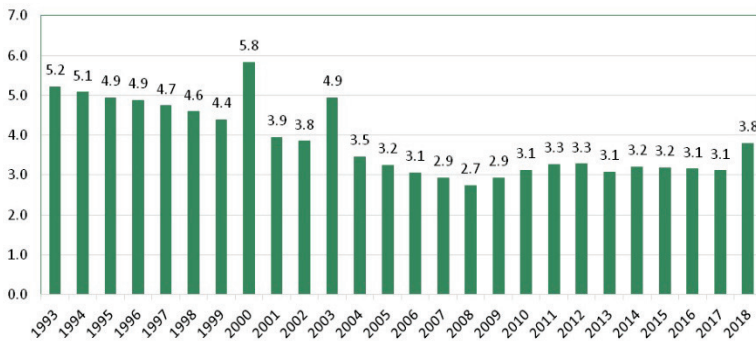
But even before this, going back to the Wilson Presidency and World War I, the then much more behind-the-scenes Jewish/Zionist lobby, led by Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis, played a major role in getting the U.S. to join the war, then in cajoling the United Kingdom to proclaim the Balfour Declaration,

and then in aiding the British to take over control of Palestine through the ruse of an imposed "Mandate" from the Western-created League of Nations. Throughout the interwar years the British proceeded to implement The Balfour Declaration helping the Zionist movement to grow, to bring more Jews to Palestine, and eventually to prevail in the war with the Arabs that broke out when the exhausted British left Palestine and the Americans took over through the then embryonic United Nations.

There is considerable information about all that happened since the founding of the Zionist Movement by Theodore Herzl at the

end of the 19th century in a book I have recently written titled *The Life and Death of the "Two-State Solution."**

This book you are now about to read, by one of America's most important and remembered Professors of Law, Charles L. Black, is also unique. Professor Black's long and distinguished career was at Yale University Law School where upon his retirement an entire issue of the *Yale Law Review* was devoted to his legal teaching and writings. It was in 1956 that Professor Black joined the Yale law faculty as its first Henry R. Luce professor of jurisprudence. In 1975, he became the Sterling professor of law, the Yale school's highest teaching post, and one he held until 1986, when he retired and became the Sterling professor emeritus of law. At his retirement, the law school student body gathered in a dining room and sang, "The Battle Hymn of the Republic."



Billions of dollars from the U.S. to Israel 1993-2018

Emeritus from Yale, Black then went on to teach at Columbia University Law School in New York City, where his wife had become Dean, until 1999. It was there that he wrote this manuscript in 1989, outraged by what had become known as the "First Intifada" that had begun in occupied Palestine in December 1987 and was still raging. Black passed away in 2001 but the importance of what he wrote has a significant

resonance today foreshadowing all that has happened since 1988, including how 9/11 was in part motivated by Arab and Muslim disgust with how the United States armed and funded the increasingly brutal and unconscionable occupation of the Palestinian people.

The unprincipled and dangerous U.S. support for Israel is what Black wanted to help Americans understand and bring to an end. What the Israelis have gone on to do since he wrote this now book is what Black's lengthy essay was meant to try to prevent. All of these reasons are why this special writing is being published at this time in book form.

There is a relevant story to how I came to know Professor Black. When his manuscript was being completed, I was at the time a journalist and political consultant in Washington, DC, very much involved with matters relating to Israel and the Palestinians. I had been Associate Editor of *Worldview Magazine* in New York, Forum Interview Editor of *The Middle East Magazine* in London, and special Representative of The World Jewish Congress appointed by Dr. Nahum Goldmann and his successor Philip Klutznick before the Israelis totally destroyed the WJC as an independent organization. I had edited books about the Middle East published by Congressional Quarterly and the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. These many positions had enabled me to travel extensively throughout Europe and the Middle East for many years, so much so that I had earned the greatest frequent traveler award in history -- a month of unlimited travel on Pan Am which I just happened to be using in that month when the Intifada erupted.

"His extraordinary ability to distill legal issues into human terms... a lesson that those of us who were honored to know him and be students of his will long remember."

