

מדינת ישראל

משרדי הממשלה

משרד

יחידה

א'סנא-ינסוים עס
ווסלניאס .

2.88-3.88

מס' תיק מקורי

9708/4



שם תיק: בריטניה -קשרים עם הפרלמנט

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תאריך הדפסה 20/02/2017

מחלקה

איוור

משרד החוץ-מחלקת הקשר

22493

תאריך: 27.03.88

יוצא **

שמו

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חוזם: 3,22493

אל: לונדון/408, ניו/1081

מ:-המשרד, תא: 270388, זח: 1539, דח: ר, סג: שמ

נד: 2

שמו/רגיל

5787

לונדון - הציר

דע: נאו'ם - ניו יורק

תדרוך חברי פרלמנט בריטיים. ח/3.22089 מניו יורק

הבריקונא הערותיכם לגבי הפרלמנטרים ישירות לניו יורק
עם העתק אלינו.

אירופה ב'

ת.פ.

תפ: ממנכל, אירב, ברנע, ארבל 2

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תאריך : 26.03.88 : מס' הקוץ-מחלקת הקשר

נכנס **

שמור

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חוזם: 3,22089

אל: המשרד

מ-: נר: 667, תא: 250388, דח: 1400, דח: טב: שמ

נד: 8

שמור/רגיל

ג.ס.
(כ)

אל: מנהל אירופה 1

דע: מנהל מז"ת, מנהל מח"ד, מנהל ארבל 2

השגריר לונדון

השגריר נתניהו/כאן

מאת: יוחנן בייך

תידורן חברי פרלמנט בריטיים.

התקשרו ממשרדו של שג' בריטניה לאו"ם - קריסטין טיקל.
באפריל עומדת לבקר כאן קבוצת סקרן של הפרלמנט וברצונם
שנציג ישראל יקבלם בנציגות לסקירה וחילופי דעות
בעיקר בנושא המפרץ הפרסי. קבענו ליבוראו ביום שישי
29 באפריל לפנה"צ, וכי אם יהיה כאן נתניהו יתורן
הוא, אם לאו - אני. להלן הרשימה: (C = שמרנים
LAB = עבודה):

שג' בריטניה SIR CRISPIN TICELL בלווי טגנו.

מלוויים (מזכירים פרלמנטריים): ROBERU WILSON

PHILIP MOON יו"ר

CC DAVID HOWEL
LAB(DANNIS ANDREW CANAVAN
CC IVAN LAWRENCE
CC JAMES LESTER
CC IAN COLIN TAYLOR
CC PETER TEMPLE -MORRIS
LAB(PETER DAVID SHORE
CC BOWEN WELLS
LAB(MICHAEL COLLINS WELSH

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SUPPLEMENT

TO: SAC, NEW YORK
FROM: SAC, NEW YORK (100-100000) (P)
SUBJECT: [REDACTED]
RE: [REDACTED]

REPORT MADE FOR THE

[illegible]

1. The first part of the document is a letter from the President of the United States to the Congress, dated January 1, 1861. It is a copy of the original letter, and is signed by Abraham Lincoln.

משרד החוץ-מחלקת הקשר

שג' בריאניה העביר לנו תולדות חיים של המשתתפים.
הבריקונא:

1. כל הערות לגבי המשתתפים שראוי שנדע עליהן.
2. הערות- אם יש - לגבי דרך הצגת עמדתנו בבריטניה בנושא המרץ.

נאום

תפ: שהח, ממנכל, ממנכל, אירב, ליאור, מזתים, ברנע, ארבל, 2, ר/מרכז, ממד

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

Standing Committee H CRIMINAL JUSTICE BILL [*LORDS*]

Twenty-third Sitting

Thursday 24th March 1988

(Afternoon)

THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS ATTENDED THE COMMITTEE:

Crowther, Mr. Stan (<i>Chairman</i>)	Heathcoat-Amory, Mr.
Archer, Mr.	Hunter, Mr.
Birmingham, Mr.	Jones, Mr. Ieuan Wyn
Brandon-Bravo, Mr.	Knight, Mr. Greg
Butler, Mr.	Patten, Mr. John
Carlile, Mr. Alex	Sayeed, Mr.
Dorrell, Mr.	Stanbrook, Mr.
Gale, Mr.	Taylor, Mrs. Ann
Golding, Mrs.	Worthington, Mr.

New Clause 52A

MURDER, ETC. COMMITTED ABROAD

“(1) A British Citizen who commits any of the following offences in the United Kingdom or elsewhere, whether before or after the passing of this Act, shall on conviction on indictment be liable to imprisonment as prescribed in subsection (2) below—

- (a) murder;
- (b) manslaughter;
- (c) genocide;
- (d) torture or inhuman treatment; or
- (e) attempt or conspiracy to commit, or aiding, abetting, counselling, procuring or inciting the commission of, an offence under the foregoing paragraphs.

(2) A person convicted on indictment of an offence listed in subsection (1) of this section shall be punished as follows—

- (a) in the case of an offence under paragraph (a) of subsection (1) of this section, he shall be liable to the punishment specified in section 1 of the Murder (Abolition of Death Penalty) Act 1965;
- (b) in the case of any other offence under subsection (1) of this section, he shall on conviction on indictment be liable to imprisonment for life.

(3) In this section—

“British Citizen” has the same meaning as in the British Nationality Act 1981 and includes a person who has acquired that citizenship or ceased to be a such a citizen subsequent to the date on which the alleged offence had been committed; “genocide” has the same meaning as in the Genocide Act 1969; and

“torture or inhuman treatment” shall have the meaning ascribed to it by international law and regard shall be had to any relevant treaties to which Her Majesty's Government is a signatory.

(4) The consent of the Attorney General shall be required for any prosecution—

- (a) under paragraph (d) of subsection (1) of this section; and
- (b) under subsection (1) of this section, where the offence was committed outside the United Kingdom or before the commencement of this section.

(5) This section extends to Scotland.—[*Mr. Archer.*]

Brought up, and read the First time.

Thursday 24 March 1988

Criminal Justice Bill [*Lords*]

Mr. Archer: I beg to move, That the clause be read a Second time.

Before I embark on my remarks on the new clause, I apologise to my hon. Friend the Member for St. Helens, South (Mr. Bermingham), whose name was in error omitted from the names of those wishing to sponsor the new clause. I unreservedly apologise to him and put the record straight.

The debate involves a matter of great importance on which this country will be judged by the world community as being either in harmony with the rest of the world or as being a recalcitrant.

I say at the outset that I do not expect to press the new clause to a Division. I should not be surprised if it were said, that the time to decide the issue was not yet. Although that may be one of the very questions at issue in the debate, I do not wish to press for an immediate decision from those who prefer to have longer to reflect.

On mainland Europe, the period between 1933 and 1945 was a time when evil was released on a scale probably not seen since the Thirty Years war. Every vicious instinct and normally repressed drive to aggression and every sadistic quirk was not only released but encouraged and reinforced. Perhaps it is surprising that the vast majority of people did not respond by persecuting their neighbours. Many displayed compassion and heroism of a high order. However, it is not surprising that some revelled in the opportunities for persecution, bullying and torture.

It was a long time ago, and it is tempting to say, "After more than 40 years, surely it would be best to forget it."

Mr. Stanbrook: Yes.

Mr. Archer: I fully respect the hon. Gentlemen's view. Those who share his opinion say, "Leave the persecutors to settle with their consciences and to live with their nightmares."

The counter-argument has two aspects. First, many people still living were among those tortured. Perhaps worse, there are many people alive today whose close relatives and dearest friends were among the victims. They would find it hard to understand if we proposed to forget what happened and to say that it was no longer our business.

Secondly, I believe that some offences are so appalling and reach such a degree of depravity that they should not be forgotten simply because the offenders have escaped detection until now. It is easy to forgive wrongs against other people, but to do so in this case would offend our sense of justice.

To say that the offences were wicked to an unprecedented degree does not mean that those accused of the offences are not entitled to a fair trial. In fact, it means the opposite. What is said against them is so serious that it is essential that we do not risk convicting a person who may be innocent.

That raises questions of how reliable the memories of witnesses may be after so long a time. It means making due allowance for the ages of those who will be tried and perhaps the errors in their recollection. It means that evidence may sometimes not be available in the courtroom in this country, but can be obtained only by some form of commission in a foreign country. All those factors will have to be taken into account when the prosecuting authorities decide whether it is fair to bring proceedings against an individual.

But we have not yet reached that stage. None of that falls to be considered unless and until there is a possibility of bringing people before a court which, by the law of its own country, has jurisdiction to try them. Some people in the United Kingdom are said to be guilty of atrocious war crimes. We do not know—at least I do not know—whether the evidence, once brought together, would support even a charge, much less a conviction. But at this stage, the United Kingdom as a community has to decide whether to do anything about it, whether to do nothing about, or whether, like Pontius Pilate, to opt for a quiet life. If we take that course, we shall be alone among all the countries outside South America, where alleged offenders are to be found, to shrug the matter off as none of our business. The United States, Canada, Australia and the Soviet Union have all taken steps to bring alleged offenders to justice.

Three courses are open to us if there is evidence to implicate an individual. First, we may notify a country where the courts have jurisdiction to try the offences, and, if they request extradition, to extradite to that country. The two countries which spring most readily to mind are the Soviet Union—many of the allegations relate to offences said to have been committed in areas which now form part of the Soviet Union—and Israel. The obvious country would be the Soviet Union, but this country has no extradition treaty with the Soviet Union, and it is unlikely that such a treaty will be concluded in the immediate future. The courts of Israel have jurisdiction, by Israeli law, to try offences of genocide committed against Jews anywhere, but it has to be admitted that Israel has no other connection with the offences in question, and I believe that Israel would probably prefer to have the questions resolved in another forum, where everyone can see that such emotions are not involved.

The second possibility is for the Home Secretary to revoke the citizenship of any alleged offender who is now a United Kingdom citizen by naturalisation.

Mr. Stanbrook: Surely, to revoke the citizenship of the alleged offender is to punish him before it has been proved even that he has committed any offence.

Thursday 24 March 1988

Criminal Justice Bill [Lords]

Mr. Archer: I was wrong to give way in the middle of a sentence. Perhaps the hon. Member for Orpington (Mr. Stanbrook) will allow me to complete the sentence, although I cannot remember now how it would have gone. I was saying that the second possibility was to revoke the naturalisation if the Home Secretary was satisfied that the person withheld relevant information when he made his application. That is one way in which the matter has been dealt with in the United States.

Thirdly, if we are dealing with a person who is either not a citizen of the United Kingdom or no longer a citizen of the United Kingdom, the Home Secretary could order his deportation. But that would not mean that he went to any country of the Home Secretary's choosing; he would be entitled to go to a country of his own choosing, if it would accept him, and some might hope that only one country would accept him.

The hon. Member for Orpington may be happier to learn that I do not favour that course because it would be extradition by a back door.

The third possibility is to amend United Kingdom law to confer jurisdiction on the English or Scottish courts. At present, English courts have jurisdiction to try a United Kingdom citizen for homicide, wherever committed, provided that he was a United Kingdom citizen at the time of the offence. But that applies only to homicide and is unlikely to apply to those with whom we shall deal.

We could amend our jurisdiction law in several ways. The new clause approaches the issue somewhat comprehensively. I could understand it if a preference were expressed for the proposal to be a little narrower. However, the new clause would make it possible for English or Scottish courts to try someone for certain offences committed abroad in such circumstances.

At the outset, we must decide how to proceed. Should the first step be to ascertain whether evidence exists against people and, if it does, elect which course of action to follow and, if necessary, change the law? Or should it be decided now to change the law and, having done so, wait to see what evidence emerges against those people? That is the decision to be made at this stage.

Mr. Bermingham: Does my right hon. and learned Friend agree that if we took the former course—of ascertaining the evidence and then making the decision—that point would never be reached? That is simply because more and more names will steadily emerge of those who were connected with, for example, what can only be described as genocide during the years 1933-45. If the approach is to wait until all the evidence is gathered, many whom the net should catch will escape.

Mr. Archer: There is such a danger. But if we took the former course, it would be possible at a certain stage to say that enough evidence existed for us to change the law or take whatever course were appropriate. That approach would not necessarily be fatal. However, I concede that there are arguments both ways.

I prefer the second course. First, it is more difficult to obtain evidence if there is no authority to seek it or to ask people about it—or an authority whose job it is to prosecute according to the legislation. Secondly, that is what happens with most changes in the criminal law—we are doing that with other changes and procedures in the Bill. We first change the law and then ascertain whether there is evidence against a particular individual.

The chief argument to the contrary is the only one of which I am aware. If it subsequently transpires that there is insufficient evidence to bring someone to trial, time will have been wasted over a matter which turned out to be academic. However, what troubles me is that if we wait until such evidence exists, at that time there may not be a suitable Bill on its way through Parliament. That problem emerged in an earlier debate today. We should then have to wait for a slot in the legislative programme. Owing to the nature of such cases, each additional 12-month delay will render it less likely that we can bring the offenders to trial. I hope that I leave the Committee in no doubt about my preference.

I know that the Home Secretary appointed Sir Thomas Hetherington and Mr. Chalmers to inquire into the subject. Part of their remit is to recommend any necessary changes in the law. But I believe that we can form a conclusion on that matter before we know the evidence which those inquiries may produce. We need not wait to see what emerges before we decide which of the three courses which I endeavoured to outline is preferable. That is why we are initiating the debate now.

I shall not delay the Committee because everyone knows the issues. But I should deal with three matters.

First, as a safeguard against frivolous or unfair prosecutions by misguided individuals, the new clause requires the prosecution to obtain the consent of the Attorney-General.

Secondly, it has been pointed out to me that although some people reside in our country, and perhaps have done so for many years, they are not United Kingdom citizens. I recognise that concern. I was not aware of that factor when we tabled the new clause, although perhaps I should have been and, in that respect, our proposal requires further thought.

Thirdly, in the conferring of jurisdiction to try offences of murder and manslaughter, the proposal is intended to operate retrospectively—though, clearly, those offences existed at the time to which the allegations relate. It is also intended to operate retrospectively for genocide and torture or inhuman treatment—in the sense that, for the first time, a definition of those offences is produced in our law—[Interruption.] No. That is not true of genocide, but it would certainly have happened retrospectively.

Thursday 24 March 1988

Criminal Justice Bill [Lords]

[Mr. Archer]

Whether Parliament legislates retrospectively is, of course, a matter of Parliament. If it were proposed to make something an offence which was clearly not an offence when it was committed, that would be a dangerous step to take because it could operate unfairly. The basis of the presumption against retrospection is that it could be unfair. But, here, we are dealing with actions which, at the time that they were committed, would have been offences against the criminal law of any civilised country—even if not always known by the names used in the new clause. Those who committed such acts would know that and would know that they were committing vile offences against humanity. For such people to argue that retrospective legislation was unfair to them—and that therefore they should be allowed to escape retribution—would be an abuse of jurisprudence and an abuse of logic.

Mr. Bermingham: I listened carefully to, and endorse, everything that my right hon. and learned Friend said. Does he agree that the way round the problem of someone who has not taken out British citizenship but is resident here is simply to alter the beginning of the new clause to say, "A British citizen or anyone else resident in the United Kingdom"?

Mr. Archer: I am grateful to my hon. Friend for that suggestion. It would certainly be a solution. However, I should not wish to rush into it because some might argue—no doubt the hon. Member for Orpington would be one—that it goes too wide and that we must be careful. But, clearly, that suggestion is a possible and simple way around the difficulty.

I prefer to leave the matter like this. I have said that I hope that we shall not press the new clause to a vote this evening. Perhaps the Minister will say that the Government agree in principle and will do something about it. If so, he will no doubt do what he did earlier today and say that the Government would like to redraft the proposal.

In my 21 years in the House, I cannot recollect one occasion when a new clause or amendment moved in Committee was just accepted without someone wanting to take it away to redraft something about it. I do not complain about that. However, perhaps we could discuss that in the light of the Minister's response. I have outlined our case. There are reasons why it would be helpful to discuss the matter now and why there is no need to wait.

Mr. Stanbrook: The proposal is thoroughly bad and I hope that the Government will not entertain or encourage it in any way like that suggested by the right hon. and learned Member for Warley, West (Mr. Archer), who said that the Government might approve the principle. The new clause is bad in its objective and in the methods by which it hopes to achieve that objective.

I am comforted, to some extent, that the proposed new clause is not in the names of all Opposition Members in Committee. That is some small satisfaction to me, because on such issues public opinion is easily stampeded to act emotionally under pressure from immensely powerful pressure groups with vested interests on an international scale. If we considered that something was justified in principle only that could easily lead us on to commit the most foul injustice.

