

# Mid-East Realities

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Washington "Street Art" depicts one ever-present Mid-East Reality

A uniquely independent newsletter published for press information in association with The Jewish Committee On The Middle East (JCOME) and hundreds of Middle East scholars and writers throughout the United States.

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## Zogby - The Arab Uncle Tom And the approach of Camp David II



Martin Indyk

"I...work with a think tank, the Washington Institute. I have Michael Mandelbaum and Martin Indyk being foreign policy advisers... We will Bill Clinton's ear... He's going to be very good for us."

David Steiner - Former President, American Israel Public Affairs Committee (Nov. 1992)  
[Note: These comments recorded without Steiner's awareness]



Jim Zogby

"I'm real pleased with everybody...so far... The whole crew is balanced... Indyk's White House work on the peace process should be 'no problem', Zogby said."

Jim Zogby - President, Arab American Institute (Jan. 1993)

[Note: These comments to a surprised Washington Post reporter asking about Indyk's appointment]

Ever since a few quotes appeared in a gossip section in the back pages of THE WASHINGTON POST in January there's been a grand firestorm of protest calling one of the better-known Arab-American insiders here in Washington every name in the book.

Jim Zogby -- the Arab-American who is being subjected to unprecedented scorn -- just loves to see his name in print, to be quoted by the press, to be courted by those with power...and money.

And those pursuing the political agenda of trapping the Palestinians into a Camp David-II agreement are delighted to have someone of Arab-American background to use and abuse at will.

After all, whatever now needs to be said about Zogby, the key issue here is the relentless movement toward another Camp David-style deal that will extinguish the Intifada, establish some kind of reservation status for the Palestinians (called "autonomy" or "self-rule" of course), put Israel back in the saddle (as did the original Camp David deal some 15 years ago), and give the Americans another duplicitous diplomatic success.

Bringing about such a "historic" deal is precisely what Martin Indyk and the others that have been pushed into the Clinton White House and State Department by the Israeli lobby are there to bring about.

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considered for the position of Republican National Chairman.

These two together -- Zogby the Donkey (Democrat), Abraham the Elephant (Republican) -- set up AAI during the mid-1980s and have been prancing around Washington every since always seeking notoriety, entre, attention from the press, and, of course, funds.

But at least Abraham has done all this partly on his own merits as a Republican political operative. However out-of-step and unrepresentative he might be with most who share his ethnic heritage, in fairness to him he doesn't try to come off as Mr. Arab American.

Zogby, on the other hand, does his political dancing always at the expense of those far more in touch with Arab American concerns than he, always trading on his Arab American name while more and more stomping on Arab American interests.

It's a modern-day Uncle Tom approach, though Zogby always reacts with great indignation at such characterizations.

Ever since his bare-knuckles brawl with Jim Abourezk at the Arab American Anti-Discrimination Committee -- which resulted in Zogby being thrown out of ADC -- he has been off trying to prove his political manhood. And more and more Zogby has been doing so at the expense of the very basic concerns of the Arab American community he claims so erroneously to speak for.

In one sense there's really nothing new in all this, it's been going on for years in one way or another. The disdain that exists among many Arab Americans for Jim Zogby personally, precisely because of his political prostitution, has been rampant for some time now -- though not always well-known even inside Middle Eastern circles.

What is new, though, is that after his most recent activities and comments, what was a background disdain has become a torrential condemnation.

Individuals who have long tolerated Zogby have quite literally marched into his office shouting abuses. Mid-East types meet on the street in Washington and compete with each other in growing bouts of frustration to denounce Zogby.

"He's lost all shred of reason and decency," said one usually restrained individual, himself raising the subject of Zogby without even being asked.

"Who the Hell is Jim Zogby to be saying such things!" said another person long involved in Arab American affairs. "Jim Zogby extending an olive branch! All you have to do is pay him!"

This considerable swelling of hostile thoughts and feelings regarding Zogby -- expressions of disgust which have not very often found their way into print but rather have had their expression mostly in private conversations -- has for years branded Zogby as a grand opportunist and left it at that.

But even before the recent explosion of anger the Washington Mid-East grapevine has already been rife with enraged sentiments against Zogby for his increasingly crass attempts to find favor with the new Clinton Administration.