*Tribute from Senator Hillary Clinton at Memorial Service***

Because of my many contacts and involvements, the year before Black wrote what is now this book, I had established the Jewish Committee on the Middle East**. This was shortly after my most recent visit to Israel and Palestine during the last days of 1987 when the expanding uprising was first becoming known as "The Intifada". I had been to Israel and Palestine so many times before. Indeed, as I mentioned, for the month of December 1987, arranged months in advance, I was quite literally flying the world on the biggest travel award ever offered by any airline -- a full month of international travel on any Pan Am plane. For that month all I had to do was go to any airport and I could get on any Pan Am plane and go anywhere in the world.

Actually, I had no intention to go to Israel or occupied Palestine or to any of the many European and Middle East countries that month. That's how I had earned the Pan Am month-long award in the first place. I was in Chile when the initial news broke from Gaza that new continual fighting was taking place. Within days it was becoming understood to be a grassroots rebellion that was not ending. The book I mentioned – *The Life and Death of the "Two-State Solution"* -- has much insightful information about this period in history and about my own involvements.

Essentially having my own airline at my disposal, until 31 December I was well aware, I decided at the last minute on Christmas day to fly to Israel. But this time it would be different, very different. I had no intention of meeting any of my Israeli friends or even of going anywhere in Israel. I arranged to be picked up at the airport by a Palestinian doctor and taken to a refugee Camp. Special arrangements had been made for me to stay in the camp for a few days. Yes, I was apprehensive and worried. Yes, I had been advised, including by the very special Palestinian woman who made the arrangements, that I should not go as it was too dangerous. But I felt I really had to. I trusted those who made the arrangements. And I had pictures of me with Arafat and other Palestinian leaders to

quickly show if any trouble resulted -- in those days all Palestinians looked to Arafat as their leader even though it was illegal for Israelis and all Palestinians in the occupied territories to even meet with Arafat or anyone in the PLO or even be seen with a Palestinian flag. But most of all, I realized that in just a few days my Pan Am Airlines extravaganza -- no cost, no reservations, just hop on any plane -- would be over!

“He was my hero. So many of the great moral issues of the 20th century seem clear in retrospect, but were quite controversial at the time. He had the moral courage to go against his race, his class, his social circle.”

*Yale Professor Akhil Amar, From NYTimes Obituary****

It was the impetus of the Intifada that also had captured Professor Black's attention. I was later to learn when I met him that he had never been to Palestine, never even met a Palestinian that he could remember. But he had a lifelong commitment and special stature with regard to human rights and international law. And as he says in this book, he believed "We are therefore ourselves fully responsible for the use to which Israel puts the power we place in its hands". Seized with that responsibility he did what he had done throughout his career. He decided to put his concerns and ideas boldly down in writing.

A mutual friend, Henry Schwartzchild, then working in a senior position at the ACLU, sent me a draft of Black's essay sometime in the early months of 1989. I had asked that friend to help me establish what became known as The Jewish Committee on the Middle East. The original Statement of Principles -- "Time to Disassociation from Israeli Policies" -- had been published in early February 1988 on the back cover of *The Nation Magazine* launching JCOME about a year before I got Black's manuscript. All that took place in those years is the story for another book that I decided to finally write during the Pandemic sequestration, *The Jewish Origins of BDS (Boycott, Divestment,*

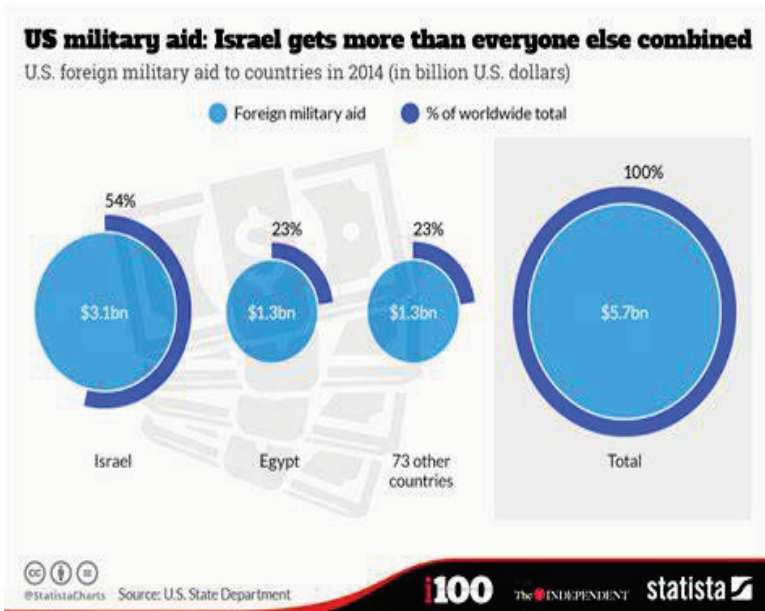
and Sanctions) – *The Story of The Jewish Committee on the Middle East.**