I exonerate the decent and honourable men and women who are associated with the new clause, and the encouragement of this idea because they are misguided, blinkered and not sufficiently imbued with a sense of the real spirit and purpose of British justice—and I mean British justice. The greatest strength and drive behind such a proposal comes from motives of revenge, hatred and malice. It comes not from a desire for justice even in the abstract but from a desire for justice in individual cases for revenge which it is thought is a necessary and, perhaps, the most important part of such justice.

Most British people regard justice as being tempered by mercy and even forgiveness. It is not a concept in British eyes to temper justice with revenge. I know that people who propose this sort of idea deny that and say that they do not want revenge, they simply want justice. But that is not so.

Mr. Bermingham: Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Stanbrook: No. I do not have much time.

Mr. Bermingham: I did not think the hon. Gentleman would.

Mr. Stanbrook: There are two aspects. One, that I have already mentioned, is that in principle the deepest instincts of the British people are not actively to pursue the prosecution or the persecution of people who are alleged, without further evidence, to have committed heinous crimes long, long, long ago. That is the deep instinct of the British people. Perhaps that is because we are Christians, and part of the Christian philosophy is not to accept revenge as part of its concept of justice. That is the basic human feeling in this country connected with those so-called war crimes.

The second aspect is that the offences talked about by the right hon. and learned Member for Warley, West were committed long ago and far away. Never before in British history has it been suggested that our courts should be called upon to adjudicate on offences committed by such people. In this case, we are talking about events that occurred in Russia more than 43 years ago, and the circumstances are totally foreign to anything that any British court has experienced.

Thursday 24 March 1988

Criminal Justice Bill [Lords]

[Mr. Stanbrook]

The right hon. and learned Gentleman and his colleagues seek to propose a fundamental change in British criminal jurisprudence. They want to enlarge our jurisdiction because that is the only way in which these foreign chaps who are alleged to have committed offences more than 40 years ago can be tried by British courts—except for one statutory exception.

That is where we should pause and ask why that is being done. Is this abstract justice? Is the intention to catch individual people who, according to the Opposition, have evaded justice because they were not British and committed the so-called offences far, far away?

The right hon. and learned Member for Warley, West then alluded to the next problem, that the people concerned were not British at the time that these offences were committed. The right hon. and learned Gentleman's suggestion was that whatever those people did, if it is true—and that is a big "if" they must have committed an offence against the criminal law of the country concerned. However, we know nothing about that because most of these things happened in a time of war and, often, under martial law under Hitler and in Soviet Russia in circumstances that even today are not wholly revealed.

If we assumed that we were dealing with ordinary cases of allegations against people, we would take further steps down the road towards injustice. The right hon. and learned Gentleman says that the fact that they are not British is easily cured because we will simply say that if they were foreigners at the time of those alleged offences, and have since become British citizens, it does not matter how long they have lived in Britain or how honourable they have lived their lives or been worthy of their adopted country, we will exceptionally condemn them for something that they did when they were beyond British jurisdiction. That as never been done before.

The other side is the reality and the evidence—

Mr. Archer: Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Stanbrook: Must I?

Mr. Archer: It would be courteous, and I expect courtesy from the hon. Gentleman. I am grateful to him for sitting down.

Before the hon. Gentleman leaves that point, will he make it clear to the Committee whether he favours the other option of extradition to the countries where those offences happened?

Mr. Stanbrook: I intended to deal with that question. The evidence is the big problem, and the right hon. and learned Gentleman and his hon. Friends cannot manufacture, or persuade this Parliament to dispense with, the evidence and declare those people guilty without that evidence. That is how Opposition Members are trying to change the law. But we must use reliable evidence.

The position is that more than 40 years ago something occurred about which there are scraps of information, rumours, stories, and so on. Perhaps there is some documentary evidence—pictures, recollections and statements—but all the resources of the famous Simon Wiesenthal centre have failed to produce evidence more than 40 years later which justifies—

Mr. Alex Carlile: Rubbish!

Mr. Stanbrook: Anyone who says that these people committed the offences with which they are now charged by Opposition Members must know that the Home Secretary made a recent statement in the House confirming that the evidence provided to him was not adequate. To our shame, the Government have appointed a special little committee to search out evidence and continue the persecution of these people to produce sufficient reliable evidence to bring them before a British court. That is the position we are in.

Why was this evidence not produced before? More than 40 years have gone by, so where is the urgency that the right hon. and learned Member for Warley, West appears to speak of? Why has the issue suddenly come to light? When the right hon. and learned Gentleman speaks about the need for early justice, he means before they die because most of those people are in their 70s. Memories of witnesses do not go back that far. I know that in the mythology of these cases, of which there have been many around the world, many injustices have been done—

Mr. Alex Carlile: The hon. Gentleman remembers Nigeria, so why can they not remember? Will the hon. Gentleman give way?

Mr. Stanbrook: If the hon. and learned Gentleman will allow me to make my case, there will be plenty of time for him to make his.

Memories do not go back far enough to provide the detail necessary to prove the serious charge of murder. In practice, in British courts, witnesses do not remember the details of facts they witnessed for more than a few months—

Mr. Carlile: Will the hon. Gentleman be courteous enough to give way?

Mr. Stanbrook: An appeal to courtesy always succeeds.

Mr. Carlile: The hon. Gentleman is extremely courteous, and I thought that he would respond to that appeal.

Is the hon. Gentleman suggesting that people who saw relatives tortured, or who may themselves have been tortured, are less able to remember what happened to them, and who committed acts against them, than the hon. Gentleman did when describing his activities in Nigeria 25 years ago? The hon. Gentleman described those activities in great detail, and to our considerable amusement.

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Mr. Stanbrook: That is an interesting illustration because, although I remember very well that I was a district officer in Nigeria 30 years ago, that I was in charge of a prison, and what happened when I wanted to introduce a stricter regime, I do not remember the details. I do not remember the names of those people and I could not identify a single person now, and why should I? No one ever does, and no witnesses will remember, either, in sufficient detail to convince a British court beyond reasonable doubt.

Mr. Bermingham: Will the hon. Gentleman give way please? It is only a little one.

Mr. Stanbrook: I must get on. Identification evidence is the most difficult of all, especially when we are dealing with events that occurred more than 40 years ago in a far distant country. Identification is virtually impossible now.

The right hon. and learned Member for Warley, West suggested that extradition was an alternative. But that is the trouble. Extradition is not possible because Opposition Members know jolly well that public opinion in this country would not stand for extradition to Russia. That is why the Government are not, I am glad to say, thinking about extraditing any of those people to Russia. In any event, the Government have dispensed with the need for a *prima facie* case in British courts, so there is the danger hovering around this concept that in any event no British court will accept—

Sitting suspended for a Division in the House.

On resuming—

The Chairman: Before I call the hon. Member for Orpington (Mr. Stanbrook) to continue his speech, it may be helpful if I make a brief statement. The Government Whip has been kind enough to let me know that he intends to move the adjournment after new clause 55. I have no idea how long hon. Members wish to speak, but it seems that if in due course it appears probable that we can reach the adjournment before 8.30 pm, that course would be better than adjourning for dinner at, say, 8.10 pm and coming back 90 minutes later. I thought that I would mention that consideration at this stage.

Mr. Stanbrook: You make me feel rather guilty, Mr. Crowther, because I must apologise for the fact that I have to leave for a public engagement soon after I finish my speech. I hope that I shall be acquitted of any discourtesy.

I was dealing with the question of extradition. There cannot be extradition to Russia because we do not have a treaty with Russia. Russia's concepts of justice, quite apart from its views on law and humanity, are quite different from ours and would not be acceptable to public opinion.

As the right hon. and learned Member for Warley, West said, Israel would have no jurisdiction either.

Mr. Archer: I did not say that.

Mr. Stanbrook: I acknowledge that the right hon. the learned Gentleman is right to say that the country did not exist at the time of the alleged offences.

Mr. Archer: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. Gentleman, but he has accused me of saying the opposite of what I said. I did not say that Israel had no jurisdiction. I said that it had jurisdiction.

Mr. Stanbrook: This is what comes of trying to telescope one's argument.

If jurisdiction is defined the jurisdiction conferred by the law of the state, Israel has jurisdiction over many matters and over many people around the world who have never set foot in Israel. Among other things, Israel purports to try people for crimes against humanity. The nationality of the person concerned or the legal system of his country does not seem to matter.

In English law, at least, Israel did not exist at the time. There is an extradition treaty, but specifically it does not give jurisdiction retrospectively and would not cover any of these cases.

To my knowledge, all the individuals so far named—I think that it is disgraceful that they have been identified—by certain organs of the press as being on the so-called list of the Simon Wiesenthal centre are or were born citizens of the Baltic states. I know of one who was a soldier in Lithuania when it was over-run by the Russians. There was a great deal of oppression and bloodshed immediately after the Soviet invasion and he was determined to fight back against the Russians. A year later, the Germans invaded Russia and the Lithuanian people considered that they had been liberated. Many Lithuanian soldiers joined the German forces and fought alongside them as units of the Lithuanian army under the banner of the German army, thinking that they were helping to restore freedom to their own country.

It is clear that any such person who could later be identified would be considered an enemy of the Russians. They would wish to persecute him if possible, to get hold of him and to brand him as a war criminal, and that is what has happened in many cases. People have written to me as a result of my comments on the subject some time ago. Those whom I know of as being named have all proved to be persons born in the Baltic states who are now emigrés. They have been driven abroad. They fully concede that they took up arms against the Russians, but it does not follow that there is evidence to link them individually with any atrocity. That is the great gap which the right hon. and learned Gentleman and his hon. Friends are unfortunately trying to fill.

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Individuals have only to be named in this country and straight away there is a witch hunt. The press names them. The man from the Simon Wiesenthal centre who came to this country not long ago went to the home of one of them in Edinburgh and paraded outside the house with a placard bearing the words "Nazi criminal". Thank goodness that the law of this country protects people against that sort of unjustified accusation and means that so far there has been some restraint. Nevertheless, newspapers follow up the stories, accepting that the people accused have no chance because of the prejudice, exaggeration and emotion that goes into the subject.

British justice cannot usefully and rightly function in such an atmosphere. We cannot get at the original perpetrators of the offences, even assuming that the offences could be proved. They happened far too long ago. Events in eastern Europe were far too confused at the time for anyone to remember details or, most importantly, to make any identification.

A cast at present before the courts in Israel appears to have a good chance of success because even the Americans, contrary to their glorious heritage of British justice, have stripped the accused of his nationality and sent him to Israel for trial. However, even in Israel, which to some extent has good cause, the court cannot swallow the issue of identification, which the prosecution simply cannot prove.

If the man is found guilty and punished in Israel, it will be the most monstrous act of injustice committed by any state. I hope that the integrity of the courts in Israel, which has been high in many respects in the past, will be sufficient to ensure that he is not so condemned.

The right hon. and learned Gentleman and his hon. Friends are trying to get us on the bandwagon. I suggest that here and now the Committee should refuse to be swayed.

Mr. Bermingham: The hon. Member for Orpington (Mr. Stanbrook) would not give way to me or be courteous to me. I am not surprised, because I can defeat his argument with one simple question and he will go before he hears it.

I bet that the hon. Gentleman can remember what his first sergeant in the Army looked like. We remember people who attack us. The hon. Gentleman has left the Room now but he can read the debate later. We remember people who have hurt and harmed us. I do not suppose that there is one member of the Committee who cannot remember the face of his teacher or headmaster.

Many a Jew who went through Dachau and Belsen and the camps in Lithuania will never forget the face of the guard—the man who killed his friends.

Mr. Alex Carlile: The hon. Gentleman mentioned Jews and the holocaust is very much in our minds when we discuss the matter, but I am sure that he is aware that Jews were not the only people subjected to genocide. Huge numbers of gipsies, Catholics and other groups of people who were regarded as vagrants because they did not fit a specific civil philosophy were also persecuted.

Mr. Bermingham: The hon. and learned Gentleman is right. Persecution extended to political opponents, trade unionists, those who opposed the war effort, Quakers, Seventh Day Adventists and many other groups. The list was endless and millions died, yet for the best part of 25 minutes—I looked at the clock—the Committee had to listen to the hon. Member for Orpington arguing why we should not come into line with many other parts of the world and extend our jurisdiction to try to rectify the wrongs of a generation ago.

The new clause would range wider than the holocaust would encompass future cases of genocide throughout the world. The provision is not merely historical. Under the new clause, someone who arrived in the United Kingdom and gained our citizenship or who, if the amendment that I suggested to my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Warley, West (Mr. Archer) were accepted, became resident here, would not be allowed to escape prosecution for crimes committed elsewhere, especially crimes against humanity.

Since 1945 there have been a number of crimes against humanity. For example, there have been massacres in the Philippines, and we recall the events in Taiwan. Whole tribes have been wiped out in parts of Central America.

What will happen if there is no extradition treaty between us and the country where the crime originates? Are we to say that because of an accident of fate, a person who is ordinarily resident here or who has acquired British citizenship should avoid and evade the guilt—and guilt it is—of his crime?

We must look at the matter again. The Minister is aware that some months ago on the Floor of the House I asked the Home Secretary whether it would be possible to extend English jurisdiction to cover the world, as it were, in respect of such crimes. The Home Secretary said that he would look at the possibility.

It is the purport of new clause 52A to achieve that objective. We are not seeking that someone who robs a bank in Taskent can be prosecuted at the Old Bailey. We seek to ensure that someone who tortures, maims, butchers and destroys should not, simply because he is lucky enough to be in this country and because we have no extradition treaty with the other country involved, escape justice. We seek that our courts, subject to the normal rules of evidence, will deal with him and that he will be punished for his crimes according to our law.

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The provision is not too much to ask. To say that it somehow debases British justice is an insult to those right hon. and hon. Members in whose name the new clause stands. The new clause would be a signal that in respect of crimes against humanity, British justice knew no bounds. It would show that we will not allow ourselves to be a haven for the international terrorist.

I accept that it may be necessary to tidy up the wording, but I assure the Minister that if the principles behind the new clause were put on the statute book he would have served this land and history well. Many people who by luck have escaped prosecution for their activities in the period 1933-45 and in respect of massacres in other parts of the world since could be brought to book. Justice is not national but international, and we should be proud of international justice. International justice and British justice have much in common.

Mr. Alex Carlile: I regret very much that the hon. Member for Orpington (Mr. Stanbrook) has thought it right to put the attractions of a radio interview before the courtesy of listening to what some of us have to say in Committee, especially in reply to his speech.

I did not intend to speak in the debate because I heard and supported the eloquent speech of the right hon. and learned Member for Warley, West (Mr. Archer). However, I am moved to speak because of what I consider to be the disgraceful nature of at least some of the remarks of the hon. Member for Orpington.

Perhaps I should start by declaring an interest, which I hope that I do not share with any other member of the Committee. Large numbers of my family were slaughtered during the last war as a result of genocide by those who carried out murders in the name of Nazism. However, I have had the British upbringing and education that the hon. Member for Orpington would consider entirely appropriate for a member of the Conservative party.

I hope that my public school, university and barrister's education and my years as a member of what is sometimes regarded, perhaps not always accurately, as the most established of professions have at least trained me in the art of objectivity. The remarks of the hon. Member for Orpington were completely lacking in that attribute.

The hon. Member for Orpington spoke of those who supported the new clause as seeking to perpetrate "a foul injustice". He said that motives of hatred and malice were the moving force behind the clause. He committed what in my view was the calumny of saying that the new clause was motivated by some international conspiracy. He spoke in the most offensive terms imaginable of a pressure group or groups being behind the proposal.

I submit that if there is a foul injustice in this context it is the fact that for the past 40 to 50 years those who committed murder on a massive scale have been able to escape due process of justice. In my view, the foul injustice is that there are perhaps tens of thousands of people living in the United Kingdom who can provide evidence of genocide and murder in the name of Nazism but who have not been able to put that evidence to the effect to which it should be put if justice in the United Kingdom is to retain its good name.

The hon. Gentleman spoke as if people who were oppressed, persecuted and tortured could not remember what had happened to them. I can say from what I have been told in the past 40 years by my mother, who went through it all, and by others, that many people who suffered these depredations can remember not only who did it but where they stood in the room as they did it. I have heard descriptions of meals that were eaten whilst Nazi oppression was taking place in Poland. I have heard descriptions of what was happening in different parts of different streets. I have heard accounts of what was said by A to B and passed on by B to C. I have heard the reasoning behind actions of the Resistance movements in which my mother was involved. It is outrageous to suggest that people who were so oppressed are any less able to remember the detail than the hon. Gentleman himself when he described in some detail an amusing incident of no great importance in itself which occurred when he was a district officer in Nigeria a quarter of a century ago.

