

The American people finally get the message

Blacks no longer have to bite their tongues on matters involving the Jews. And that new freedom to say what one truly thinks has extended to Whites. As a result, the whole Middle East debate will never again be what it was.

And so the PLO has finally achieved a kind of de facto American recognition, regardless of the hamstrung official positions of the American Government. 5

—MARK BRUZONSKY

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COMMENT

“NO DURABLE Arab-Israeli peace is possible without PLO participation in the negotiations.” So says a well-known figure. Criticizing the American promise to Israel that it would not recognize or negotiate with Israel, he says: “For a great power to give a tiny nation a veto on its diplomatic freedom of action was not only grotesquely inappropriate, it imposed a major obstacle to effective peace-making implying that the fate of 1.2 million Palestinians could be settled without the participation of their only valid spokesman.”

The United States only stimulates neutering violence when it refuses to talk, yet does nothing effective to block the Israeli government's

strategem of creeping annexation through new settlements.

The truce has been expressed, not by an official of the PLO, not by an ordinary Palestinian, not even by an Arab or a member of the Third World. These are the words of an American, who apart from representing his country at the UN and holding many other high offices was the State Department Under-Secretary for five years.

Mr. George Ball, like many of his educated countrymen, must have been observing the continued lack of direction and purpose in the American policy on the Arab-Israeli dispute. With his knowledge and background he realized

more than others the utter futility and failure of this policy. Perhaps he thought that in the dilemma then existing an expression of his views would either be a voice in the wilderness or decreed with shouts of protests.

The Israeli overkill of Andrew Young, however, has focused Americans' attention not only on the safety of Israel but on the rights of the Palestinians. How can a durable peace be established between the two? They are asking. If by negotiation, then between whom?

A debate, as foreseen by Young himself, has started and a man of George Ball's standing has come out not merely censuring the administration but actually making positive suggestions.

Mr. Ball suggests that the U.S. must adhere to the two well-established principles of its policy: first, security for Israel, and second, self-determination for the Palestinians. The U.S. is committed to both the latter through the UN and the two objectives are not inconsistent but mutually indispensable.

He goes on to say that, despite Israeli objections, the U.S. must start “exploring with PLO leaders the outlines of a deal in which Palestinians would be offered self-determination in return for such renunciation (destruction of Israel). Once that initial obstruction were cleared away, Israel would have no basis for refusing to join negotiations.”

But he warns that ruling out the possibility of a Palestinian state nullifies the principle and achieves nothing” and asks: “Why, among all the world's peoples, should the Palestinians be regarded as uniquely unworthy of self-determination?”

There is no cogent answer to this query, as there is none for others that arise from a situation that Mr. Ball's government has itself created. But such questions will be increasingly asked by more and more people. The Carter administration will be well advised to heed the counsel of George Ball: “liberating itself from self-imposed restrictions and getting on with serious peace talks.”

The people get the message!

‘The PLO has achieved de facto recognition despite the hamstrung position of the U.S. government’

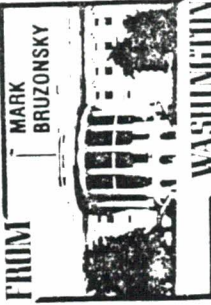
THE “Palestinian problem” and the PLO itself are fast becoming fully legitimate issues for discussion among mainstream personalities and influential pressure groups here. *Washington Post* columnist William Raspberry, may have summed things up best in one of his recent editorials.

“Take... the commentators who are now remarking on the silliness of not talking to the PLO or the absurdity of having U.S. policy dictated by Israel. Now ask yourself why they were not moved to point out these absurdities before two weeks ago.”

That is the real change wrought by the Andy Young flap.

The assumption among Blacks that Young's resignation was forced by Jewish interests means that Blacks no longer have to bite their tongues on matters involving Jews. And that new freedom to say what one truly thinks has extended to Whites as well. As a result, the whole Middle East debate will never again be as it was.

And so the PLO has finally



The American Arabs

and Andrew Young

ON AUGUST 23 more than 200 Arab-American community leaders issued the following statement concerning the Andrew Young resignation:

"What impressed the world most about Andrew Young was his courage to say and do not what was expedient, but what was necessary. Andrew Young became a symbol to America's adversaries of our people's commitment to human rights and to our respect for the aspirations of those who struggle for recognition of their rights. That Andrew Young is now to be sacrificed for political expediency is ironic and tragic."

"For too long the U.S. was isolated from the international community, particularly with regard to issues such as the aspiration of the Zimhabwian and Palestinian peoples for recognition of their full rights. It was Andrew

Young who made an effort to end that isolation by interpreting for us the mood of these and other people of the Third World."