When I initially read Black's manuscript, I was both shocked and inspired. Right away, as the person who had set up JCOME, at that time I wanted to know who was Charles Black and if he was Jewish. As a journalist, then writing a weekly column known as "From Washington" and published in newspapers in many countries in the Middle East -- including Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, and Palestine -- I wanted to know when and where Black's lengthy essay would be published and the soonest I could quote from it. So I got my friend Henry to give me Black's personal phone number and I just called him out of the blue.

Black had no idea who I was, and Henry needed to remain in the background. Black was evasive, and in fact he seemed upset and apprehensive that I even had a copy of his manuscript and his phone number, especially as I couldn't tell him how. As a result of these circumstances, it was not a long conversation. But before it ended, I took the chance to warn Black that I thought there would be all kinds of attempts to get him to edit it, to water it down, to not be so critical of Israel, indeed maybe to hold off publishing it at all. I further warned him that unless he succumbed, which he should not do I emphasized, he might not even be able to get any significant U.S. journal or magazine to publish it. At the time, it was quite evident that my audacity in saying these things to him hastened the end of the phone call.

A few months later, very unexpectedly for sure, I got a phone call in my small office at the Dupont Circle Building. The caller quickly simply said "This is Professor Charles Black" and at first, never expecting to hear from him, I didn't realize who was calling. Then immediately when I did, I quickly prepared myself to be chastised and/or to be told how wrong I was as it was being published in some major journal or magazine.

But actually the call was quite different and after all these years has led to this book publication.



Professor Black said to me something along these lines: "When you called me many months ago, and when you urged me to not edit or water down what I had written, and when you told me maybe nobody would publish it unless I did so, I didn't know who you were or how you even had my manuscript. Yes, at the time I dismissed you. Now I know who you are. And now it has come to pass that what you told me was right. For the first time in my life no one will publish what I have written!" He made reference to a huge publication list, as I recall about 40 pages in small type going back decades to the 1950s and his involvement in one of the most important Supreme Court cases, *Brown v. Board of Education*.

He then said, to further reconstruct, "You were right about everything. Now I know who you are. I want you to come to New York tomorrow and have lunch with me. Take the shuttle

and I will pay for everything." He didn't even stop to ask if I was free tomorrow, and I didn't raise any questions knowing immediately that I would just cancel everything and do what he said. He gave me his address, which turned out to be an apartment complex across the street from the Columbia University Law School, and he told me they would announce me when I had arrived and I should come right up to his apartment where we would have lunch (no pocket cell phones in 1989!).

“ Colleagues were often struck by his legal insights, and a writing style that was eloquent and powerful.

He also wrote more than 20 books and hundreds of articles on constitutional law, admiralty law, capital punishment, the role of the judiciary and other legal subjects, including “Impeachment: A Handbook,” that was widely praised in 1974, when President Richard M. Nixon resigned in the Watergate scandal, and also when reissued during the 1999 proceedings against President Bill Clinton.

As his bibliography and his reputation as a constitutional scholar grew over the years, Professor Black was often sought out by reporters for opinions on civil rights, the death penalty, impeachment and other national issues. He also wrote extensively for legal and academic journals, and occasionally for The New York Times and other publications.”