In my view, if the United Kingdom does not tackle this problem in a way which causes the law to be changed, in due course we shall stand alone in our willingness to bring these matters before the courts and to justice. We shall stand contrary to common law jurisdictions. Canada already has jurisdiction to deal with such matters. I did not hear the hon. Member for Orpington criticise the Canadian common law system of justice as having dealt with these matters unfairly so far. Australia will face up to the problem and provide the jurisdiction to deal with it. It is approaching the matter clearly and responsibly. Outside the common law jurisdictions, France has recently dealt with the problem.

The Home Secretary's statement in the House recently in which he announced the appointment of Sir Thomas Hetherington and Mr. Chalmers to look into these issues was a large step in the right direction. It was a response to a clearly perceived need. It was a decision based on policy and judgment and it was the correct decision in almost all its aspects. It gives an opportunity for evidence to be collected and assessed.

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[Mr. Carlile]

However, the statement failed in one rather important respect. Here I come back to France. There is a danger that if the Hetherington-Chalmers commission says, "We have found a lot of evidence against one person or two people. Therefore we should change the law to deal with them", it will be difficult for them to obtain a fair trial. It will not be impossible—it never is in the jurisdiction of England and Wales, and perhaps that of Scotland that the hon. Member for Orpington rightly admires so much. We want to avoid show trials. Such trials are against our legal tradition. The Barbie trial in France was a show trial, which we would not have been proud of here. It seems right that we should change the jurisdictional law now so that, if evidence is available later, we can say with intellectual honesty, "We had already changed the law; now we intend to apply it." If we find the evidence and state that because of the evidence we will change the law, we run the risk of being damaged by a post hoc, propter hoc argument. I should greatly regret that.

With the new clause, what those of us from many racial backgrounds and political viewpoints from all over the world seek is not merely a law which provides redress for the past but one which shows that the United Kingdom is preparing for the future as well by legislating against these heinous and wicked crimes.

Mr. Sayeed: I had not intended to speak, so I shall be brief. I agree wholeheartedly with every word spoken by the hon. and learned Member for Montgomery (Mr. Carlile). I regret that my hon. Friend the member for Orpington (Mr. Stanbrook) has left because I believe that he departed from the high standards of argument that I usually expect from him. He suggested that people who had committed heinous crimes would be condemned without trial in this country. That shows, to put it mildly, a considerable lack of faith in the British judicial system. He then suggested that those who tabled the new clause were motivated by revenge, hatred or malice. I consider that to be deeply insulting. He suggested finally that because these crimes happened a long time ago, they were out of order because of time, or they should be because of jurisdiction. I disagree.

I believe that the new clause promotes a point of principle—I am less fussed about the wording than the principle. The principle is simple: there should be no hiding place for people who commit such evil crimes against humanity. There should be no hiding place by virtue of time, jurisdiction and geography. This country must, in time, ensure that it has the right to prosecute these evil people.

Mrs. Llin Golding (Newcastle under Lyme): I, too, believe that a crime is no less serious because it was committed 40 years ago. I remind the Committee of the parliamentary delegation that went from the House a few weeks after Allied troops had gone into Belsen. My father was a member of that delegation, and what he told me of the horrors that he found there are engraved on my mind and on my heart.

I can remember clearly answering the door to him when he returned home. He was grey and drawn, and he said to me, "Do not touch me. I am covered in lice. Everyone there was covered in lice. We have been deloused many times, but we are still covered in lice." He did not sleep for many weeks. He had nightmares for a number of years. The lady member of that delegation died a few years later. Everyone knew that what she had seen during her time with the delegation affected her greatly.

I apologise to the hon. and learned Member for Montgomery (Mr. Carlile) for telling him what my father told us. He spoke of hanging gibbets where human beings were hanged on hooks under their chins until they died. He spoke of lampshades made with tattoos that the Nazis had wanted in their homes. They had begun by skinning dead bodies but decided that the skin had contracted too much and was too shrivelled for the sorts of lampshades that they wanted, so they skinned people alive and made the lampshades from them.

My father brought back photographs of huge piles of bodies that were just skin and bones which the soldiers, although they had been there for about four weeks, had not been able to remove. He brought photographs of men standing in thin, thin clothes with grey faces and haunted eyes, everyone looking alike. I can see those faces now. I recall the expression of complete bewilderment in the men's eyes; they were the faces of living skeletons. What my father told me and what I saw in those starving haunted faces gave me a commitment to ensure that this would never happen again anywhere on earth. But these crimes are still happening.

It is our duty as a Committee to act on what that parliamentary delegation discovered and told the House of Commons about. We have failed to do anything so far. It is more than time that the Committee endorsed some action that would make worthwhile the suffering and the actions of Members of this House who went and saw the suffering of so many more.

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Mr. John Patten: I do not think that I have been present in a debate in the House or in Standing Committee where hon. Members have listened so carefully to every word. I am grateful to the right hon. and learned Member for Warley, West (Mr. Archer) for initiating this short debate and for saying that he did so because he wished to put certain views on the record and give hon. Members an opportunity to air their views without repressing the matter to a vote later.

The right hon. and learned Gentleman raised extremely important questions. As he said, the Government's approach has been to appoint an entirely independent inquiry into war crimes which is to be undertaken by Sir Thomas Hetherington, a most distinguished one-time Director of Public Prosecutions, and Mr. Chalmers from Scotland. My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary made a statement on 8 February. Many of those present this evening were in the Chamber at the time. He announced the terms of reference. He has asked that the evidence, such as it is and where it is, be examined in the light of its likely prohibitive value. That is most important.

Whether the law should be amended was the next issue referred to by my right hon. Friend. This would make it possible for prosecutions to take place. We have made a deliberately cautious approach, although we wish to have the results of the inquiry as soon as possible bearing in mind the terribly difficult task facing Sir Thomas and Mr. Chalmers.

It was clear to us in the Home Office that work was needed before we could reasonably decide whether there should be legislation to enable such allegations to be heard in a British court. Although some hon. Members have some reservations about certain aspects of the inquiry approach, it has been broadly welcomed in the House and in the country.

The right hon. and learned Gentleman no doubt tabled the amendment to allow the issue to be debated. I welcome that, and I hope that he and his hon. Friends and my hon. Friends the Members for Bristol, East (Mr. Sayeed) and for Orpington (Mr. Stanbrook) feel that the debate has been worthwhile. Naturally I shall draw to the attention of my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary, Sir Thomas and Mr. Chalmers all that has been said in our debate. For the moment, however, I am convinced that the right course would be to let the inquiry take its course and report back as soon as may be.

Mr. Bermingham: If the Minister has decided to oppose a change in the law at present and will ask his hon. Friends also to oppose it, can he assure us that, when the Home Office has considered the implications of changing the law, proposals to change it will be put before the House immediately? We are not talking only of the period between 1933 and 1945; we are also including other atrocities committed in other places at other times against other persons, some of whose perpetrators are resident in this country now. Whether Sir Thomas discovers *prima facie* evidence against named persons in this country should not affect our position *apropos* other atrocities and other persons.

Mr. John Patten: We must await the report from Sir Thomas Hetherington and Mr. Chalmers. We cannot pre-empt decisions that we are unable to take because we do not have the report. As always, the Government will take their decisions and make them known as soon as possible after deciding whether there is to be legislation. In the light of what I have said, I hope that the right hon. and learned Gentleman will feel able to withdraw new clause 52A.

Mr. Archer: This has been one of the best Standing Committee debates that I can recollect. It has been the House of Commons Committee system at its best. Any comment from me would not add to the quality of the debate.

I disagree with the Minister's conclusion, for the reasons given by my hon. Friend the Member for St. Helens, South (Mr. Bermingham) and by the hon. and learned Member for Montgomery (Mr. Carlile). The Government are wrong about the timing, but I do not think that this is the moment to press the matter further. When the Minister has read the report of our debate and has reflected upon it, he may take a different view. I beg to ask leave to withdraw the motion.

Motion, and clause, by leave, withdrawn.

משרד החוץ

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שגרירות ישראל
לונדון

כ"ח באדר תשמ"ח
17 במרץ 1988
סימוכין: 2558

Handwritten notes and signatures in black and green ink.

אל: ארופה 2 ✓

מאת: הציר-יועץ, לונדון

הנדון: דיוני הפרלמנט: המזה"ת

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HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Oral Answers to Questions
FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Middle East

4. Mr. Adley: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on progress towards a middle east peace settlement.

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Mr. David Mellor): We welcome recent efforts to give new impetus to the search for a negotiated settlement of the Arab-Israel conflict. We and our European partners support strongly an international conference as the suitable framework for negotiations between the parties directly concerned.

Mr. Adley: I thank my hon. and learned Friend and congratulate him on his active participation in the process during the past few weeks. Has he had a chance to look at the *Hansard* extract I sent to him dated 23 July 1946 entitled "Terrorist Outrage, Jerusalem" and the statement made by the then Prime Minister, Mr. Attlee? Does he agree that as Messrs. Shamir and Sharon were involved in those terrorist activities, it is utter hypocrisy for them to condemn the PLO as a terrorist organisation? On that basis, does he agree that if Mr. Shultz is to play any useful role, it is essential that the United States and our Government include the PLO in any discussions, if they are to be meaningful?

Mr. Mellor: I appreciate my hon. Friend's sincere interest in this matter. The tragic events of the King David hotel are matters for historians, and our concern has to be with the present. Plainly, the PLO is accepted widely within the occupied territories as the representative of the Palestinian people. We have never accepted it as the sole representative of those people and there has been an inhibition on the part of the Americans and the British Government at Cabinet level to receive the PLO because of the need for it to make a clean break with terrorist activities of the past. I hope that the PLO will do that, so that it can play a proper role in the unfolding peace process, which as I said earlier, we very much welcome.

Wednesday 2 March 1988

Oral Answers to Questions

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Middle East

Sir Russell Johnston: Does the Minister accept that the unfolding peace process, as he put it, has been unfolding for a terribly long time without any real progress? We warmly welcome his support for an international conference, but would he go as far as to say that there will be no progress until Mr. Shultz makes proposals which go considerably beyond those he has made so far?

Mr. Mellor: I thank the hon. Gentleman for his consistent support for a bipartisan approach to the matter. I welcome that. Mr. Shultz is properly taking all possible pains to consult as widely as he can among the Governments in the region. He is trying to break down the old objections to peace, to which the hon. Gentleman referred, in order to see whether some new development is possible. Our role is to assist him in that. Of course, we assist him by talking frankly to him about difficulties and the need for the United States to tackle some of those difficulties. I think that the hon. Gentleman will find that that is exactly what my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister did in her talks with Mr. Shultz yesterday.

Mr. Walters: Is my hon. and learned Friend aware that in 1973 the United Nations Commission on Human Rights described Israeli conduct on the West Bank as "an affront to humanity and tantamount to war crimes"? The only thing that has changed there is the presence of the television cameras. In the circumstances, should not the Palestinians, after all these years of injustice, at least have the right to choose their own representatives?

Mr. Mellor: Our condemnation of many of the practices in the occupied territories by the Israeli defence force is well known. Sadly, those problems appear to be growing rather than diminishing. I believe that they will fundamentally undermine the reputation of the Government of Israel unless something is done about them. I hope very much that out of this will come the progress that my hon. Friend seeks.

We wish to see the Palestinians properly represented at any conference. Of course that is primarily a matter for the Arab side. The idea which has been floated — should there be an international conference — of a joint Palestinian and Jordanian delegation would appear to be the right way forward.

Mr. Ernie Ross: The Minister must know that the Shultz mission will fail because Shultz is unable to talk to the Palestine Liberation Organisation. If there is to be a peace settlement in the middle east, the Minister, Shultz and the Americans must drop this reluctance to talk to a main player. Shultz can talk to the Israelis, but he must talk to the other side, the PLO. The best thing that the Minister and the British Government can do is to urge the Americans to drop their refusal to accept that the Palestine Liberation Organisation is the representative of the Palestinians.

Mr. Mellor: I know the hon. Gentleman's serious concern for this issue. I urge him, as I have done in the past, to make the PLO aware of the central inhibition of the Americans in talking to the PLO and of the British Government at Cabinet level in receiving the PLO because of the need for it to make a break with the past.

Mr. Skinner: The Minister is not on television now — he has had his knuckles rapped by the Prime Minister.

Mr. Mellor: Of course the Americans would like to talk to the Palestinians, just as a number of us have been able to do and just as I was able to do when I visited the occupied territories during a visit from which the hon. Member for Bolsover (Mr. Skinner) says I am retreating. There is no question of retreating from that or anything else.

It is important that the Palestinians should be able to put their case directly. That will best come about when the PLO has legitimatised itself in a form that enables it to repudiate the past which, as the hon. Member for Dundee, West (Mr. Ross) knows, was disfigured by terrorist actions that caused grave difficulty and resentment in Europe. That is the way forward that we all want to see.

Mr. John Marshall: Does my hon. and learned Friend agree that a necessary precondition of peace in the middle east is that Israel's Arab neighbours must accept Israel's right to exist and its right to secure borders? Does my hon. and learned Friend agree that it is an international scandal that, 40 years after the foundation of the state of Israel, only one Arab country has done that? Does my hon. and learned Friend regard it as significant that those Arabs who are willing to bankroll the PLO have also been seen to be supporters of the IRA?

Mr. Mellor: That last observation is a bit strong and I do not think it is in accordance with the facts; nor do I think that the football supporter approach to this problem — taking positions on one side rather than striking a balance — is at all helpful in resolving this difficult matter. A sensible policy for the peace process, which I believe we have, is based, first, on the right of the Palestinians to self-determination and, secondly, and every bit as important, on the right of all states in the region — including, of course, Israel — to exist behind secure boundaries. I am sure that no progress is possible until all states in the region appreciate that.

Mr. Kaufman: Is the Minister aware that, from my own talks with the PLO and the Governments of Iraq, Egypt and Jordan, it is perfectly clear to me that there is no problem about their taking part in an international conference under the auspices of the five permanent members of the United Nations, which could lead to a settlement that would provide security for Israel as well as self-determination for the Palestinians? Is he also aware that the principal, and so far immovable, obstacle to the holding of such a conference is Mr. Shamir, the Prime Minister of Israel? Is he further aware that, instead of trailing new and circuitous solutions to the problem, Mr. Shultz and the United States Administration should tell Mr. Shamir, in no uncertain terms, to sit down at a conference and negotiate with the Arab countries?

Mr. Mellor: The right hon. Gentleman's progress around the middle east has been most welcome to me, as it has allowed a great deal of bipartisan agreement between the two Front Benches. I certainly agree with him about the attitude of the Arab world towards an international conference. It is our view just as much as his — and I believe that that view has all the more authority because it appears to be a view that commands majority support in Parliament — that an international conference is the best way forward. There is no doubt that one section of the Israeli Government has consistently rejected that and I hope very much that, as part of the tireless work that Mr. Shultz is doing, he will be able to tackle that issue.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Oral Answers to Questions
FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

USSR (Ministerial Visit)

7. **Mr. Dykes:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on his recent discussions with the Soviet authorities during his visit to Moscow.

Mr. Mellor: My right hon. and learned Friend had full and wide-ranging talks with Mr. Gorbachev, Mr. Shevardnadze and others covering bilateral matters including trade, arms control, human rights and regional issues. He also met human rights activists and was able to put our views directly to the Soviet public in their press and on television. The visit was a further contribution to our active dialogue with the Soviet leadership and to the improving atmosphere of East-West relations.

Mr. Dykes: On the assumption that my right hon. and learned Friend's successful visit also included talks on middle eastern peace prospects, does my hon. and learned Friend agree that it is no good the United States objecting to the Soviet and Syrian presence in a possible future international peace conference, and it is no good us repeating that we think that the Jordanian cum Palestinian option is the best way forward if, quite manifestly and clearly, the Jordanians object to the Palestinians being included with them rather than having their own independent and legitimate position in the negotiations?

Mr. Mellor: Perhaps I should explain to my hon. Friend the inhibiting factor in some of the earlier answers. While Mr. Shultz is still active—as he is and there is no question of his mission having come to an end—it is difficult for us to comment on the substance of it when it is at the heart of Mr. Shultz's efforts that the substance should emerge as a result of his careful negotiations. However, in private we advise Mr. Shultz with all candour about the ways we think things should move forward. Let me correct my hon. Friend on one point. I was in Jordan yesterday, and I can assure him there is no question of the Jordanians objecting to a mixed delegation. It is their policy to press for one.

Mr. John M. Taylor: Did my hon. and learned Friend, in the course of his discussions, give as part of his appreciation of the middle east situation the view that Israel is entitled to secure frontiers but not to occupy all the territory up to those frontiers?

Mr. Mellor: I think that I understand the point that my hon. Friend is making. Israel is entitled to have internationally recognised borders, but those are not the borders that are taken as a result of war and the occupied territories are not part of Israel. It is the view of the British Government and, I believe, of the world community as a whole, that they should not remain so. Nor will that secure peace, so long as the Israeli Government fail to recognise that the principles of territories at peace will be the crucial element in any future discussions.

