

PLO subversive tactics endanger the state of Israel, says Canadian Jewish Congress

by Gregory Hamara

In its efforts to bring about "the total destruction of Israel," the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) is actively pursuing "organic links with European fascists," charged a leading spokesman for the Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC) last Thursday at Dalhousie University.

Erol Araf, director of communications for the CJC, cited recent attacks against Jews in Vienna, Rome and Antwerp, along with the PLO's alleged ties to Spain during Franco's later years in office; and more recently, to neo-Nazi groups such as Germany's "Adolph Hitler Rifles", as evidence that the PLO is prepared to go to any ideological extreme to ensure Israel's collapse.

In the past, the PLO has been loosely-linked to a variety of left-wing terrorist outfits, ranging from Japan's Red Army Faction, to the now-defunct Bader-Meinhof group of West Germany.

Araf listed a number of occasions when leaders of the PLO met with representatives of European right-wing organizations at conferences he described as "the fascists Internationales". According to Araf, the most recent 'summit' occurred in 1977 in France.

In a polished address, Araf told his audience that only Israel and Egypt were intent upon living up to the provisions of the Camp David accords. In contrast, he said, the PLO's sole

interest was to disrupt that progress with incessant campaigns of terrorism. He rejected any suggestion that the PLO join future peace negotiations until the organization recognized Israel's right to exist as a sovereign state in the Middle East.

Though he conceded that the Camp David agreement was

less than picture-perfect, Araf urged its critics "to give it a chance to prove itself before condemning it outright."

He began his speech with an analogy of the current situation in the mid-East to that of the centuries-old acrimony between Turkey and Greece.

"The relationship between

those countries (Turkey and Greece) has rarely been harmonious," he said. "Yet neither country advocates the total annihilation of the other as a solution to their problems."

He claimed that the PLO leadership was "out of touch" with the aspirations of the Palestinians in the occupied territo-

ries. Lasting peace could be achieved, he said, if the organization began to listen to West Bank mayors who say that the PLO must concentrate on building the social and economic infrastructure to deal with problems facing the Palestinians.

"The last thing the refugees want to see is more violence," he added.

Though he quoted approvingly the statement made by Sol Linowitz, former U.S. envoy to the Middle East, that "80 per cent of Camp David had been fulfilled", Araf was cautious in his assessment of America's role in the region following the election of Ronald Reagan.

"I was mildly disappointed with those people who have said Reagan would have been a strong defender of Israel," he said. "At the moment, America does not seem to have any policy on the Middle East."

When asked by a questioner whether or not Prime Minister Menachim Begin in fact practiced terrorism during Israel's late 1940's struggle for independence, Araf responded that he preferred to distinguish between Begin's "freedom fighting" and PLO-style "systematic terrorism".

Except for scattered calls of "not true" by some members of the audience, Araf's occasionally provocative remarks failed to spark any bitter exchanges - perhaps in deference to the evening's moderator who had asked those in attendance to exercise "tolerance" when listening to Araf's speech.



The Canadian Palestine Association presented an information booth in the SUB lobby last Friday. The organization seeks to inform Canadians of the situation in Palestine.

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McDonough pinch-hits for Broadbent

Social considerations needed in planning

by Sandy Smith

The issue facing Canada's economic planners is whether planning will be carried out with the interests of all persons in society, not exclusively private corporate shareholders, being given due consideration, the provincial leader of the New Democratic Party told the Commerce Society's annual Businessman's luncheon last Thursday.

Speaking for federal leader Ed Broadbent, who was unable to make it to Halifax because of last week's constitutional developments, Alexa McDonough said any economic planning must be thought out "with the benefit of broad social objectives shaped by people whose accountability is to the public interest."

Among the areas McDonough singled out for consideration was the government policy regarding interest rates. "The federal policy of high interest rates is insanity," she said, adding "It must be thrown out. (High interest rates) are inflationary, discriminatory and

extremely damaging to the long-term prospects for this country."

Not only are the high rates failing to cure inflation, they are "killing the economy", she said, "and the consequences are truly tragic in human terms...this government is inflicting widespread damage that affects all of us, whether homeowners or renters, working or unemployed."

The economic policies of the government "ignore the power of corporations to insulate themselves from inflation and to maintain and increase their profits by simply passing on higher costs." McDonough said that even the Economic Council of Canada has acknowledged that high interest rates only add to inflation.

The policy of following the interest rates of the United States and staying ahead of their rates is "a kind of colonialism that Canada has not known for years," she said.

Among the steps a federal NDP government would take would be a six-month freeze on

mortgages "to help those people facing renewals". Steps would also be taken to expand the government role in housing "both as a builder and a direct lender".

Perhaps the most important policy statement made on the day was McDonough's announcement that an NDP government would implement a major change in Canada's banking system, making it publicly controlled.

"That means controlling bank profits. That means controlling the spread between what the banks charge borrowers and what they pay savers. That means controlling the lending policies of the banks and protecting consumers."

Banks must also set aside money for housing and social investment, she said, as well as money to help small business.

"Asking the banks to design mortgage relief schemes is like asking the Mafia to write your gun control legislation," she said.

McDonough also lashed out at Canada's taxation system, cit-



Mosher/Dal Photo

cutback in federal transfer facts that show 3,467 people who earned more than \$50,000 in Canada in 1979 paid not one cent of income tax. 160 people who made more than \$200,000 the same year did not pay any taxes either. The tax system has "become a treasure hunt for the rich and their accountants," she said.

McDonough also severely criticized the possible \$1.5 billion

payments. "A society can't begin to realize its full potential without superior medical care and an education system that equips us with healthy and skilled workers for the future," she said.

"Instead of cuts, what Canada needs is a renewed commitment to these services. To further cripple the health and education systems with less funding would be economic and social madness."