*From New York Times obituary, 8 May 2001 ****

It was then that I learned Black had never met a Palestinian and had no Palestinian friends. As I recall he vaguely knew the name of Edward Said, one of the most distinguished American Palestinians who also taught at Columbia and lived just a few blocks from him. He did have many establishment friends. Later I was to learn that he had in fact taught Hillary Clinton who at the time of his death was to praise and laud him speaking at his funeral – then as the former First Lady and at that time Senator from New York. He did have many Jewish friends, most very much supportive of Israel. His wife, then the Dean of Columbia University Law School, was proudly Jewish and he introduced me to her when she came home as we spent the entire afternoon continuing to talk in their apartment.

Whatever one's view of the justification for providing such a flow of money, arms, along with unprecedented political and covert assistance to tiny Israel, the focus of Professor Black's remarkable essay, now available for the first time in book form, is human rights and what the Israelis have done to the Palestinian people. Things have become much much worse since. When Black wrote the apartheid restrictions were just beginning, there was no wall, no by-pass roads, travel between West Bank cities, Jerusalem, and Gaza was easy compared to the major restrictions increasingly instituted since then.

At the Memorial Service and Celebration of the Life of Professor Charles Black when he died, one of the three speakers was, as I mentioned, Hillary Rodham Clinton, then U.S. Senator, remembering how both she and Bill had been students of his at Yale. She concluded her remarks, after recalling how often she went to him and called him for advice, saying "Even to the end, memorable, unforgettable, and lovable" adding words about "his extraordinary ability to distill legal issues into human terms...a lesson that those of us who were honored to know him and be students of his will long remember."**

* All books mentioned, including this one can be ordered from
MarkBruzonsky.com/books

** [Tribute to Charles Black by Hillary Clinton \(yale.edu\)](http://digitalcommons.law.yale.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.bing.com/&httpsredir=1&article=4604&context=yj)
<https://digitalcommons.law.yale.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.bing.com/&httpsredir=1&article=4604&context=yj>

*** [Charles L. Black Jr., 85, Constitutional Law Expert Who Wrote on Impeachment, Dies - The New York Times \(nytimes.com\)](https://www.nytimes.com/2001/05/08/nyregion/charles-l-black-jr-85-constitutional-law-expert-who-wrote-on-impeachment-dies.html?searchResultPosition=1)
<https://www.nytimes.com/2001/05/08/nyregion/charles-l-black-jr-85-constitutional-law-expert-who-wrote-on-impeachment-dies.html?searchResultPosition=1>

*All books mentioned, this one soon to be available, can be ordered from:
MarkBruzonsky.com/books

Note: The pamphlet published by JCOME in 1989 was precisely as written by Professor Black without any editing. That was his decision and our agreement at the time. What follows now for the first time in book form is the same without any editing of content or style which accounts for some of the extended language and flow-on sentences and paragraphs.

MAB

Original Introduction

Occasionally a special person comes forward at a crucial time to help us reconsider an issue of great historic importance. This pamphlet represents such a unique set of circumstances.

Charles L. Black, Jr., is one of America's most eminent legal thinkers. At the Yale Law School Black was Henry R. Luce Professor of Jurisprudence and later became Sterling Professor of Law. Black was a participant in the landmark 1954 school desegregation case, *Brown v. Board of Education*, as well as many other important civil rights and constitutional law cases before the Supreme Court. In 1986 the students honored Black upon his retirement by devoting the July issue of the *Yale Law Review* to testimonials to his career along with reviews and reprints of some of his works.

JCOME is honored and privileged to publish this pamphlet. But we did so only after this distinguished scholar – whose personal bibliography spans four decades, hundreds of titles, and dozens of important issues – was unable to find an American periodical to publish these controversial views.

Consequently, this essay was mostly written a year ago and the situation it describes has gotten considerably worse. The number of deaths and injuries have increased to more than twice the conservative figures Black uses, and leading Israeli personalities have even charged that war crimes are being committed. But the general considerations that propelled Black to write remain the same if not even more urgent.

Further, it is precisely because it is so difficult to get a fair hearing for these ideas in the U.S. today that we feel this pamphlet to be so important. Precisely because we are American Jews, we feel a special obligation to encourage all Americans to rethink the “special relationship” with Israel and to work for new policies in the Middle East consistent with professed American values.