Vol. 494
No. 92



Tuesday
8 March 1988

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)

HOUSE OF LORDS

OFFICIAL REPORT

Middle East Conflict: Refugee Aid

Lord Molloy asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether in concert with the United Kingdom's allies they will seek to provide food and medicaments to the people in the refugee camps of Gaza and the West Bank in Palestine.

Lord Glenarthur: Yes, my Lords. Our national contribution to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency whose programmes include supplementary feeding will be £5.25 million in 1988, 5 per cent. more than in 1987. Our share of planned 1988 Community contributions amounts to a further £5 million. Since December 1987, the Community has also provided directly £450,000-worth of emergency medical supplies and food. We are ready to consider requests for special funding, both nationally and with our colleagues in the Community.

Lord Molloy: My Lords, may I thank the Minister for that very encouraging reply? It certainly stands our Government in good stead and gives them a good name in the terrible tragedy in the Middle East.

However, there are some countries among our allies which do not seem to be pulling their weight. According to the Red Cross, some European voluntary organisations appear to be in need of a little more co-ordination, both in respect of medicaments and of food supplies. Would the Minister not agree that there could be a closer examination of whether or not the relief dispatched from Great Britain and our allies reaches the proper places and fulfils the proper purposes?

Lord Glenarthur: My Lords, we believe it to be effective but if we can see ways of improving it we shall use them.

House of Lords

Tuesday, 8th March, 1988.

Middle East Conflict: Refugee Aid

Lord Mellish: My Lords, recognising that the conditions in the refugee camps are appalling, can the Minister say whether any money has been offered by the very wealthy Arab states that have made billions of pounds out of oil? Have they tried to help their fellow countrymen in the resettlement camps? Or do they desire to keep them in appalling conditions—a constant eyesore to the rest of the world—because of their hatred of Israel?

Lord Glenarthur: My Lords, I think it is fair to say that not a lot has been forthcoming. Nevertheless, I am certain that they would share in some respects at least the noble Lord's concern about the conditions.

Lord McNair: My Lords, is the noble Lord aware that his original Answer to the noble Lord, Lord Molloy, has our full support? Would he perhaps also agree that the camps in the Lebanon are every bit as deserving and perhaps more so than those in Gaza and the occupied territories?

Lord Glenarthur: My Lords, that is a point of view. The Lebanon is a matter which concerns us. Of course, we support Lebanon's sovereignty, its unity, independence and territorial integrity. As regards my original Answer, the way in which the United Nations Relief and Works Agency disburses its funds is a matter for that organisation.

Lord Cledwyn of Penrhos: My Lords, I warmly welcome the practical assistance described by the noble Lord. But can he confirm that it is getting through to the occupied territories?

Lord Glenarthur: My Lords, so far as I am aware, the answer is yes. Perhaps I should say, in amplification of my answer to the noble Lord, Lord McNair, that the United Nations Relief and Works Agency does not predetermine the funding levels by area.

Returning to the question of the noble Lord, Lord Cledwyn, I have no evidence to suppose that it is not getting through. We have also a bilateral programme for Gaza and the West Bank outside the refugee camps which approaches £1 million per year. The story is encouraging.

Lord Molloy: My Lords, does the Minister not agree that there is a great deal of truth in what the noble Lord, Lord McNair, said about the situation in the Lebanon? Many of us who have been there and to the Middle East have seen the terrible tragedies. We are irritated that those who could contribute are not contributing. It is almost like saying that the problem of Ethiopia, the great drought and the starvation affecting thousands if not millions of refugees is the fault of the Almighty for allowing the drought to happen. Will the Minister take on board the proposition I made initially that, with our allies, we want to see that what we are giving so generously to help those in urgent need is arriving at the intended destination?

Lord Glenarthur: My Lords, I agree with the noble Lord. We certainly do not want to see going adrift the money of an agency such as the United Nations Relief and Works Agency to which we and our partners donate much for the benefit of these unfortunate people. We believe that it is getting through.

Lord Mayhew: My Lords, will the noble Lord not agree that in very difficult circumstances UNRWA is doing a first class job and fully deserves the support of the European Community?

Lord Glenarthur: My Lords, yes, I agree entirely with the noble Lord. I am grateful to him for making that point. In fact, that agency held a consultation with donors only last week in Vienna. We await further proposals and its latest plans which we shall also consider sympathetically.



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ד בניסן תשמ"ח

22 במרץ 1988

סימוכין: 2564

שגרירות ישראל
לונדון

ג.נ.ס.
כ"ב

אל: ארופה 2 ✓

מאת: הציר-יועץ, לונדון

הנדון: דיוני הפרלמנט: צבא וציוד צבאי

לוטה עותקים משאלות ותשובות שהועלו בדיוני הפרלמנט ב- 17-18/3 בתחומים

הבאים:

א. הכשרת אנשי צבא זרים בבריטניה.

ב. יועצים צבאים בריטים במדינות זרות.

ג. תשובת משרד המסחר והתעשייה לאספקת ציוד לאש"פ.

בכרבה
יורם שני.

העתק: המרכז



HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Written Answers to Questions

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Military Training (Foreign Students)

Mr. Hinchliffe: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the names of countries currently sending students to Britain under the military training assistance programme.

Mr. Mellor: The countries which have sent students to the United Kingdom for military training in 1987-88, whose costs have been wholly or partially paid for from the United Kingdom military training assistance scheme are:

Algeria
Antigua
Bahamas
Bangladesh
Barbados
Belize
Botswana
Brazil
Burma
Cameroon
China
Colombia
Congo
Cyprus

Djibouti
El Salvador
Egypt
Fiji
Gambia
Ghana
Greece
Guyana
India
Indonesia
Ireland
Ivory Coast
Jamaica
Jordan

Kenya
Korea
Lebanon
Lesotho
Malaysia
Malawi
Maldives
Malta
Mauritius
Morocco
Mozambique
Nepal
Nigeria

Pakistan
Philippines
Portugal
Senegal
Sierra Leone
Singapore
Somalia
Spain
Sri Lanka
St. Vincent
Sudan
Swaziland

Tanzania
Thailand
Tonga
Trinidad and Tobago
Tunisia
Turkey
Uganda
Uruguay
Venezuela
West Samoa
Yemen Arab Republic
Zaire
Zambia
Zimbabwe



HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Written Answers to Questions

DEFENCE

Loan Service Personnel Programme

Mr. Hinchliffe: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the names of countries to which Britain has military personnel on loan currently under the loan service personnel programme.

Mr. Ian Stewart: Members of Her Majesty's armed forces have served in the following countries and territories on loan or secondment terms during the current financial year:

Australia	Kuwait
Bahrain	Lesotho
Bangladesh	Mauritius
Barbados	New Zealand
Belize	Nigeria
Bermuda	Oman
Brunei	Qatar
Dominica	Saudi Arabia
Fiji	St. Lucia
Gambia	St. Vincent
Ghana	Sudan
Hong Kong	Swaziland
Indonesia	Uganda
Jordan	United Arab Emirates
Kenya	Zimbabwe ¹

¹ Since January 1986 a wing of the British military advisory and training team has been specifically allocated to train Mozambican troops within Zimbabwe.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Written Answers to Questions

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Palestinian Terrorists (Military Equipment)

Mr. Latham: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what progress is being made with Her Majesty's Government's inquiry into the allegations of sales of military equipment to Palestinian terrorist organisations; and when it will be completed.

Mr. Kenneth Clarke [*holding answer 9 March 1988*]: Allegations that in 1981-82, military communications equipment was licensed for shipment to the PLO have been investigated by the Departments concerned with the active co-operation of Racal-Tacticom.

Applications to export military communications equipment are considered by relevant Government Departments before any licence is granted by the DTI. Records have been examined and there is no trace of any licence having ever been granted for shipment to the PLO.

The investigation has revealed that in the case of one export licensed in 1982 to a company in the Lebanon an error occurred so that the usual procedures were completed without taking into account information showing that the Lebanon company had links with the PLO. It is possible therefore that this consignment eventually reached the PLO. It was of very small value and the equipment was non-lethal.

No evidence has been found to justify any suggestion of unlawful actions by Racal-Tacticom.



6011

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ד בניסן תשמ"ח
22 במרץ 1988
סימוכין: 2563

שגרירות ישראל
לונדון

ג. כסל
גר

אל: ארופה 2 ✓

מאת: הציר-יועץ, לונדון

הנדון: דיוני הפרלמנט: איראן - עיראק

1. לוטה עותק ממפגש הועדה לעניני חוץ של הפרלמנט עם אנשי הפוראופ בנושא הנ"ל,
מיום 27/1/88.

2. המפגש התחיל בהצגת הנושא בראשי פרקים ע"י הפוראופ לרבות המדיניות הבריטית
ולאחר מכן הדיון עצמו כולל המטרות הבריטיות והמערכיות במפרץ.

ובכחה
יורם שני.

העתק: ראש המרכז

ממ"ד/פריפריה

HOUSE OF COMMONS
FOREIGN AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE
THE IRAN/IRAQ CONFLICT

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

Wednesday 27 January 1988

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

*The Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey Howe, QC, MP.
Sir Patrick Wright, KCMG, Sir David Miers, KBE, CMG and Mr Paul Lever*

Members present:

Mr David Howell, in the Chair

Mr Michael Jopling	Mr Ian Taylor
Mr Ivan Lawrence	Mr Peter Temple-Morris
Mr Jim Lester	Mr Bowen Wells
Mr Ted Rowlands	Mr Michael Welsh
Mr Peter Shore	

THE IRAN/IRAQ CONFLICT (GF/2)

Memorandum by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Introduction

1. Iran became an Islamic Republic with the overthrow of the Shah in 1979, and supreme power is vested in the Ayatollah Khomeini. Nearly half of the population, now over 50 million, were still rural dwellers at the time of the revolution, though there has been an accelerated drift to the towns (particularly Tehran, whose population is now over 10 million) despite the Government's attempts to check it. Iran's 628,000 square miles border the Caspian Sea and the USSR to the north, Turkey and Iraq to the west, the Gulf to the south and Pakistan and Afghanistan to the east. Iran is a major oil producer with reserves which will sustain the present rate of production for about 71 years.

2. Iraq became an independent monarchy in 1932. The fall of the monarchy in 1958 was followed by 10 years of short-lived military regimes until the Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party seized power in 1968. Under the 1970 Constitution, supreme power is vested in the nine-man Revolutionary Command Council (RCC). The population now numbers roughly 15 million; most are Arabs but there are a number of minority groups, the largest of which consists of about 1 million Kurds. Iraq's 170,000 square miles border Turkey in the north, Iran in the east, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf in the south and Syria and Jordan in the west. Iraq is also a major oil producer with very large reserves which will sustain the present rate of production for about 75 years.

3. The origins of the conflict between Iran and Iraq lie in the centuries-old dispute between the Persians and the Arabs for domination in a strategically important area. In recent times there have been repeated disputes over the precise demarcation of the international border, which runs for 1,458 kilometres from Turkey in the north to the Shatt-al-Arab waterway in the south. In the early 1970s, relations between Iran and Iraq became increasingly hostile, with each side supporting dissident activity on the other's side of the border. In early 1975, on the initiative of President Boumedienne of Algeria, the Shah of Iran and Saddam Hussein of Iraq (then Vice-Chairman of the RCC, now Chairman) met in Algiers. They confirmed the land boundary fixed in 1913-14, agreed to demarcate the frontier on the ground on the basis of a 1913 Protocol, and defined the southern boundary, where it followed the Shatt-al-Arab waterway for its entire length, as being the thalweg or deep-water channel, rather than the eastern Iranian side of the waterway as previously. In June 1975 a Treaty Relating to the State Boundary and Good Neighbourliness was signed in Baghdad, with protocols on the land and river boundaries and on border security. In December the same year, an Agreement on Regulations Concerning Navigation on the Shatt-al-Arab was signed, also in Baghdad.

4. These accords meant that Iraq surrendered her sovereignty over the waters of the Shatt on the eastern side of the thalweg. In return, she obtained the withdrawal of Iranian support for the Kurdish rebels in Iraq and Iranian agreement to complete the demarcation of the land border. Detailed regulations for joint navigation in the Shatt were drawn up, control having previously been in Iraqi hands.

5. Correct relations were subsequently maintained until the Shah's downfall in 1979, and remained steady for some six months after the Iranian revolution. By mid-1979, however, the Iraqi press was reporting ethnic clashes in the Iranian province of Arab-populated Khuzestan (adjacent to the southern border with Iraq) and accusing the Iranian Revolutionary committees there of interfering in Arab affairs. At the same time, Iran's media were blaming Iraq for the problems in Khuzestan and among Iran's Kurdish community in the north; and Iran was stirring up trouble among the Shia in Iraq. Thereafter relations between the two countries steadily deteriorated. In mid-1980 there were border clashes in the central region. In September the Iranians shelled border towns and clashes intensified until Iraq invaded Iran late in the month. Iraq occupied large areas of Iranian Khuzestan and significant pockets of territory along the border as far north as Qasr-e-Shirin. In 1981 Iran began to regain much of this land and in June 1982 Iraq withdrew from all but a few pockets of Iranian territory.

6. In late 1982 and early 1983 Iraqi aircraft made the first few attacks on shipping serving Iran, attacks which have since escalated and have been met by continually increasing Iranian retaliation. In April 1983 the first Iraqi missiles hit Dezful, starting a long series of attacks on civilian targets which have continued intermittently ever since and drawn condemnation from the international community. March 1984 saw the first confirmation of Iraqi use of chemical weapons and condemnation by the UN Security Council. In February 1986 the Iranians captured the Fao peninsula, but were unable to press northwards through the marshes to Basra, on the western bank of the Shatt. The second half of the year was marked by an increase in Iraqi attacks on economic targets inside Iran. Early 1987 saw a long Iranian offensive towards Basra, resulting in huge loss of life but little territorial gain. At sea Iran retaliated against merchant shipping serving the Arab countries for Iraqi air raids against shipping serving Iran. In mid-1987 the US deployed substantial naval forces to convoy Kuwaiti shipping after a Kuwaiti request to re-register a number of tankers under the US flag. The Iranians undertook extensive minelaying. Attacks by Iranian speedboats became commonplace. Kuwait became a target for Silkworm missiles.

7. The United Nations became seriously concerned about the conflict virtually as soon as the conflict began and Security Council Resolution 479, passed in September 1980, was the first call by the international community for a halt to hostilities. Iraq responded that she would stop fighting only if Iran recognised her "legitimate rights", and Iran retorted that a settlement could only be found if the aggressor were conquered and punished. Over the next four years the UN Security Council passed Resolutions 514, 522, 540 and 552, each calling for an immediate ceasefire, the last also condemning attacks on merchant shipping for the first time. In early 1985 the Secretary-General decided to become more directly involved himself in diplomatic efforts to persuade both sides to come to the negotiating table. By early 1986 international interest was focusing more on the Gulf conflict. That year two Security Council Resolutions were passed. The first of these, SCR 582, drew on its predecessors but this time deplored the initial aggression as well as calling for a ceasefire.

8. After months of intensified fighting on land and growing tension at sea, SCR 598 was passed on 20 July 1987. Not only did this rehearse the previous condemnation of the conflict itself, of the use of chemical weapons, of attacks on civilian targets etc, but for the first time included a mandatory call for a ceasefire and withdrawal and pointed to enforcement measures in the event of non-compliance by Iran or Iraq. This Resolution, voted unanimously, formed the basis of much diplomatic activity in the latter half of 1987. The Foreign Ministers of the Five Permanent Members of the Security Council met in New York on 25 September and agreed a "twin-track" approach: the UN Secretary-General would continue his efforts to persuade Iran and Iraq to comply with SCR 598, whilst Representatives of the Five would work on the terms of an enforcement Resolution should the Secretary-General fail. After hesitation on the part of some members, discussions are now starting on an arms embargo.

Iranian Interests

9. Iran seeks the punishment of Iraq as the aggressor. This means the public identification of Iraq as having started the conflict (in return for a ceasefire) and the payment of reparations (in return for withdrawal). Iran has also in the past insisted on the removal or punishment of President Saddam Hussein.