It seems Zogby has been willing to go to just about any length to try to have "access" with the new Clinton people and to try to be perceived as someone who can get to those in the new team now that all the Bush folks have departed.

For months now, even before the election, stories have been heard about Zogby's repeated attempts to cozy up to the so-called "moderates" in the Israeli lobby --

### WHY "Mid-East Realities"?

This is a newsletter born in war, blood, and deceit. American politicians of both parties have so regularly twisted the truth about U.S. involvements in the Middle East -- the real reasons behind these policies as well as the actual policies pursued -- that even experts are confused and bewildered.

Furthermore, the White House and CIA have so undermined the very nature of accountability that Congress finds itself continually deceived, and the press is often reduced to reporting more falsehoods and cover-ups than realities.

Furthermore, still, multinational business interests and foreign-influenced lobbies so distort media coverage of events that crucial facts and analysis are quite often well hidden from the American public.

Mid-East Realities will attempt to uncover the truths and expose the deceptions. And MER will assist those in the press wanting to delve into underlying Mid-East realities by making independent scholars and experts available. June 1992

playing footsie in order to ingratiate himself with a variety of establishment Jewish groups and personalities knowing that together they are a powerful group that has a very good foothold inside the new Clinton Administration.

In this process, it seems, Zogby seems to have jettisoned all sense of discretion and come to believe he can do anything he wants to do and say anything he wants to say without anyone standing up to him in public.

It's this kind of mind-set which explains how Zogby -- in the name of Arab Americans! -- came to public endorse the Clinton Administration's very bondage to the Israeli/Jewish lobby.

True enough, as Zogby's defenders will no doubt point out, what he did was abt less direct and more subtle than that.

Nevertheless, by endorsing Martin Indyk's appointment to the National Security Council, along with other Israeli-sponsored people to key Clinton Administration positions, the effect of Zogby's words reverberated in just such a way.

The Martin Indyk story is in itself a telling example of Washington intrigue, behind-the-scenes maneuvering, and jostling for power and influence. But more on that some other time.

At the moment, the focus here is really not on Indyk as an individual nor really on Zogby as an individual -- or how in both cases we have classic examples of how people prostitute themselves to court power, influence and money.

The real story in all this is how the Israelis, manipulating the Clinton Administration which owes them and their American Jewish backers so much, is pushing ahead -- with the backing of key Arab States -- to create a "new world order" in the Middle East and to sell-out the Palestinians in the process.

Under the little headline "An Olive Branch Over NSC Appointment" on page A21 of THE WASHINGTON POST on 21 January, here's what has finally ignited the quite unprecedented torrent of protests against him.

Here's how the POST story read, along with Zogby's specific quotations:

"Word that Australian-born Martin Indyk, head of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy -- which is often seen as pro-Israel -- is headed for the National Security Council does not seem to be sparking fireworks in the Arab-American community.

And the Zogby's of this world have been groomed -- throughout the past decade -- precisely so they can provide accolades for this process with the diplomats, with the press, and with whomever among Arab Americans still listens to them.

It is for these reasons that Jim Zogby, and this latest eruption of attacks on him, should be considered significant. Neither intellectually nor politically does Zogby as an individual count for much one way or another. It is only the role he is playing on behalf of those forces in the U.S., in Israel, and in the Arab world that desperately want to make some kind of a deal that a man like Zogby, and a place like the Arab-American Institute (AAI), are important.

If what is being prepared were going to be a real peace, one allowing the Palestinians their self-determination and promoting real democracy throughout the region, then little of this would be important. Such a deal would already command widespread support around the world as well as in the Middle East itself.

Rather, what's going on is quite the opposite. The deal that is being put together is specifically designed to push the Palestinian issue into the background while allowing Israel to retain effective control over the occupied territories -- both resources and people. The deal's will be course abound; indeed that's precisely what the negotiations both in public and behind-the-scenes are really all about -- treating the fig-leaves.

But a true peace, a comprehensive peace, the kind of peace so discussed for so long now in academic circles, his is not what lies ahead. For of far more importance to the key players -- Israel, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the U.S. -- is a diplomatic deal which keeps today's Middle East leaders in charge, the oil flowing at cheap prices, and the current distribution of power and wealth in place.