Mark A. Bruzonsky

JCOME Founder & Chairperson

Foreword

The piece that follows was mostly written before our government yielded sufficiently to the reality-principle to start talks with the PLO, and before Secretary of State Baker delivered an address that did seem to introduce traces of sanity and balance into our official positions on the Palestinian question.

But our talking to the PLO looks like a bold step only because we had before taken such a crazy position. And the Secretary’s speech seemed balanced only by contrast with an almost complete imbalance in our positions of the past.

First, having said that the Palestinians have “political rights”, he reiterated the earlier announced position that “...the United States does not support...

the creation of an independent Palestinian state.” I reel at the idea that the United States of America is to decide that a distant people, living in discrete territories, ought not to have a “state”. What right do we have to record such a denial? And if we do have an interest in the question, how can it be that the American people have an interest in denying this “political right” to the Palestinian people?

Even deeper is another flaw. The Secretary failed adequately to address the resolute cruelty of the measures Israel has taken against the Uprising—failed to say clearly, ringingly, that the hideous violations by Israel of the human rights of the Palestinians are things that the United States does not just barely deplore, by faint and uncertain allusion, but utterly and forthrightly condemns on the basis of the core-principles that underlie the moral life of our own nation. That is what the United States is supposed to be all about.

Then, by a tragic coincidence, it was brought all the way home to me that we are still in the same old rut. I heard and viewed our government’s reactions to the horrible events in China in early June. These “butcheries” (in this case often publicly so called by their true name) drew from our President, and the Secretary of State, denunciations that at least began to be adequate, and even some stern sanctions—while Congressional critics called for more and more drastic measures.

I reminded myself then that the President, and his Secretary of State, are not saying or, above all, doing anything in a like vein about the political killings committed by Israel. And I was dumbfounded, even disgusted, to see, among the Congressional proponents of harder sanctions against China, some of the chiefest pro-Israel people, through thick and thin, killings or no killings.

Yet China has a population about 800 times the Palestinian population of the West Bank and Gaza. Just the six inhabitants massacred by Israel's armed forces in the one village of Nahalin on one day, April 13 last, stand in proportion to this Palestinian population as 4800 dead would stand to the population of China. In the cruelest single day so far in the hideous Chinese business, it now seems unlikely that quite that many have been killed. The Chinese government would have to kill 232,000 young street-protestors in a year to match the proportion of deaths in the Palestinian Occupied Lands inflicted by Israel in the first year of the Uprising!

It's not that these two things can in no way be distinguished—though I wouldn't much like to have the job. Attempted distinctions could be talked about. But what happened was that no public person that I heard or saw, commenting on the Chinese slaughter, even so much as alluded in passing to there being an

arresting similarity between Beijing and the West Bank.

Then our President, in a June press conference, passed up a chance to give his thoughts on this similarity. A couple of days later, the United States vetoed, in the Security Council of the United Nations, yet another resolution critical of Israel on the ground of it not being “balanced”—though all the other Council members (representing, pretty much, the civilized world) approved.

I thought about all this, and I judged that things here hadn’t changed enough to matter. I still feel an obligation and a desire, just as strong as ever, to put forward these thoughts about our “special relationship” with Israel and I am deeply grateful to *The Jewish Committee On The Middle East* for making it possible for me to do so.

C.L.B., Jr. - September 1989

Let Us Rethink Our “Special Relationship” With Israel

By Charles L. Black, Jr.
Sterling Professor of Law Emeritus,
Yale University

I believe that the so-called “special relationship” now assumed to connect the United States and Israel ought to be radically rethought, in all its aspects and clear down to its deepest foundations. I believe such a rethinking would sooner or later put an end to this “special relationship”, in anything at all like its present form.

This “relationship”, as it now functions *de facto*, is sweepingly and grossly incompatible with our country’s supposed dedication to the cause of human rights throughout the world; it poisons the sheer basic honesty of that dedication, and must more and more be seen to do so, by ourselves and by the whole community of peoples and nations. I have no illusion that our extrication from this involvement, this visibly and invisibly “entangling alliance”, will be easily or soon accomplished—or even that it is certain of accomplishment at any time. But that depends, after all, on the possibility of change in the knowledge and conscience of the whole American

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This is JCOME's "Statement of Principles" first published in early February, 1988. Since then, it has been published in many magazines and newspapers, including *The Nation*, *The Progressive*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, *The New York Review of Books*, and *L.A Weekly*. The Statement has been endorsed by thousands of American Jews, including professors at over 125 universities nationwide.