10. Iran sees the UK as a major western power but distrusts us for what it regards as our previous active intervention in Iranian affairs. She acknowledges our importance as a Permanent Member of the UN Security Council but claims to see us as increasingly pro-Iraq. She likewise tends to identify us with the United States (the "great Satan") because of our naval presence in the Gulf, but has been deterred so far from clashes with RN vessels. Her lack of respect for internationally accepted principles of diplomatic behaviour led to the Chaplin incident of May/June 1987 and the subsequent withdrawal of almost all Embassy staff on both sides. We have at present no UK based staff in the British Interests Section of the Swedish Embassy in Tehran (which has looked after our interests since 1980, when the Iranians warned us that protection of a UK mission could not be guaranteed). Iran keeps one diplomat in its Embassy in London. Diplomatic relations have not been broken. While there are signs that some in Iran are slowly coming to regret the deterioration in relations, there are several factions in the leadership and a wide range of political outlooks. The closure of the Iranian Military Procurement Offices in Victoria Street following the attack on the Gentle Breeze in the northern Gulf in September 1987 inhibited Iran's international arms purchasing capability and sent a firm signal to Tehran that they could not damage British interests with impunity. Disputes with the United States, the UK and France have encouraged Iran and the Soviet Union to move warily closer.

11. Important circles in Iran are committed to the export of those Islamic principles on which the Iranian revolution was based. This involves both propaganda and material support for selected dissident (particular Shia) elements abroad. Her practical priority is to obtain support in the conflict against Iraq, or at least to try to deter those who support Iraq (traditionally Kuwait and Saudi Arabia). She has tried to achieve this by attacking shipping serving Gulf States, in retaliation for Iraqi maritime attacks, and more recently by threatening direct hostilities across the Gulf. She has succeeded in undermining the cohesion of the Gulf Co-operation Council, reducing its political impact. Iran does, however, see a need to remain on reasonable terms with Syria, hitherto her one reliable Arab ally, but facing increased Arab pressure to modify her policy. Syria is currently keeping a delicate balance between Arab and Persian interests: indeed there are reports that Syria is actively trying to mediate in the conflict.

Iraqi Interests

12. Iraq wants the conflict to end as soon as possible with least political damage. Iraq accepts SCR 598 but insists on a strict application of its provisions regarding withdrawal of forces and exchanges of prisoners. Iraq cannot beat Iran militarily. It is in Iraq's interest to draw other powers into the conflict in order to contain Iran and to persuade them that a settlement should be imposed. Iraqi air attacks on shipping serving Iran not only inhibit Iranian oil exports but also provoke Iranian retaliation which (usefully for Iraq) agitates the international community. This tactic has worked well but risks leading to Iraq being regarded as a non-compliant party and liable to enforcement measures which are being considered by the Security Council. Iraq is dependent on financial support from the Arab oil exporting states and on the port of Kuwait for much of her supplies.

GCC Interests

13. The Gulf Co-operation Council states (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, UAE, Oman) do not have a monolithic policy towards the conflict, although they all see a need for political accommodation with Iran in the longer term. On the one hand, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait are staunch allies of Iraq, offering material and financial support, and condemning Iran for her intransigence. The UAE and Oman, however, tend to hold more nuanced views, primarily because their geographical position means that overt support for Iraq could bring easy retaliation by Iran. Bahrain has also risked an Iranian backlash by her provision of port facilities to the US navy. Qatar has sought to avoid any direct involvement with either side. Recently however, the GCC states have united in criticising Iranian procrastination in implementing SCR 598, and the GCC Summit in Riyadh in late December 1987 called on the UN to take appropriate measures immediately.

British Objectives

14. Our major objective is to promote an early negotiated settlement to the seven-year-old conflict. Only when fighting by land, sea and air stops, achieving a total ceasefire, will the present dangerous instability in the wider region be removed and will reconstruction work start in Iran and Iraq. Soundly-based economic and political growth in the region, and security of oil supplies at stable prices, is in everyone's interest, and remains a prime objective for the UK.

15. Recent developments, however, have shown that there is insufficient willingness on the part of Iran to take seriously attempts by the international community to find a negotiated compromise solution. Iran's position is unlikely to change as long as Ayatollah Khomeini is alive, and given the probable jockeying for position between contenders for the succession in the immediate post-Khomeini era, any substantial lessening of commitment to prosecute the conflict is equally doubtful, at least in the short-term. An important and additional short-term objective, therefore, is to ensure that the waterways are safe for our own shipping while the conflict continues, and, particularly in view of the possibility of renewed mining, thus to contribute to upholding freedom of navigation for all merchant shipping. (This is vital if the safe flow of oil through the Straits of Hormuz is to be guaranteed, even if the UK itself at present imports little of it.)

16. A third objective is to limit the spread of Soviet influence in the strategically vital Gulf area. Notwithstanding the welcome increase in dialogue between East and West, as expressed in the Washington Summit in early December 1987, and indeed as shown in the significant unity of the Five Permanent Members (UK, US, USSR, France and China) in the passing of SCR 598 and subsequent discussions, the Soviet Union remains alert to exploit regional conflict to advance its own influence at the expense of the West's. It is therefore a strong Western interest that regional conflict should be halted, lest confrontation take the conflict out of the regional and into the global arena.

British Policy

17. The UK has made a significant contribution to the frequent efforts by the international community to find a peaceful settlement to the conflict. The UK has made a major diplomatic effort over the past year to promote a negotiated ceasefire leading to a settlement. As co-ordinator of the Five Permanent Members of the Security Council we have organised the work of the Five and can claim an appropriate share of the credit for the unanimous adoption of SCR 598. Bilaterally we have been tireless in making representations to those governments whose activities could contribute to achieving the common goal. In particular we remain in close contact with Gulf States who have a rôle to play in seeking to reduce tension in the region; we encourage them to play a more active part in the protection of their own interests and in mobilising international pressure on the belligerents. We co-operate with them in such fields as defence equipment procurement and training to help them in this. This endeavour will continue. The next major task is the adoption of enforcement measures to be applied in the case of non-compliance with SCR 598. This is being taken forward during our Presidency of the Security Council in January 1988.

18. In our bilateral dealings with Iran and Iraq over the conflict our policy has throughout been one of strict impartiality. Our policy on the supply of defence equipment is restrictive and rigorously applied. We refuse to sell military or defence-related equipment which could significantly enhance the capability of either side to prolong or exacerbate the conflict. We have consistently balanced Iran's refusal to enter into serious discussions of a negotiated settlement with Iraq's use of chemical weapons. We have protested to both about attacks on merchant ships, and have urged Iraq's Arab allies to counsel restraint on Baghdad.

19. We have maintained the Armilla Patrol in the Gulf since 1980 to assist shipping under British and Dependent Territory flags or which are majority British owned. A variety of legal and practical considerations mean that the list of ships thus entitled to RN protection is necessarily limited. The Patrol's operating area is restricted to the waters of the Southern Gulf, the Straits of Hormuz and the Gulf of Oman, where the risk to merchant ships is greatest. The Patrol, whose size and operating time inside the Gulf were nevertheless increased early in 1987, has performed its non-provocative defensive task with skill and courage, contributing to the safe passage of hundreds of ships. When Iranian minelaying posed a new threat to the Patrol and to merchant shipping in the summer of 1987, the Government despatched a flotilla of minesweepers with afloat support to deal with the problem. Their efficient operations have disposed of a number of mines and have contributed to the safety of navigation from that threat. At the same time the Government have been active in trying to persuade other countries to play a practical part in the defence of freedom of navigation. The Netherlands and Belgium sent minesweepers which operate closely with RN forces. France and Italy sent separate squadrons. Australia has earmarked a diving team for deployment when needed. The consequences of these and the US deployment are that Iran has been deterred from attacking ships accompanied by Western warships. She has instead concentrated on attacks on merchant ships of countries with no naval forces in the Gulf.

20. While there has been some interest in integrating the naval forces of the Western powers into one co-ordinated operation in the Gulf, this idea has not been put into practice. Each country tasks its own force. There is a close arrangement between the Dutch, Belgian and British forces in the conduct of joint minesweeping operations. A great deal of informal, local exchange of information enables the Western naval forces to operate efficiently without duplication of effort.

21. The important but necessarily limited rôle of the Western naval forces in the face of increased and provocative Iranian raids on third country merchant shipping has encouraged some shipowners of countries with no naval forces in the Gulf to seek protection from those which do. The US Navy convoys a number of Kuwaiti tankers which have been re-flagged on the US Register. The Soviet Union has leased three vessels to Kuwait and assists their passage with naval vessels. The Kuwait Oil Tanker Company has re-flagged a small number of tankers on the UK, Gibraltar and Cayman Islands registers. They have been warned that RN protection in the Gulf is limited to the south and will not be extended northwards to cover new Kuwaiti entries on British registers. There are no plans at present to increase further the size of the Armilla Patrol.

22. At the invitation of the Iranians, UN investigating teams have visited the front on three occasions to check on the reported use of chemical weapons. On each occasion they have confirmed Iraqi use, but on the last visit in May 1987 they were unable to verify Iraqi claims of Iranian use. The UK has consistently and vigorously condemned all use of chemical weapons, and has been at the forefront of international moves towards a comprehensive verifiable and worldwide ban.

Future Policy

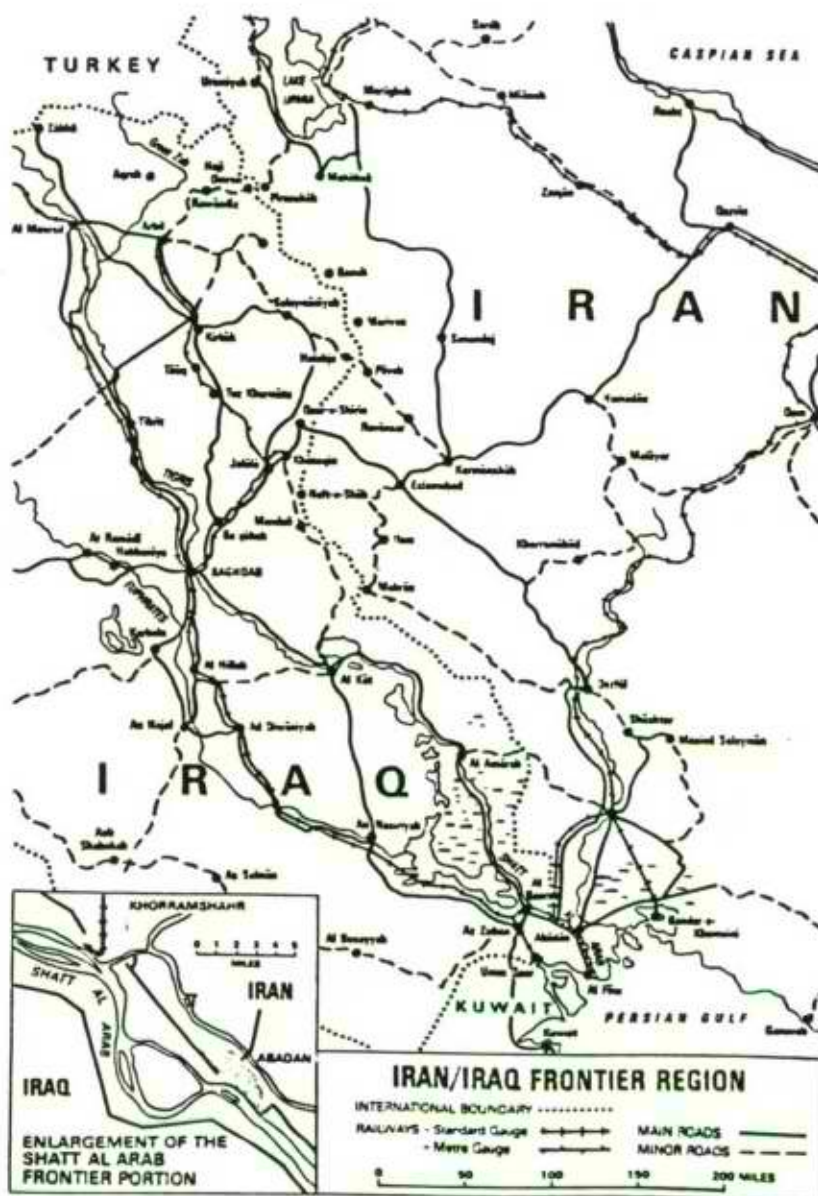
23. British efforts at the UN Security Council will continue with support for an enforcement resolution to back up SCR 598. However, despite current willingness among all Permanent Members to start serious work on an arms embargo resolution, it is likely to be a long haul. The Soviet Union is expected to promote the idea of a UN naval force. So far it has not provided any detailed description of the nature and tasking of such a force. In particular, it has not indicated whether such a force would have a peacekeeping rôle (in which case a ceasefire must come first, again underlining the need for UN diplomatic, rather than military, activity); or a shipping protection rôle. In the latter case, apart from the fact that such a force would be unacceptable to, and hence provoke, one of the belligerents, there would be considerable political and practical difficulties (such as actual deployments, port facilities, command and control, language, etc). The Government will press for full details of what is proposed in order to determine whether the idea is a serious contribution to efforts to end the Iran/Iraq conflict or a propaganda device aimed at placing Western navies in the Gulf under a UN flag and thus constrained by an impracticable mandate or even subject to a Soviet veto.

24. On the waters of the Gulf the RN will continue the vital task of assisting our shipping and with friendly navies contribute to upholding freedom of navigation. On land there remains the possibility of renewed fighting on a large scale, and the UK will continue to urge the utmost restraint on all concerned. Both tasks, however, remain extremely difficult.

25. Nothing short of wholehearted acceptance of SCR 598 by both sides will create the right climate for serious negotiations leading to a settlement. Iran has yet to take the necessary political decision to end the conflict peacefully. This remains the key to progress and the focus of UK diplomacy.

Middle East Department
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

11 January 1988



Examination of witnesses

THE RT HON SIR GEOFFREY HOWE, QC, a Member of the House, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, examined.

SIR PATRICK WRIGHT, KCMG, Permanent Under-Secretary of State and Head of the Diplomatic Service; SIR DAVID MIERS, KBE, CMG, Assistant Under-Secretary of State (Middle East Department); and MR PAUL LEVER, Head of Security Policy Department, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, examined.

Chairman

1. Could we now just briefly turn to the other matter that is concerning this Committee very much¹, and that is the UK's rôle in the Gulf, and current prospects for settlement of the Iran/Iraq conflict, with the particular thought in our minds that this is very topical, given the fact that the UK is the president of the UN Security Council from January onwards. As I said earlier, the Minister of State in your Department will be coming to see us later on to talk about the details of the Armilla Patrol protection of merchant shipping as well as some other aspects, but it would be helpful if we could have your mind on one or two things as well. Are there any other officials you wanted to bring in at this stage?

(Sir Geoffrey Howe) No. I have Sir David Miers sitting silently but impressively beside me.

2. If we may proceed, again, you have provided us with a very helpful memorandum, in which you describe British policy objectives in paragraphs 14 and 16 as being as follows: "Soundly-based economic and political growth in the region and security of oil supplies at stable prices"; secondly, "to uphold freedom of navigation for all merchant shipping"; and, thirdly, "to limit the spread of Soviet influence in the strategically vital Gulf area". Those are big and clear objectives, but to what extent does the United Kingdom play a leading rôle in trying to achieve these objectives and to what extent are they shared by our allies? What, in particular, is the British element in these objectives, if I may put it like that?

¹ The first part of the Secretary of State's evidence was dedicated to Arms Control and Disarmament. It is published as a separate volume and is available as HC 280-i.

(Sir Geoffrey Howe) I think one of the remarkable features about the Iran/Iraq conflict is the universality of the perception, about the importance of most of the objectives. For a long time it has been almost the only topic in which I can go round the world and say to almost any interlocutor "Now, the Gulf war, we all agree on that, don't we?" and from all sides there is a kind of "Yes, these are the implied terms." So, objectives: common ground. UK's rôle: I think an important one for two reasons, I suppose; one, because of our traditional influence, and indeed, presence in the region, manifested by the presence over a number of years, for example, of the Armilla Patrol, and two, because of our presence as a permanent member of the Security Council, so that people have looked to us as one of those who ought to play a leading rôle, and we have been ready to try and respond. It was, in fact, essentially British initiative which set in hand the work which secured agreement on Resolution 598 last summer, and it is the United Kingdom who has been the co-ordinating member of the Five Permanent Members still in the forefront of the efforts to follow it up. So I think Britain's rôle has been an active one, and I think an important one. I think there has been at different times and different places a certain reluctance on the part of that quintet to come together, and it has needed a conductor, if a quintet can be conducted.

Mr Rowlands

3. Foreign Secretary, the important and proper principle of guaranteeing freedom of navigation etc is an objective shared by almost everyone, but there could be a situation arising when, in fact, to achieve that objective it might actually require much closer co-ordination or co-operation with the Soviet Union, which in turn might actually rather conflict with objective 3 about limiting Soviet influence. If that situation develops—and it has been aired at previous times about closer co-operation and co-ordination—would objective 3 be of equal standing with that of 1?