Middle Eastern leaders in key countries are more and more using their public relationship with the U.S., and their growing private relationships with Israel, to make sure that the 'reges for revolutionary and democratic change in the area are kept at bay.

Knowing that Israel is the strongest regional power, both in terms of military and covert capabilities, and knowing that Israel is not about to accept a real Palestinian State in the occupied territories, the political game has increasingly become how to "stabilize" the region with the help of Washington and Israel, while providing the Palestinian bourgeoisie with acceptable bribes and means of protection.

In this sense what the Egyptians did in the late 1970s -- essentially selling-out for billions of American dollars and under-the-table Israeli help to keep their regime in place -- is what key Arab states want to emulate; all the more so now that the U.S. is the only superpower left.

This is the overall context in which the issue of Jim Zogby has arisen with Zogby becoming, for many Arab-Americans, the epitome of duplicity, deal-making, backbiting, and political chicanery.

Zogby's Arab American Institute (AAI), promoted to the press and the politicians as an important institution representing Arab Americans, is hardly that at all in reality.

At the grassroots level Zogby actually has very little support of any kind -- and what there was has actually diminished over the years as his reputation for self-aggrandizement and politically selling out has spread far and wide.

More and more, it has become widely realized in recent years, Zogby has all along simply been capitalizing on his Arab-American name while pursuing an agenda mostly of benefit to himself and those he serves.

Even though Zogby has little Arab American grassroots

support, he does have the backing of a small clique that has attempted to push him and AAI forward in an attempt to coopt the political involvement of Arab Americans in the current "peace process".

Zogby has become, over the past few years, a rather crass creature of the special interests he serves -- both overseas and in the US -- always manipulating his contacts and exploiting to the full his considerable self-promotional skills on behalf of those who have their own self-serving political agendas.

In short, rather than a serious think-tank, lobbying organization, or even gathering place, Zogby has made AAI a kind of self-styled public relations firm, lending his articular voice for one cause or one politician today, another tomorrow, always bending in the political wind, always twisting as the situation of the moment warrants.

The Following Petition has been circulating against Zogby by a small group of initial signers:

**PETITION CONDEMNING JIM ZOGBY OF ARAB-AMERICAN INSTITUTE**

We Arab-Americans strongly condemn Jim Zogby of the Arab-American Institute (AAI) for his repeated attempts to speak to the press in the name of Arab-Americans. Zogby's misrepresentations and duplicitous conduct have gone on for some time now with his excesses and abuses escalating year after year. Zogby's recent comments to the press endorsing the appointment of an AIPAC-sponsored operative, Martin Indyk, to the Clinton National Security Council are outrageous and are unacceptable to a great number of Arab Americans.

Jim Zogby in no way represents Arab-Americans or speaks for them. Rather, Zogby is no more than a self-promoter who has abused the trust of those few Arab-Americans who are affiliated with his self-created Institute.

We call upon the Board of AAI, even though we are aware it was mostly chosen by and controlled by Zogby, to nevertheless remove him as President and spokesperson immediately. We further insist that AAI cease portraying itself as representative of Arab-American thoughts and feelings.

Aida Abu-Zayyad, Public Relations Consultant  
Hisham Ahmed, Professor  
Tony Kandah, Film Producer

always focusing on the primary goal of self-promotion and pleasing his financial sponsors.

AAI under Zogby is in these senses more a P.R. firm than anything else. But it is a P.R. firm not that has much support or involvement from any large segments of the Arab American community. Rather AAI as built by Zogby gets its means from a few well-healed Arab Americans and from their powerful and wealthy Arab friends overseas in the Gulf countries.

As a conduit for these special interests, Zogby's primary mission, and AAI's basic role in Washington, are to cater to whomever has power and influence in the USA and to encourage a deal that will "stabilize" the Middle East as a kind of U.S.-Israeli protectorate.

One of Zogby's primary allies in all this is Spencer Abraham, a political big shot on the conservative Republican side of the fence -- fit him in somewhere between John Sununu and Dan Quayle -- who was until recently being

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