

An American Jewish group is demanding a major reduction of the US economic and military aid to Israel until Israel agrees to Palestine state and ends its occupation of Arab territories. This development should help non-Jewish criticism of Israel in the US.

Not all Jews toe the line

ONE of the most promising developments in the American countryside, where, in my view, the battle for peace and justice in the Mid-east must be won, is the emergence of the Jewish Committee on the Middle East. Its membership and message prove that not all US Jews toe the Israeli line.

The group supports Palestinian independence in the occupied territories and urges "a major reduction of economic and military aid to Israel until Israel agrees to Palestinian statehood and ends the occupation."

Imagine! American Jews openly calling for a cut in aid to Israel! But read on. Other declarations are equally astounding.

In a fullpage advertisement on the back cover of a recent issue of the prominent magazine, *The Nation*, the organisation which goes by the acronym JCOME—backs its calls to "cut aid to Israel now!" with a powerful message.

The Jewish group puts responsibility squarely on the US government for "financing and encouraging (Israeli) policies that are contrary to the principles and values we hold precious." It warns that America has become an accomplice to "Israeli policies of aggression and brutal repression."

And it cites American support as key to Israel's ability to maintain these offensive policies: "We believe that Israel's course could not be maintained but for the continuing financial, political, military and covert support of the US government."

The message includes this somber warning: "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 are already underway."

SPEAK OUT



PAUL FINDLEY

The call appears over the signatures of 17 Jews, most of them prominent in academia. The organisation lists Jewish professors at more than 135 universities among its members and claims to speak for "thousands of concerned American Jews."

It has sponsored similar advertising in other major periodicals and has published a challenging address by Charles Black, a nationally-prominent Jewish legal scholar.

In it, Black declares that America is "fully responsible for the use to which Israel puts the power we place in its hands" and demands that "the so called special relationship now assumed to connect the US and Israel ought to be radically rethought."

This organisation's activity is not the only sign of a break from Israeli policies by American Jews. I.F. Stone, the recently deceased author and commentator, from Israel's very first days

lamented its treatment of Palestinians.

In interviewed him one day in a small office in downtown Washington. Stone warned, "Israel is on the wrong course." Perring through the thick lenses of his glasses, he added: "This period is the blackest in the history of the Jewish people. Arabs need to be dealt with as human beings."

Nahum Goldmann, one of the major architects of Israel, urged in vain that the actual creation of Israel be delayed until consultation could occur with Arab leaders.

He later noted the extraordinary growth in political power by Israel's lobby in the US and warned that it may backfire.

Hew wrote that "blind support" of the Likud government in Israel by American Jews "may be more menacing for Israel than any danger of Arab attack." He explained: "By giving (Israel's Likud) government the impression that the Jews are strong enough to force the American administration and Congress to follow every Israeli desire, they lead Israel on a ruinous path."

Philip Klutznick, Chicago developer and cabinet officer under president Jimmy Carter, and Arthur Kobacker, Ohio businessman and philanthropist, have been sharply critical for six years. Jeremy Levin, TV journalist, has been critical since his escape four years ago as a hostage in Lebanon.

Rita Hauser of New York and Stanley Sheinbaum of California, lifelong supporters of Israel, joined Yasser Arafat in his appearance at Stockholm last November, just before the PLO declared its acceptance of the two-state solution to the Mid-east impasse. But they acted as individuals. JCOME may be the

first example of a large group of organised American Jews breaking sharply with Israel.

Still, they battle against a powerful tide. American Jews over the years have been easily persuaded to leave decisions about Israeli policy entirely in the hands of Jews living in Israel. For one thing, having ignored the call summoning all Jews to Israel, they have a guilt complex. They stayed in America and enjoy the good life here. For another, they are cowed into silence by Israel's highly organised US lobby. The lobby uses all levers of influence with determination and skill but focuses first and foremost on the Jewish community itself. Its primary goal is to maintain the solidarity of American Jews behind Israeli policy, no matter where it leads. To that end, they use pressure tactics in both the social and economic realms that are often heavy-handed in order to force Jews to the line.

Will JCOME overcome the tide? If so, it will have a powerful influence far beyond America's Jewish community. As Jews criticise Israel in greater numbers, non-Jewish criticism becomes easier.

In appealing to what Abraham Lincoln might have called "the better angels of Jewish nature," they appeal also to what is best for non-Jewish Americans.

The Jews in JCOME may be acting substantially, if not mainly, out of understandable and laudable concern that Likud policies are destructive of Israel itself.

But, in doing so, they also act for America, which, after all, has no business financing policies a foreign state employs in order to repress brutally the human rights of an entire nationality and expand its territory by force of arms.

Sikh wrath reigns red in India's g

By John Pomfret

KARTAR Singh has a recurring nightmare. He's driving home from his machine tool factory. Sikh militants in

The fields of Punjab are green and lined with trees. The northwestern state is India's breadbasket, producing 60 percent of the country's rice and wheat.

to the police station to plea for his release, saying he was not a militant. The police said he had committed suicide.

Federal authorities recently sent the Nation-