(Sir Geoffrey Howe) I think so far as it has been possible to achieve it, we have achieved co-operation and liaison with the friendly naval contingents that are there and with the Gulf states. That is so far, so good. If one looks beyond that into the territory of possible United Nations naval forces, for example as the Soviet Union has canvassed from time-to-time, I think one is then moving into very much more difficult territory. I think it is that that has been a dominant reason for not going further in the degree of liaison than we have achieved so far. I think that so far as the search for peace is concerned, I have been concerned to be sure that the Soviet Union is playing a part, in the United Nations, for example. I think that one of the most important components in the effectiveness of an arms embargo will be the whole-hearted commitment of the Soviet Union to that. I think that was one of the benefits of the Amman summit of the Arab league; that demonstrated the wish of moderate Arabs to get the Soviet Union's influence engaged in the right direction. I think that in the search for peace the Soviet Union has to be involved and has to know the world looks to it to be involved, but I do not think anyone, including the moderate Arabs, look to Russian involvement in the peace process as paving the way for an extension of Soviet influence in the region.

4. If I recall, one of the reasons why conflict arose in respect of Kuwait was because the Kuwaitis were strongly seeking support from the Soviet Union in the problems they had. I am just wondering whether this parallel about Soviet influence in the region is going to inhibit effective activity or effective action?

(Sir Geoffrey Howe) I do not think it is. I do not think it need be. We cannot gainsay the legitimacy of the objective of limiting Soviet influence in the region. It is the objective of the States in the region as well as the objective of ourselves and others. No doubt they would say the same about us backwards, so to speak, and about the United States. I think the important thing is that the existence of this virtually inevitable competition for influence should not be allowed to stand in the way of the search for peace. And it is for that reason that we have, at different stages, said to our allies "Of course we have got to maintain our naval presence". And why we must be there, and the Soviet Union must know what we are doing and why in order to prevent it becoming a cause for misunderstanding, because we have to keep them as far as possible on the side of the united search for progress in the United Nations. There is a reconciliation to be done. If you have got people competing for influence in the region and yet trying to seek a common objective, then you do try and reconcile those things.

Mr Temple-Morris

5. Sir Geoffrey, when a stated objective, namely objective 3, "to limit the spread of the Soviet influence in the strategically vital Gulf area" is on the one hand and, of course, we are also told about the very creditable efforts we have made in the United Nations, a positive result of those efforts is quite impossible without the co-operation of the Soviet Union. Also, if we go to institute action against Iran it would involve an arms embargo which would be quite impossible to be vaguely practical, if ever it was possible to be practical, without the co-operation of the Soviet Union. Therefore, the reconciliation of these two areas of Government policy is, to my mind, absolutely central. Until they are reconciled—just to take it one step on—it seems to me that the Soviet Union is in quite a reasonable position to take advantage of any western faults or mistakes in the area. In other words, if there is any violence breaking out or whatever, they are in the position of innocents. They can also continue their relations with Iraq and they have extended their relations with Iran. Carrying it a bit further on, I am really saying that until this is resolved it does seem to me we are not keeping the Soviet Union out, but it could be argued, we are in danger of letting them in.

(Sir Geoffrey Howe) I do not think there is any absolute about this at all. The fact is that *inter alia* the Soviet Union will have as its objectives in the region (and they are not there alone) a disposition to exploit conflict to advance its own influence at the expense of the West. The world, like it or not, is like that. That is one of the reasons why we want to bring the conflict to an end. That being said, you cannot reconcile the objectives in some magic way. We want to get the Soviet Union working with us in trying to bring a means of diminishing the scope for the Soviet Union to be extending its influence.

Mr Lawrence: If we are serious about trying to limit the influence of the Soviet Union in this region, why are we in such a hurry to give them a seat for the first time in a conference for the settlement of the Arab/Israeli conflict, which is very much part of the region?

Chairman: Can I suggest, Foreign Secretary, it is a fascinating question but it does open up so many aspects at this late stage. We will give you a bye on that question!

Mr Lester

6. On the British objectives, Foreign Secretary, we say only when the fighting ceases will the present danger of instability in the wider region be removed and will reconstruction work start in Iraq and Iran. Surely, one of the major factors in the present danger of instability of the wider region is this spread of Islamic Fundamentalism which affects not just any particular Government but spreads through the Mediterranean and into North Africa as well. We could hardly be neutral to that and its influence in the whole question of the instability of the wider region.

(Sir Geoffrey Howe) I think that the wish of the Iranian Shia to export the Islamic revolution (if that is the right way of putting it) coupled with their particular lack of enthusiasm for the Iraqi Ba'ath party are components of this particular conflict. I think the wish to export the revolution will remain even when and if this particular conflict comes to an end. I think what we are seeing here is yet another example of the world having to adjust itself to the impact of a revolution. I do not know what the next stage is of a national revolution. We have seen it in relation to the French Revolution and the Soviet Revolution and we have this revolution taking place there. As you say, it is a powerful cause for instability. What we have to do is try and help bring that conflict to a close and do it in a fashion that does not feed or encourage the revolution to sprout out in some different direction.

7. It is the most irrational and yet international influence that is affecting the wider region.

(Sir Geoffrey Howe) Yes, I think you are right, and I hesitate, incidentally, to endorse your identification of Islamic Fundamentalism as the cause of the trouble, because there are many moderate Sunnis, for example, who call themselves Islamic Fundamentalists, but there is undoubtedly an Islamic revolution of a special kind taking place in Iran.

Mr Lester: It is the exporting of the revolution and the way it is being used to destabilise so many countries, including Saudi Arabia.

Mr Shore

8. I think, to follow another aspect of neutrality, British neutrality in the conflict, or strict impartiality. I have no doubt we have a genuine wish and desire to do what we can to assist in bringing the conflict to an end, but in practical terms there is a fundamental asymmetry in the situation of the two countries, Iran and Iraq. In particular, this comes out in all the trouble we have in defending our ships. The Iraqis attack ships going to Iran for obvious reasons; they are trading with their enemy state. But Iran cannot attack ships going to Iraq because they are trading not with Iraq but, of course, with the neutral countries in the Gulf, and surely the whole purpose, when we have a naval presence there, is in fact to protect those ships which are trading with the neutral countries in the Gulf, and because they trade with Iran, knowing that that country is at war, we do not actually try to protect British ships going to Iran.

(Sir Geoffrey Howe) We offer protection in relation to British ships travelling in the relevant part of the Gulf up to the relevant point, so to speak, but I agree; because of the imbalance in the defendants, the two combatants, on the importance of sea-borne oil, there is in any event bound to be a lack of balance there, but that is in the nature of things. What we are trying to do is to uphold freedom of navigation, and at the same time, in relation to our arms embargo, maintain a completely even-handed neutrality between the two combatants.

Mr Jopling

9. We heard the Foreign Secretary tell us a few months ago that we were co-ordinator of the Five Permanent Members of the Security Council. I am interested to know quite how that arose and, also, to what extent our actions in this part of the world have been taken in cahoots with other international bodies, whether it be the European Community or the United Nations or whatever, and to what extent we have been taking actions entirely unilaterally for our own interests, whether it be the interests of our oil supplies, 18 per cent of which come from the Gulf. It would be helpful to know what the balance has been and what has motivated it in terms of our own strategic interest in having oil supplies from that area.

(Sir Geoffrey Howe) I think that everything we do there we obviously discuss and consider as far as possible with our partners, for example, in the European Community, and with other western members of the Security Council and with the moderate Arab world. I do not think at any stage are we on a frolic of our own—quite fruitless to do that, and we are concerned in it because we have a range of interests, and we are not the only country in the region, which prompts us to try and bring this conflict to a close. It is an area where we are not as dependent as others are on the region for our oil supplies, but where British commercial and political interests prompt us to try and bring the conflict to an end. How we actually became involved in the lead rôle is simply that we happened to be the people who started working on it in the autumn of the year before last, in autumn of 1986; to give it most of our attention at that time at the United Nations, and so we became the country round which the activity has been centred as co-ordinator, but we are particularly active this month because it is our month in the presidency of the Security Council. I would not want to overstate our priority in that respect; virtually every other organisation in the world has had a go at it, and they are all trying in different ways to bring it to a conclusion.

10. Although we only get 15 per cent of our supplies from the Gulf, as the Foreign Secretary says, some other countries have much greater dependence. He was in Japan the week before last—I was there last week, and I heard from some of them how they would like to reduce their reliance on Gulf oil. They were making the point that if the Americans would be prepared to change the law and allow Alaskan oil to be exported to a greater extent, particularly to Japan, rather than taking it the long, expensive way round, through the Panama Canal, and to invite the Americans to become more reliant on Mexican oil, that this would reduce their reliance on Gulf oil, I wonder if this is a matter which is being discussed here, and by other countries who are trying to reduce their reliance on Gulf oil.

(Sir Geoffrey Howe) I have not heard that one discussed at all. My impression, frankly, is that the oil market more than most is a single market worldwide. I would be surprised if any particular restraints and inhibitions on the movement of oil could have a decisive effect. I do not know; I have never heard that suggested. Certainly we discuss continuously with the Japanese the part they can play in helping to bring the conflict to an end because of their important commercial involvement with both combatants, which is another example of the countries who share an interest in ending this.

Chairman: In the remaining few minutes I wonder if we could return to the question of the arms embargo, which remains one of the objectives ahead.

11. In paragraph 17 of the memorandum you talk about the task being the adoption of enforcement against non-compliance with the Security Council Resolution 598, and with the special rôle we will have, because we will have the presidency. What are the prospects of our getting an arms embargo, which is the obvious enforcement measure on Iran, and how are we going to go about it? Can you give us some indication of how you are going to tackle this task?

(*Sir Geoffrey Howe*) We have been working very energetically throughout this month in New York, trying to get agreement on a Security Council resolution. We have got agreement on the part of Five Permanent Members, including ourselves, to work together on that and they made quite substantial headway in getting acceptance by the five of a text. It still has then to go on to mobilise acceptance from a wider group than that. I am getting telegrams keeping us up-to-date from day-to-day, and we have made pretty good headway in getting agreement on the text.

(*Sir David Miers*) There are continual meetings between the five members of the Security Council and also consultations with the non-permanent members of the Security Council, and the discussion on the elements that the resolution should contain, and even on parts of the text that it might contain, are really quite far-advanced.

12. There is a sense of urgency, obviously. I have been tracking through the press. I do not know if you can confirm this incredible story, that the new batch of Chinese Silkworm missiles have been carted by North Korean ships to be delivered in Iran, and no-one can touch them and no-one dare intervene in that because there is no international basis or legality to do so. Is that the sort of objective that we must be pursuing?

(*Sir Geoffrey Howe*) Yes, I agree with you about the urgency of putting in place the arms embargo resolution. It was for that reason that I was able to press for work on it to commence at the meeting we had in New York of the Five Permanent Members in September. We did get a commitment from all the five to get that work under way. It has been quite difficult to translate that commitment into action, but the Secretary-General has now been saying he needs the support of the resolution in place to help him in his work, and so we are trying to get that in place as quickly as possible. I think the precise wording is not yet complete, but we are intending to have an arms embargo which will call on all countries to cease supplying military material.

13. Could we not, in the meantime, with the very close relations we have with the Chinese, for example, bring pressure to bear to prevent the sort of sale and distribution of these Silkworm missiles that have been sent off to Iran now?

(*Sir Geoffrey Howe*) I think that it has, frankly, been hard enough to mobilise the form of arms embargo and then, with that authority, secure actual progress towards compliance with it. I do not think we are in the kind of world in which—

14. Bilateral responsibility would work?

(*Sir Geoffrey Howe*) Not effectively. It has been difficult enough (I am not wanting to cast stones in any direction) to pull the five together into the position that will support an arms embargo in place.

Chairman

15. Foreign Secretary, I promised to curtail these proceedings by 6 o'clock and that I will do, but before I do so can I ask whether there are any points you wanted to add on this section of our discussions—on Iran/Iraq and the Gulf?

(*Sir Geoffrey Howe*) Chairman, I think not, thank you very much.

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שגרירות ישראל
לונדון

אל: ארופה 2 ✓

מאת: הציר-יועץ, לונדון

הנדון: דיוני הפרלמנט: הועדה לזכויות האדם

לוטה עותק משאלה ותשובתו של מלור בנושא התנהגות המשלחת הבריטית בוועדה
לזכויות האדם ונאומו של ערפאת שם.

בכרחה,
יורם שני.

העתק: ארכל 2
ג'נבה



HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Written Answers to Questions

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Mr. Yasser Arafat (Speech)

Mr. Latham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he will make a statement on the action of the British delegation (*a*) before and (*b*) during the speech to the United Nations Human Rights Commission in Geneva by Mr. Yasser Arafat; whether the action of the British delegation was co-ordinated in advance with that of the United States of America; and whether any protest has been made by the British delegation to the chairman of the Commission about (*a*) allowing Mr. Arafat to speak from the podium and (*b*) the violence of his language against another member state.

Mr. Mellor: We and other Western delegations expressed to the chairman of the Human Rights Commission our vigorous opposition to the proposal to extend exceptional privileges to Mr. Arafat, but the majority of members were in favour and the chairman ruled accordingly. A junior member of the United Kingdom delegation was present during Mr. Arafat's speech. The level of representation was discussed in advance with other Western delegations, but not specifically co-ordinated with that of the United States. We have made no protest about the content of Mr. Arafat's speech.



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שגרירות ישראל
לונדון

כ"ח באדר תשמ"ח
17 במרץ 1988
סימוכין: 2556

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קנ"ט

אל: ארופה 2 ✓

מאת: הציר-יועץ, לונדון

הנדון: דיוני הפרלמנט: טרור

לוטה עותקים משאלות ותשובות שהועלו בדיוני הפרלמנט בימים 7-15/3 בנושאים
הבאים:

- א. אש"פ וטרור.
- ב. סוריה וטרור.
- ג. לוב וטרור (הדיסקוטק).

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בכר, יורם שני.

העתק: המרכז

Vol. 494
No. 96



Tuesday
15 March 1988

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)

HOUSE OF LORDS

OFFICIAL REPORT

Written Answers

PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANISATION

Lord Mayhew asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether they hold the Palestine Liberation Organisation responsible for terrorist actions, and if so (i) whether they will specify those actions and the years in which they took place, and (ii) whether they took those actions into account in taking their decision to have no official contact with the PLO.

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Glenarthur): The PLO is a broad-based umbrella organisation. Some of its component elements have a deplorable terrorist record. Individual terrorist acts associated with PLO groups, particularly in the 1970s, are too numerous to list. We do maintain contacts with the PLO at official level, and the then Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Hurd) met Mr. Farouq Qaddumi in 1983; but the PLO's failure unequivocally to renounce violence is a major obstacle to our developing contacts at Cabinet level.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Written Answers to Questions
FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Syria

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Syrian Government about the alleged supply to terrorists of Semtex bombs by the Syrian embassy in London prior to 1987.

Mr. Mellor: We broke diplomatic relations with Syria in October 1986 because of official Syrian involvement in the attempt to blow up an El Al aircraft with a Semtex bomb.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Written Answers to Questions

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

La Belle Discotheque

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will place in the Library such parts of the intercepts relating to the La Belle discotheque bombing on 5 April 1986 as are no longer classified; to whom these intercepts have been shown, when and why; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Mellor: No. It is not our practice to comment on intelligence and security matters.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Written Answers to Questions
FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

La Belle Discotheque

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what communications were received by the British military government, West Berlin, from the United States military police regarding the likelihood of a terrorist attack in West Berlin during the hours before the attack at La Belle discotheque on 5 April 1986; what response was made; and if he will make a statement;

(2) what information has been made available to the British military government, West Berlin on the type of explosive used to bomb the La Belle discotheque on 5 April 1986;

(3) whether the allied authorities made any inspections under paragraph 8 of BK10/58/3, of police information relating to the La Belle discotheque in April 1986; and if he will make a statement;

(4) whether in accordance with paragraph 6 of BK10, the Berlin police president reported to Kommandantura the timing of any alerts in relation to events surrounding the bombing of the La Belle discotheque;

(5) whether, in accordance with paragraph 9 of BK10/58/3, the possibility of issuing direct instructions to the police in relation to the La Belle discotheque bombing was discussed by the allied Kommandantura with the West German authorities in April 1986; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Mellor: We have throughout the period in question kept in close touch with the American and French authorities, and with the German authorities in Berlin. I have nothing further to add to the many statements we have made on these matters.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Written Answers to Questions
FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Berlin

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will discuss with the American Government (a) the implications for President Reagan's policy towards Libya of recent West Berlin police discoveries regarding Christina Endrigkeit and (b) the implications of these discoveries for the joint management by the allies of police in West Berlin.

Mr. Mellor: We are in constant and close contact with the United States authorities as well as the German authorities in Berlin about all aspects of the bombing of La Belle discotheque on 5 April 1986. It is not our practice to comment on cases, such as this, which are still subject to judicial inquiry.