Time to Dissociate From Israeli Policies

We are Americans and Jews and we come together at this time to publicly express our strong desire to see the United States take meaningful steps to dissociate our country from the policies of Israel.

For some years we have witnessed Israel increasingly deviating from policies we find acceptable and from moral values that we hold dear. These developments are not the responsibility of any single party in Israel but rather stem, in our judgement, from a tragically misguided approach toward the Arab world in which Israel is located, a racialist ideology, and a growing militancy. We can no longer condone or be associated with such Israeli behavior, nor, do we believe, should our country.

In recent years Israel has twisted away from basic commitments made in many international agreements including Camp David; continued to annex territories including East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights while expanding settlements throughout the occupied territories; and used its military to bomb and invade neighboring countries, at a cost of tens of

thousands dead and wounded, as well as to assassinate Palestinian leaders.

Furthermore, Israeli policies and attitudes toward the Palestinian people have made it evident that only major changes in Israel's fundamental posture will allow for a peaceful political settlement with the Palestinians.

Covert Israeli complicity in arming the Contras, the Iranians, and other reactionary regimes, coupled with Israel's employment of American Jews as spies against the U.S., further underscore the growing dangers inherent in the current U.S.-Israeli relationship. The close identification in the public mind between Israel and Jews -- an equation vigorously fostered by Israel and the American Jewish lobby which is under its control -- threatens to stigmatize Jews everywhere.

The ongoing acts of killings, beatings, curfews, expulsions, house arrests, collective punishments, home demolitions, tax raids, and press censorship -- all against unarmed Palestinians living in areas Israel has occupied through military force for 22 years -- further demonstrate that Israel has become a badly fractured nation with many unfortunate similarities to the situation that prevails in South Africa. Our ancestors came to the United States because, as a result of their Jewishness, they were discriminated against and abused. The European experience culminated in the horrors of the Nail Holocaust. How tragic that in our own time the very State established by Jews in the aftermath of this evil has become a place where racialism, religious discrimination, militarism and injustice prevail; and that Israel itself has become a pariah state within the world community. Events taking place today are all too reminiscent of the pogroms from which our own forefathers fled two and three generations ago -- but this time those in authority are Jews and the victims are Moslem and Christian Palestinians.

We believe that Israel's course could not be maintained but for the continuing financial, political, military and covert support of the U.S. government. And we fear that unless firm steps of

disengagement from Israel are taken soon our country might get dragged into a major war for which preparations already appear underway.

For all these reasons we believe the time has come to normalize the U.S. relationship with Israel. A complete re-evaluation of what has become since 1967 the American sponsorship of Israel is required. We believe economic aid should be suspended until Israel agrees to self-determination for the Palestinian people along with withdrawal from the occupied territories pending mutually agreed security guarantees. And we believe that military and intelligence assistance should be radically reduced to demonstrate American refusal to endorse Israeli policies as well as the imperative of insisting upon a negotiated peace and an end to the brutal occupation. Unfortunately, in recent years much the opposite course has been followed by the Reagan and Bush Administrations, and Israel has practically become a ward of the United States.

Consequently, we urge an urgent and open debate about the serious problems and dangers which have resulted from the current structure of U.S.-Israeli relations. Few foreign policy issues are of such importance to our country. And so we call upon our elected public officials to resist the widespread inhibitions about speaking up about Israel, inhibitions which result from the severe financial, political and ideological pressures often brought against those who do.

We further believe that the time is overdue for negotiations between the Israeli government and the PLO which is beyond doubt the accepted representative for the great majority of Palestinians; negotiations that should quickly lead to full recognition of the Palestinian State proclaimed last November by the Palestinian National Council and reasonable security guarantees for all parties. In the security guarantees we think our country should participate; but no longer in the financing and supporting of the kinds of policies Israel has been pursuing.