"We are saddened that this voice has now been silenced. Not only Andrew Young, but the American people lose. In the eyes of the people of Africa, Asia and Latin America, our national leadership appears cowardly and dishonest. With the resignation of Andrew Young it seems clear that the Carter administration has backed down in the face of Israeli pressure and has turned away from its alleged search for real peace in the Middle East. We can now only hope that all Americans who have been shocked by these events can come together to work to build a new American consensus, dedicated to building a foreign policy based on a real commitment to peace and human rights for all."

will now serve upon this first opportunity we have had in our national discourse openly and fully to consider on their own merits the issues of the rights of the Palestinian people, and the role of whatever organizational or individual spokesmen they may freely choose to put forward to represent their interests." The Trans Africa statement added: Taken all together, these developments make August 1979 a watershed month for the PLO in its quest for legitimacy with the one power having the potential

strength to move Israel toward an accommodation with Palestinian nationalists

Meanwhile, rumours are being spread in the capital of the PLO, even likely some, say, resignation of President Carter's hand-picked Middle East troubleshooter, Robert Strauss.

"Ambassador Bob," as Awni Sudat has grown fond of addressing him, has positioned himself for an exit by publicly indicating he needs more time for his personal life and business interests. He prefers, he has been saying, to go on unpaid, part-time status



Strategy

What this all really means, say a number of sources close to Strauss, is that he may decide to leave unless a much clearer policy and strategy emerge within a few weeks with him in full control

Strauss's slip a few weeks ago when he was last in the region "I'm out here not to please the State Department but to help Jimmy Carter win the next election," surfaced the Ambassador's most crucial assignment, to keep Carter's one foreign policy triumph, from unraveling

But the tensions that have continued to flare between Strauss and the PLO, and more, may force a rift between Strauss and Young

Dialogue

Other establishment figures such as former Under Secretary of State, George Ball have resumed, more loudly than ever, their pleas for basic shifts in American thinking

"Israel is paralysed and is incapable of doing what is necessary to bring about peace," Ball stated in an interview published in the September 3 issue of the Conservative-leaning weekly U.S. News and World Report

"Israel's policy is self-destructive, and it's based on self-deception," he argued. "There is no way (but for the U.S.) to begin a dialogue with the PLO. No durable Arab-Israeli peace is possible without PLO participation in the negotiations." Ball added in a Washington Post article: Church groups, black organisations

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Spotlight

Putting the debate "on hold" rather than forcing a vote on the controversial resolution updating 242 with a call for Palestinian self-determination, national independence and sovereignty, added considerably to the Arab image of maturity and reasonableness here

The Arab manoeuvre, while showing diplomatic restraint, now keeps the entire matter of U.S. Palestinian policy in the spotlight of American media attention

In short, for the first time, the Palestinian cause, with the PLO as

from absolute ignorance and some leading journalists are all beginning to create something of a chorus, rising on such a re-evaluation of American Middle East interests and policies

Actually, the "rethinking" has been under way for some time — certainly since the March 1975 Ford Kissinger "re-assessment" and the Brookings Report released in December that same year. But never before has the polarisation here been so evident and widespread nor the pro-PLO sentiments so openly admitted

Some black leaders are actually taking a position of assailing the Jewish community for dual loyalty. The president of the largest black sorority recently told 6,000 delegates meeting at their annual convention of Delta Sigma Theta in New Orleans:

Eroded

"We have been patient and for the latest affront reveals clearly that their loyalties are not compatible with the struggle of black Americans for equal opportunity under the law. Indeed, we question whether their loyalties are first to the State of Israel or to the U.S. The loyalties of black Americans have never been questioned"

Indubitably it seems the Carter administration finds itself being upstaged by voices calling for policy shifts similar to those it has been desirous — but much too weak (both internally and domes-

Like Andy Young, Strauss too may take his leave while helping under pressure from Carter and find a prominent spot in the President's re-election campaign in Strauss' case, probably the top job

It is widely known in this highly politicised capital that Strauss is one of the very few Carter people who could bolster the seriously unsuccessful fund-raising efforts of the Carter re-election committee

To sum up, the political dam so elaborately constructed by Israel and her American partisans to prevent just such pro-Palestinian developments, has been substantially damaged, probably beyond full repair

Equalise

Barring a major shift in the station of Middle East policy, a trade involving the PLO's evened-out public acceptance of the long-discussed two-state formula — which includes some kind of explicit recognition of Israel for American willingness to give the PLO some form of formal recognition seems all but inevitable

That may be the point when the PLO will find itself having to evolve into something more substantial — something like a government in exile — to more equalise its relationship with the Israelis to face a

Still, the time table for the carrying out by the U.S. and the PLO of this game plan — not to mention the time table for bringing the dug-in Israelis to the table with a Palestinian delegation — remains most hazy

With the American election campaign already underway, pro-Israeli forces will surely attempt to force commitment from the major candidates at the party platforms — arguments which will be strident jetties on the policies of the next administration. The Israeli counter-attack will also bring the charge of Arab oil petrodollar blackmail aiming for a backlash against Arab pressures

Say the PLO on chalk up a few giant steps towards its goal of state in Palestine, co-opting how it is, and the Arab world will not be far behind. But the tensions that have continued to flare between Strauss and the PLO, and more, may force a rift between Strauss and Young