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on what grounds the allied Kommandatura exercised their right to instruct the Berlin authorities to remove from the western sector persons identified as posing a threat to the population of Berlin in April 1986; how such persons were identified; and whether their names are known to him.

Mr. Mellor: The decision referred to was taken for the safety and security of the city. The people concerned were identified as posing a threat on the basis of information available to the allied and German authorities.

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what communications there were in April 1986 between the allies and the Soviet authorities about the alleged use of embassies in East Berlin for promoting terrorist activities.

Mr. Mellor: The allies were in close contact with the Soviet authorities in April 1986 regarding their joint rights and responsibilities for the security of Greater Berlin.



EMBASSY OF ISRAEL

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כ"ח באדר תשמ"ח
17 במרץ 1988
סימוכין: 2553

שגרירות ישראל
לונדון

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העתק: המרכז.

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Wednesday
9 March 1988

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)

HOUSE OF LORDS

OFFICIAL REPORT

Palestine Conflict

Lord Mayhew rose to ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will promote an international conference on the conflict in Palestine.

The noble Lord said: My Lords, I ask this Unstarred Question in no spirit of criticism of the Government. Indeed, except in one respect, they deserve credit for their current policies on Palestine. Ministers are assiduously canvassing for an international conference and for the other three essential elements of a peaceful settlement—namely, security for Israel, self-determination for the Palestinians in the occupied territories and the participation of the PLO in the peace negotiations. Moreover, Mr. David Mellor and other Ministers have expressed publicly, with evident sincerity, their repugnance to the methods used by the Israelis in the occupied territories. On all these points the Government are at one with the other governments of the European Community, with virtually all the members of the United Nations and, I believe, with the opposition parties in this country. I suspect that there is more common ground today between the parties on Palestine than ever before, and that is most welcome.

What is difficult to defend is the Government's ambivalent attitude towards the PLO. On the one hand, Ministers correctly assert its right to participate in peace negotiations and they rightly deny that it can be described as a terrorist organisation. On the other hand, Ministers continue to refuse to talk to the PLO unless and until it unilaterally recognises Israel and unilaterally renounces violence. If Israel and the Palestinians both recognised each other and jointly renounced violence, that would be a huge step forward. However, that is not the Government's position. They are insisting on conditions from the PLO, conditions on which they are not insisting in the case of Israel.

However terrorism is defined, a head count of the victims shows that the four men with the worst terrorist records in the Middle East are Gaddafi, Abu Nidal, Begin and Shamir. All terrorist acts are to be utterly condemned, whoever perpetrates them. This includes, if the reports are true, which they may not be, this week's outrage in the Negev. But compared with these four men Arafat and the PLO are not in the same league. If Ministers are ready, as they have been, to receive Mr. Shamir at No. 10, they ought to be ready to talk to the PLO in the interests of reaching a settlement. The PLO is an essential element in the search for a settlement and by refusing to talk to it Ministers are weakening the contribution that they can make to peace.

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Lord Mayhew

The same is true of Mr. Shultz. We must hope that, despite his ostracism of the PLO, his initiative will have positive results. However, the prospects seem very unpromising. Israel rejects the idea of an international conference, rejects the idea of any withdrawal from the occupied territories and rejects any contact with the PLO. Nor are there any signs at present that the United States is ready to require Israel to compromise, as it could easily do. Therefore it is of the utmost importance for the British Government and the European Community to use all their influence with Israel and the United States to persuade them that failure to compromise at this time would end in disaster for Israel itself.

The Israelis put forward two objections to withdrawal from the occupied territories. The first, an objection put forward by only a minority, is that Judea and Samaria were promised by Jehovah to Abraham. It is possible to hold Judaism in the greatest respect without finding this a credible justification for Israeli rule in the occupied territories, especially if, as Palestinians are fond of arguing, conversions to and from Judaism over the centuries mean that today a Palestinian Arab is as likely as an Israeli settler to be descended from the Jews of Biblical times. The more important objection, widely held in Israel, is that a Palestinian state would undermine Israel's security.

Let us consider the possible military threat to Israel from such a state. A glance at the map shows that the new state will be embraced on three sides by Israel, that its one airstrip will be within artillery range of the Israeli army, that its one small port in Gaza will be at the mercy of the Israeli navy and that its two mountainous roads linking it with Jordan could be destroyed in five minutes by the Israel air force. Even if this state was not demilitarised, as is very likely in a settlement, and even if there was no neutral zone between the two countries manned by an international peacekeeping force, which again is a likely outcome of a settlement, the new Palestinian state would be a military hostage rather a military threat to the state of Israel.

The last time I was in Israel I established that the chiefs of staff have made no appreciation of the possible military threat of a Palestinian state to Israel. The reason is obvious: there is no such threat. However, the Israelis go on to argue that the new state might ally itself with Syria, Jordan or Egypt for an attack on Israel. But if the oppression of the Palestinians is ended, Arab support for an attack on Israel would be lessened and not increased. Equally, the Palestinians themselves, having shaken off Israeli rule and established their new state—which inevitably would be vulnerable to economic and military reprisals—would be less and not more inclined to start a war or to launch guerrilla or terrorist attacks on Israel.

No state can ever enjoy perfect security, least of all perhaps a specifically Jewish one implanted in the heart of the Arab world by force at the expense of the native inhabitants. However, if Israel were to change course and to come to an international conference to negotiate a settlement on the lines suggested, for example, by the European Community and the United Nations, she would stand a fair chance of achieving security and surviving in peace.

On the other hand, what are her chances of survival otherwise? Certainly Israel is still dominant militarily in the region. She still has an effective alliance with the United States. However, year by year the balance of power, financial, economic, diplomatic, demographic and even military, is slowly swinging against Israel.

Demography presents a particular threat to the survival of Israel. The great majority of Jewish people do not want to live in Israel. Many Israelis want to leave and are doing so in increasing numbers. The birth rates of Jews and Arabs in Palestine are different. If Israel does not change course there is a serious long-term threat of a new exodus which would undermine the viability of the state. In addition, there are increasing numbers of Jewish people inside and outside Israel who now publicly criticise the Israeli occupation, demanding that land should be traded for peace. They are showing the moral courage and the independence of mind, together with a hatred of oppression of all kinds, which the world rightly associates with Jewish

One thinks of the recent brave stand on principle of Labour's foreign affairs spokesman, Mr. Kaufman. Not the least achievement of all those people is to have convinced the Arabs that their adversary is not the Jewish people but the Israeli Government and their supporters; it is not Judaism but a debased form of Zionism. In the years ahead this could prove to have been a vital service to the Jewish people. I wish that more Jewish people would follow their example. Sadly there are many who speak out passionately and well against crimes committed by non-Jews against Jews but who when crimes are committed by Jews against non-Jews remain shamefully silent.

I think that all noble Lords recognise the limitations on British power in the region. As a member of the European Community we can play an important part in persuading Israel and the United States that withdrawal from the occupied territories is in Israel's own vital interests. Forty years ago Israel began, and has since continued, to try to establish itself in the Middle East by the ruthless use of military power and by attempts to repress the Palestinian and neighbouring people. At one time or another Israel has bombed Baghdad, Damascus, Cairo, Tunis, Amman and Beirut. It has especially inflicted terrible suffering on the Lebanese people by invading and bombarding them and still in the south subjecting them to ruthless military intervention. That policy of expansion and repression has failed. Israel is now less respected and less secure than it was before. I urge that the Israeli Government now take the advice of their own Jewish critics, change course, trade land for peace and find security in the only way that it can be found—by giving justice and freedom to the Palestinian people.

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Lord Chelwood: My Lords, the noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, has I think done us a good turn this evening by putting down this Unstarred Question at this critical and delicate time. I shall not dwell on events in Gaza and on the occupied West Bank, save to say that the Palestinian INTAFABA has alerted world-wide opinion to the urgent need to find a lasting solution to the Arab-Israeli dispute. Strangely, Israel's operation which they call "Peace in Galilee"—which achieved none of its objects—did not have the same effect in spite of the awful casualties (at least 15,000 people were killed) which resulted from it. I shall not dwell on that aspect, either.

I want to look forward and not back to the Balfour declaration, Suez, the 1967 war, and the partition of Palestine because all those, and other things, are water under the Allenby bridge. Since 1945 I have consistently expressed my views that Palestinian rights were being endangered and might be extinguished. That opinion has led to my receiving a good deal of abuse, both verbal and written; it has been very unpleasant—but perhaps my skin is too thin. The question that I have asked myself consistently is this: where do British interests lie and how can one be even-handed between Jews and Arabs? I should like to strike a personal note here. **My Jewish mother**, the daughter of Henry Simon (well known in Manchester) often gave me excellent and balanced advice as, indeed, did my uncle Ernest who is well known to many of your Lordships as Lord Simon of Wythenshawe. We frequently discussed those issues from the time when I first went to Palestine as a young soldier in 1938. The essence of their advice—and of many other Jewish friends of mine—was that peace in Palestine could never be achieved by force or repression. I believe that that assertion is as true now as it was then.

I think that Eretz Israel and Palestinian rights are incompatible, and I am sorry to have to say that. However, I sincerely believe that Israel, within her 1967 armistice lines—because that is what they are—with her age-long experience of democracy world wide, could thrive and prosper beside a reborn Palestine. Despite what is happening today in Gaza, and in the occupied territories, the Palestinians and the Israelis now have the opportunity, if they will seize it, to practice:

"the art of living together in harmony".

Those words were used in the dramatic maiden speech made by the noble Lord, Lord Jakobovits—although in another context (col. 377 of *Hansard* for 4th March). I refuse to believe that Israeli security and Palestinian self-determination are mutually exclusive. That is how they were described to me by a very distinguished and senior representative of the Israeli Government the week before last. I refuse to believe it.

Therefore, where do we go from here? The European Community, with Britain in the lead, pointed the way in 1980 through the Venice Declaration. I thought the principle that was then laid down could not be criticised, and was entirely right. Unhappily, the follow-up to the declaration has been feeble, leaving aside only the Prime Minister's own brave initiative when she went to Amman which, unfortunately, came to nothing. It did, however, prove certain points.

The noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, spoke of the importance of the European Community playing a leading roll in finding a solution to the problem. I should like to see them playing a much more forceful role. I should also like to see this country in the lead because of our unrivalled experience in those parts of the world, in spite of all the mistakes that we have made. The United Nations created the problem that we are discussing this evening when Palestine was partitioned. I say that not because Palestine was partitioned, but because the partition was ill-thought out and unpoliced; it therefore led to the disaster that we now see. Why cannot the Security Council make a supreme effort to find the path to peace now? I am sure it exists. Is it not possible that the United Nations might take on the trusteeship of the West Bank and Gaza? That is a very difficult undertaking; but do not let us forget that UNWRA are on the spot and already have trusteeship for all the Palestinian refugees. Do not let us forget, either, the great success the UN have had in Cyprus since 1964, on the Golan Heights since 1974, and in Sinai after Israel's withdrawal. Admittedly, their efforts in South Lebanon have been a total failure; but the reasons for that are clearly understood and they lie at Israel's door.

Is it not possible that during the coming months and years work can be done in great detail on a blueprint for demilitarisation and policing after Israel's withdrawal behind the 1967 armistice lines so that Israel's genuine fears—and I accept that they are genuine—can be stilled? Is there any hope in trying to find an Austrian solution, as I call it, by which I mean writing into the Palestinian constitution non-alignment and a ceiling on forces? Had that not been done with Austria, the Soviet Union would still be occupying the Soviet zone. Is that a possibility?

Lastly, I should like to turn to a few points in fairly quick succession and in telegraphese on some of the things which concern me and on some of the phraseology which has been used. We talk about autonomy. The autonomy of a state means the right of self-government, according to the dictionary. It can occasionally be qualified by political, local or administrative considerations. But the United States' policy, as expounded by Mr. Schulz, will go no further, according to *The Economist*—I think this is an accurate summary—than semi-autonomous Palestine in federation with Jordan. How can one have a semi-autonomous country in federation with another country? I do not begin to understand that. I say this without disrespect, but that sounds to me like some sort of gobbledegook.

On the subject of self-determination, surely the Palestinians have as much right to seek to regain their statehood as had, for example, the Polish Home Army during the war under General Bor-Komorowski or, for instance, as have now the Mujahadin in Afghanistan. I do not think that can be denied.

Having mentioned **the PLO**, I wish to make some criticisms of them. They always go for all or nothing. That is a dead end. They can only achieve their rights step by step. All too often the PLO trump their own aces. In spite of that, I do not believe that it is possible to short circuit the PLO. Too many efforts have been made to try to do just that.

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[LORD CHELWOOD.]

On the same subject, I wish to see the Palestine National Council, and therefore the PLO, change the charter which denies Israel's right to exist by promising to strike out any such references to Israel immediately Israel recognises their right to self-determination. We are entitled to ask for that.

Turning to terrorism, is it not as wrong to label the whole PLO as terrorists, as has been done fairly often (The noble Lord, Lord Paget, is guilty of that, and may have some riposte to make), as it would have been to label the Haganah or even the Jewish Agency as terrorists because of the shocking things done by Irgun, Lehi and the Stern group? I say that bearing in mind the equally shocking things done by Abu Nidal and other minority groups which come roughly under the umbrella of the PLO, though I think their activities have never been condoned by Arafat.

Yet under this heading the PLO are asked to renounce terrorism and the Israeli Government are not. At the same time the PLO are asked to recognise the 1967 armistice lines before they can attend a conference, but Israel is not so asked. The PLO are asked to recognise Resolution 242, which incidentally Yasser Arafat did quite recently and I have the date here. He has done so on several occasions. Why is there undue emphasis on that resolution which regards the Palestinians as refugees and which was specifically drafted, I think by the noble Lord, Lord Caradon, immediately after the 1967 war came to an end, requiring Israel's withdrawal? It had nothing to do with Palestinian rights and was not intended to have anything to do with them. None of this seems to me to be even-handed, which I suggested was the first important principle.

To conclude, I mention two glimpses of the obvious. First, the *status quo* is not sustainable. That has been said on both sides of the Atlantic and by many people whose opinions we must value. Secondly, the parties—as they are so frequently called from my own Front Bench—will not solve this problem on their own. I am certain that there is no chance of that at all. The noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, said that time is running out for Israel, and I agree with him. Their survival depends on their coming to terms with their Arab neighbours and coming to terms with themselves.

I should like to see a United Nations trusteeship of the West Bank and Gaza which would give a desperately needed breathing space of several years during which a series of conferences could be held, and many working parties could get down to work to try to find the way to a comprehensive peace settlement under strict UN supervision. I fervently pray that that will happen.

Lord Glenamara: My Lords, during one of the recent demonstrations in Jerusalem a mullah was heard to shout through a loud-hailer from the steps of a mosque, "The Ayatollah demands a martyr a day". That remark is very revealing about the present troubles in Israel—not a series of spontaneous riots but a carefully organised and carefully sustained uprising, as three weeks ago President Reagan said was the case, based on information the Americans had from intelligence sources.

The uprising is organised from Moslem fundamentalist sources outside Israel, the same sources which hold most of the hostages and which are trying constantly to destabilise the moderate Arab governments in the Middle East. Is it not significant that in all this trouble criticism of Israel from the surrounding Arab countries has been extremely muted?

The uprising has been nurtured by the world's press and the media. The spectacular and sickening daily stone throwing, the throwing of Molotov Cocktails, the wielding of knives and guns, have been as manna from heaven for the 800 representatives of the world's press who are now in Israel. I am told there are more there than in any other country in the world. There are well authenticated examples of stone throwing actually being organised by the media to enable the cameras to get their pictures.

The uprising has presented young Israeli soldiers—they are not professional but 18-year-old conscripts—with a situation that they were never trained to handle, any more than our young soldiers were trained to handle the situation into which they were put in Northern Ireland 20 years ago. The functions of the soldier and the policeman are quite different. Of course there have been excesses—terrible excesses—which we and everyone in Israel very much regret.

The International Federation of Human Rights in Paris recently carried out an investigation and published its report last week. Perhaps I may quote from the report:

"The Israel Defence Forces, responsible for maintaining order in the territories, did carry out acts of punishment, but those were departures from, and not part of, deliberate policy".

It continued:

"The members of the delegation confirm that they did not find evidence of the use of dum dum bullets by the Israel Defence Forces, in contrast to the charges voiced by the British Labour leader, Neil Kinnock".

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[LORD GLENAMARA.]

When a kindly English lady visits Israel she is whisked off immediately to hospital to see tragic young Arabs who have been wounded. She would be less than human if she did not shed a tear and less than human if she did not see her own son in those boys there. But we are entitled to ask what they were doing when they got themselves wounded. They were throwing bricks through the windscreens of Israeli army jeeps; they were throwing Molotov cocktails; or they were wielding knives or guns. That is how they got wounded. Then perhaps the kindly English lady should go to the other hospital and see the 300 young Israeli soldiers who have been wounded, who are lying there and who also look like her son.