The continual oppression and denial of self-determination for the Palestinians is an injustice which has become intolerable not only to those demonstrating for their freedom in East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip; but to many Jews throughout the world as well.

The citizens of Israel, of course, will ultimately choose their own country's destiny. But at the very least the citizens of the United States should stop financing and encouraging policies that are contrary to the principles and values we hold precious as Americans and Jews.

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Note: This Statement of Principles was published in the 1989 pamphlet along with Professor Charles Black's manuscript. It had been first published on the back cover of *The Nation* magazine in early February 1988, just two months after the modern-day Palestinian Intifada began, with the 18 original signers shown. Very quickly many Jews around the country endorsed the Statement and it was soon republished in *The New York Review of Books* in March with hundreds of signatures. Soon Jewish Professors at over 125 American Universities endorsed it. In April it was republished in full in *The Congressional Record*.

The previously untold story of JCOME will soon be available as a book titled *The Jewish Origins of B.D.S. (Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions) – The Story of the Jewish Committee On The Middle East*. This book includes reproductions of the many dozens of full-page magazine ads and statements published by JCOME and links to the video documentaries.*

JCOME

Jewish Committee on the Middle East


During the years of the first Intifada in Occupied Palestine - 1987 to 1993 - a group of Jewish professionals created a unique organization known as The Jewish Committee on the Middle East. JCOME published a historic [Statement of Principles](#) and followed that with numerous [full-page magazine ads](#) calling for a major change in U.S. Middle East policies and serious efforts to create a Palestinian State. These nearly one hundred magazine ads appeared in many publications throughout the U.S. including *The New York Review of Books*, *The Nation*, *LA Weekly*, *The Progressive*, *Roll Call*, *The Village Voice*, *The Washington Report*, *In These Times*, *The Washington City Paper*, and other publications. The Statement of Principles was also reprinted in the Congressional Record, and when JCOME was asked to testify before a Congressional Committee, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) organization, popularly known as the Israel Lobby, protested. When unsuccessful in blocking JCOME, AIPAC refused to attend

JCOME, led by founder [Mark Bruzonsky](#), produced and broadcast [three unique video documentaries](#) on cable TV throughout the United States: Palestinian Statehood, We Dare to Speak, and Chomsky: The New World Order, Latin America, and The Middle East. JCOME also stepped forward, when all American magazines and journals refused, to publish a unique [pamphlet](#) authored by distinguished Yale University Law School Professor Charles Black: "Let Us Rethink Our 'Special Relationship' With Israel". In retrospect, JCOME's efforts were the origins of today's BDS - Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions - Movement that has spread throughout the U.S. and worldwide in recent years. *The Origins of BDS - The Story of the Jewish Committee on the Middle East*, is the title of the forthcoming [book](#) that tells the story of how and why JCOME was created and makes available for the first time the entire collection of magazine pages as well as the Congressional testimony and Professor Black pamphlet.

JCOME had to end its activities in 1994, but Mark Bruzonsky and persons associated with JCOME from the past can be reached by email at JCOME@jcome.org and by phone at 202-362-5266.

Below are pictures of the Pamphlet as published in September 1989.
 Forty thousand were published to fit in business envelopes in which they were mailed.
 And copies were inserted in an issue of *The Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*.

**LET US RETHINK
 OUR "SPECIAL
 RELATIONSHIP"
 WITH ISRAEL**



*"We are therefore ourselves fully responsible
 for the state to which Israel puts the power
 we place in its hands."*

By Professor Charles L. Black, Jr.
 Sterling Professor of Law Emeritus,
 Yale University

A publication of
 The Jewish Committee On The Middle East
 JCOEME

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**Time To Dissociate
 From Israeli Policies**

It is time to dissociate from Israeli policies and to demand that the Jewish Committee on the Middle East (JCOEME) dissociate from the Israeli government and its policies. The Jewish Committee on the Middle East (JCOEME) is a non-profit organization that has been established to promote the interests of the Jewish people in the Middle East. It has been established to promote the interests of the Jewish people in the Middle East. It has been established to promote the interests of the Jewish people in the Middle East.

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