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Mark Bruzonsky

Gazette correspondent detained by Israelis

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM, Sat. (AP)

GAZETTE correspondent Mark Bruzonsky was detained by Israeli security yesterday as he was about to board a plane for the US.

Bruzonsky, a US citizen active in an American pro-Palestinian group, said yesterday that he was ordered to provide airport security authorities with a list of Palestinians he met before he could board his plane.

Bruzonsky, an American Jew from Washington DC, told the Associated

Press that security officers told him he must answer "all their questions" before he could be given security clearance to board his Pan Am flight yesterday morning.

Bruzonsky, chairperson of the Jewish Committee on the Middle East, said he agreed to comply with any requests relevant to aviation security but refused to provide names of Palestinians he met while on his three-week visit here.

"I will not discuss my personal life," he said.

He added that "to the best of my knowledge, none of the Palestinians I spoke to are involved in anything that is illegal."

Bruzonsky said he called the US embassy in Tel Aviv for help.

Embassy spokesman Donald Coffman would only say "all we can do is try to determine if a US citizen is being treated in a discriminatory manner," and refused further comment on the matter.

Israeli officials reached by phone refused to comment on the incident.

Bruzonsky said his organisation, established last January, was working to urge US opposition to Israeli policy in the occupied territories.

"We want to end the special relationship between Israel and the United States, as well as reduce American aid to Israel," he said.

Bruzonsky also claimed that other members of his group, who frequently visit Israel and the occupied territories, have been questioned by Israeli authorities.