The image that the world press has fostered in recent weeks of savage, inhuman, ferocious Israelis against peace-loving, gentle Arabs is as far from reality as it could possibly be. Quite apart from the **hundreds of acts of terrorism**—the noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, knows that there are hundreds of examples—by the PLO in Israel and abroad which, for example, in 1985 alone, caused 124 deaths, there are most appalling examples of the way in which Arab countries have dealt with dissent and riots in their territories. Let me quote one or two. A few years ago in the town of Hama there was a riot. The town was circled by the Syrians, who levelled it with artillery fire and killed 20,000 people. In 1980 the Syrians killed 5,000 people in the El Zatar refugee camp in Lebanon. In 1987 the Amal militia laid siege to Bourj-al-Barajneh and killed hundreds of people by bombardment and starvation. At the university of Yarmouk in Jordan, the Jordanian authorities killed eight students in putting down a minor riot. I could quote many other examples of the way in which the Arab countries deal with dissent in their territories. Of course, none of these was reported at any length in the world press. The press was not there; the cameras were not there.

Between the Atlantic coast of Morocco and the borders of India there is one democracy, the state of Israel—one country alone where the press is allowed to come and go as it pleases and photograph and report whatever it likes. But does Israel get any credit for this? Of course not. All that happens is that its democratic freedom is abused.

In the grossly distorted image being projected in the world today, there is, I believe, a clearly discernible strand of anti-semitism. Anti-semitism in my opinion is the biggest blot there has ever been on Western civilisation. After centuries of persecution culminating in the holocaust, the Jewish people must have the added dimision of a secure homeland. I believe that the West must ensure that security.

Britain, of all the nations in the West, surely has a major responsibility for this commitment. We were responsible for the Balfour declaration. We were the mandatory power after the war. We were the people who walked out on the mandate and left Jews and Arabs to fight it out. The present impasse is the result of 40 years of Arab rejection of two nations, a concept that Israel has been prepared to accept ever since it was proposed by the United Nations in 1949.

The noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, talked about land for peace. He forgets that Israel has offered land for peace. In 1956, in 1967 and in 1978 it traded land for peace with the Egyptians and concluded a peaceful settlement with them. The PLO, on the other hand, has consistently reaffirmed its position as "no peace, no negotiation, no recognition".

Displaced persons are always one of the saddest and most tragic consequences of war. In Europe after World War Two there were millions of displaced Poles, Germans, Czechs and others. Mercifully they are now all resettled. When we walked out on the mandate there was a vast number—approaching a million—of displaced Palestinians. The Arab states then set about creating another million displaced persons by expelling all Jews from their territory. The number of Jews displaced by the Arab countries was certainly as great as the number of Palestinians displaced after the war of liberation. All those Jews displaced from the Arab countries were quickly absorbed and resettled by Israel in spite of its limited resources and limited territory. The Arabs with their vast territory—one sees from a map of the Middle East, that Saudi Arabia is as big as most of Europe—and their vast resources from oil could have settled the Palestinians refugees quite easily. But they choose not to do so.

The United Nations offered resettlement. Its offer was spurned. Since 1971 the United Nations, with Britain acquiescing, passed the most astonishing resolution. It has passed a resolution 17 times calling upon Israel, to desist from rehousing the refugees and to leave them in squalor in the camps. The last time was 30th October last year. Britain voted for the resolution. It now includes the West Bank as well as Gaza.

Appalling though the squalor of the camp is, anyone who knows Cairo will be aware that it is not as bad as the slums of Cairo. That does not make it any better; but let us keep it in perspective. It is not as bad as a thousand Arab villages across the Arab world. In spite of the United Nations resolution, however, Israel, from its limited resources, has rehoused 10,000 refugees in nine separate residential projects. Of those 10,000, 70 per cent. were given land and allowed to have houses built according to their own preferences.

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[LORD GLENAMARA.]

In addition, Israel has built an infrastructure in the area of the camps. It has started many new industries—carpet making, furniture making, floor tile making and so on. It has created many new facilities and services, including universities, public buildings, mosques and clinics.

To hear the press accounts, one would think that Gaza was a slum from end to end. I wonder whether your Lordships are aware that some of the most opulent housing in the whole of the Mediterranean is in Gaza, some of it occupied by rich Saudis who are only too glad to live in the state of Israel. But a completely distorted view is given of Gaza. Why do not the media give a complete picture of the situation instead of this simplistic picture of goodies versus baddies, of Arabs versus Israelis? Their failure to do so simply hardens the intransigence on both sides and does not help to find a solution one little bit.

There is one point I want to make quite firmly because we must bear it in mind. Israel must restore order no matter what the cost—the tragic, unfortunate cost in loss of world esteem and goodwill. Bearing in mind the overthrow of the Shah's regime in Iran which none of us thought was possible before it happened, by a mob inspired by religious fanaticism, Israel cannot allow the situation to get out of hand because Israel is unique in the world. It can never afford to lose. Israel is the one-chance country and it cannot afford to be beaten.

I do not often praise Her Majesty's present Government. Leaving aside the aberration of Mr. Mellor, I want to applaud them for the efforts they are making to get agreement on a Middle East conference. I know from a number of sources that they are making real efforts to get a conference under the auspices of the five members of the Security Council. But the Prime Minister knows, as we all know, that the major impediment to holding such a conference is Mr. Shamir.

I should like to ask that Mrs. Thatcher use her considerable influence to try to persuade her fellow Conservative prime ministers to show a bit of flexibility about this conference. I am sure she is doing that. I do not say this at all critically because I have applauded all that she is doing to try to get a conference. I also applaud Mr. Shultz for his efforts. His modest plan probably represents the maximum common ground among the maximum number of participants in the region. It certainly holds out the prospect of a short-term, even a medium-term solution, which, if the will is there, could lead to a long-term solution. I sincerely hope that it will do so.

Viscount Buckmaster: My Lords, I should like to start by thanking the noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, for his very revealing speech, with which I entirely sympathise. As your Lordships may know, I have spoken four or five times on this subject in the past four or five years; the last occasion was in a debate which I myself initiated in April last year. Noble Lords also know that I am sympathetic to the Arab cause, although of course not in any way opposed to the Jews themselves.

I shall not dwell on the press reports, the broadcasts and the television reports which we have had about the horrors in the part of the world we are talking about. They must be familiar to many noble Lords. The noble Lord, Lord Glenamara, who has just spoken, referred particularly to Gaza. I see the noble Lord, Lord Molloy, looking towards me: he knows a good deal about this subject also. I would only ask him to refer to the speech that I made in April 1987 about conditions in the Gaza Strip which have been described by many people. There are such horrible things as the deprivation of water rights for the Arabs in that area, torture and so on, with conditions in the hospitals which have been accurately described as quite appalling.

I do not want to go into the details of the horrors and persecutions, the tortures, stonings and so on because I think that is quite pointless. But there is growing evidence that the Israelis themselves are turning against their own regime. I can quote two examples of this from the *Israeli Mirror*. That is a paper which is produced in Israel and it is strongly critical of the Israeli Government. One of these reports describes an ex-brigadier calling on his soldiers to refuse army service. Another one which I think even more revealing is by an Israeli army doctor who said: "I never imagined Jews could do this". This is the story, it is quite brief:

"I am of European origin and I know what my parents suffered. Not even in my worst nightmares did I ever imagine that we, the Jews, would do to another people what the Germans did to us."

I think that is a most revealing statement.

"We may not be building gas chambers and we have no organised extermination structure, but we are not very far from that. All those beatings and humiliations. They were sent to me—

these are the patients—

"wet and covered in mud and marks of beatings, blindfolded and with their hands tied. I saw signs of blows on their hands, legs, backs and sometimes heads. The soldiers have learned to administer dry beatings, that hurt a lot and leave marks, but do not cause damage. I saw two cases of swollen testicles but could not tell whether they were caused by blows or illness."

I emphasise again that that is by an Israeli doctor.

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Viscount Buckmaster:

Secondly I want to deal with the PLO, which has been referred to by most speakers so far. I remind your Lordships that, as has already been said, the PLO is by no means a wholly terrorist organisation, though I feel sure that the noble Lord, Lord Paget, will challenge me on this. Although the point was made previously I feel that I must make it again that the largest of these groups, Al-Fatah, is a most moderate group and that the PLO's own representative in London, Mr. Faisal Awaidha, has been consistently moderate and helpful in every way. We know of course that one of the most extreme terrorist groups is Abu Nidal, which has been mentioned by the noble Lord, Lord Mayhew. But I must emphasise that it is not typical of the group as a whole.

I should like to call to the notice of noble Lords something which has not been mentioned before and which I think is particularly important. That is Arafat's own peace plan. This peace plan was presented in Tunis at an international press conference two or three months ago. In this declaration, Arafat lists four stages. Stage one: transfer to the United Nations for a period of six months of the rule in the occupied territories; UN forces to be stationed on the Palestinian side of the border for an unlimited period, as long as the Israeli government wishes. Stage two: general elections to be held in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Stage three: an international peace conference to be held, attended by all sides including the Israeli government and the PLO, the PLO taking part in an independent capacity. Stage four: the establishment of a Palestinian state, and also co-existence between the Palestinian state and the state of Israel for as long as the Israelis wish.

A great deal has been said on this very difficult and delicate issue over many years. I feel that there is nothing of any great substance that I can add. But I hope strongly that the Minister will continue to press Her Majesty's Government to do all they can to use their good offices to achieve this conference, which we all feel is of the utmost importance. I hope that the inclusion of the PLO will be one of the prime factors of the conference.

Lord Paget of Northampton: My Lords, I find this a rather curious debate because of the degree of naivety with which a world which is unknown to the participants in the debate is being described. The situation is so utterly unlike that when one gets over there. This conflict is represented as a great national uprising of a people trying to get their own country back. Curiously enough Palestine is a country that has belonged to a great many people. The only people to whom it has never belonged at any point is this Levantine—Arab is a false name for it—population. That population has never been there except upon the basis of being in somebody else's country.

When we go back, we find that the Philistines lived there. They were Achaean Greeks who were driven south and to the sea by the Dorians. Then we find it was Egypt. Then the Jews came over. There was a period under David and Ahab when Israel established an empire that reached from the Nile to the Orontes. Then came Assyria and Babylon who divided Palestine between them. Then came Persia. Then came the Greeks of Alexander and again for a short period the Jews under the Maccabees. Then came the Romans, the Byzantines and the Franks of the Crusades. Saladin was the only Arab who ever ruled and he certainly was no relation to the present Levantines.

Finally there came the Turks and the British. But the British rule was the most interesting because it came after the first world war. Our mandate was to provide a national home for the Jews. We did not do very much about providing a national home for the Jews. The Jews provided themselves with a national home. Basically they bought it. To a very high degree Palestine was bought by the Jews in deals with the Arabs carried out at the Hotel Georges V in Beirut. There was a room kept for the purpose.

Then we come to the post-war period. This is where the participation of the noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, becomes so interesting. The question then was the desperate search for a home by the victims of the holocaust. They passionately wanted to get into Israel. That really was a case of people looking for a home.

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[LORD PAGET OF NORTHAMPTON.]

We had Ernie Bevin in charge. He was a tremendous man but he was certainly not without blemish. His dominant force was hatred. He hated the employers; he had to put them down. He hated the Germans. I shall never forget one occasion when I had to go and see him when I was working with Victor Gollancz in trying to get some food to the Germans in that awful winter when they were down to 700 calories.

Ernie Bevin said to me, "Tell your friends in Germany to go and look at the concentration camps. That is all that interests me." He was a very very formidable person. But to him the Jews were the sweatshop masters in the East End against whom he had organised. One could never persuade him that the people who were ruling Palestine were very different from that. If at that period Ernie Bevin was our Batman, the noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, was his Boy Robin. He was there when these awful things occurred. Ernie decided that we would end the mandate and that we would withdraw our defences and the army and leave four Arab armies, including the famous Arab Legion under the command of Glubb Pasha, in the region free to invade. It was Ernie's intention that Israel should be destroyed and smashed. We know what sort of mercy it would have received then.

In those circumstances, when the noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, tells us that all he is saying about the need to compromise and to help the PLO armed terrorists is for the good of Israel could there be any man from whom Israel would be less inclined to take advice?

Then we come to the noble Lord, Lord Chelwood. I am sorry that he is not here for the moment. He came out with the to my mind quite terrifying suggestion that these areas where order must be kept should be handed over to the United Nations. Just look at the record of the United Nations here. There is the complaint of the damage that has been done. In 1971 the Israelis were building very substantially in Gaza at the rate of 12,000 yards of brickage a year. In that year and in every year since the United Nations has passed a resolution calling upon Israel to cease its housing efforts and to take effective steps immediately for the return of the refugees concerned to the camps from which they were removed. That is the body which it is suggested should act as trustee. The one thing that can be said about the United Nations is that if things are bad almost anywhere in the world one can rely upon the United Nations to make them worse.

The Arabs repeatedly condemn rehousing, apparently because they realise that reasonably contented people cannot be exploited for political ends. In the Gaza Strip the camps are administered by the United Nations, which is also responsible for the housing, the sewage system and other services there. We should be sending for the very people who are responsible for what we are complaining about and putting them in charge. That is not a practical or a sensible idea.

The Arab nations have had all the facilities in the world to take in every one of the refugees. They had the money. They had the industry. They could have absorbed the whole lot of them. But they have kept them in Gaza and maintained them there as a propaganda instrument. That is why they are there. They would not be there otherwise.

Now there is an Arab rising. Could anything be much more disgusting than to see how such a rising works? The fathers keep under pretty safe cover and the children are sent out to throw the stones. Anybody who comes along to the hospital is shown those wretched beaten children. What were they doing to get themselves beaten?

The important matter is order. I do not happen to agree with my noble friend in his call for a conference. I do not think that in such conditions a conference would be worth a damn. What we ought to do is to leave the job to the Israelis, who are the people who know the job, and we should get out of the way. But that job has to be done and order has to be restored. The system was working fairly well until a few months ago; now it has gone bad. But the job can be done if we get out of the way. The highly efficient Israeli army were not originally trained to deal with such matters. They are getting trained and we know that. The last thing we ought to do is to send people out to tell them how to do their job.

The Foreign Office sent out a minister who proceeded, in circumstances of violence, to dress down an Israeli army colonel who was in charge of the situation. Nothing can be more important than the prestige of an officer in charge; and to undermine the officer's prestige was wrong. If the colonel had told a sergeant to take the young man along, paste his bottom and send him away until he had learnt manners, he would have been entirely within his rights. I wish he had done that. It was disgraceful conduct.

The Israelis are highly able people and they can do the job if we will keep out of the way and not try to tell them that their real interest is to surrender a strip of land which runs the length of their country and another strip of land that pinches them to within 20 miles of the sea. The noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, said that it was to Israel's strategic advantage. It is not to Israel's strategic advantage to place the whole of its country within artillery range from three directions at the same time.

Palestine Conflict

Lord Weidenfeld: My Lords, it was just a little over 50 years ago that the eminent Zionist leader, Dr. Weizmann, addressing a Royal Commission described the Jewish-Arab conflict as not so much one of right and wrong as of two rights and two wrongs. He added:

"And ours is much the smaller wrong."

A moderate and fair-minded Arab might well have made a similar remark, though I do not know whether any such remark is on the record.

The prerequisite of peacemaking is even-handedness and compassionate understanding. I respect the consistent and staunch endorsement of Arab causes by the noble Lord, Lord Mayhew. But I cannot help feeling that the fair-minded even-handedness which is so often present when he speaks on other issues was missing from his speech. Of course we all deplore transgressions and repressive acts of violence on the West Bank and in Gaza. But anyone who claims first-hand experience of one party's excesses should pause to ponder on the foul deeds of the other.

Have those who are so forceful in their attack on the Israeli authorities that try to restore order and protect human life ever been in a casualty ward where wounded Israeli soldiers, maimed civilians or mauled innocent bystanders languish? Have they paused to reflect that Israel has since its very inception been pleading for the razing of refugee camps and the reintegration of refugees? Have they thought that the Israelis are in the West Bank and Gaza simply because 20 years before King Hussein joined Nasser in his high-risk venture to smash the Jewish state—the state which on the morrow of the Six Day War asked for negotiations, only to be met by the famous "three nos of Khartoum": no recognition, no negotiation, no peace?

Today we are debating the need for an international peace conference. It is an old notion of mixed parentage and varied motivation. Mr. Brezhnev was the first to advocate such a format to allow the Soviet Union to re-enter the Middle East arena. For a long time the Americans saw little point in it. Presidents Nixon and Ford stonewalled the idea. But when President Carter seemed to warm to it, a wary President Sadat, who had only recently ejected the Russians from Egypt, was prompted—one might almost say stung—into flying to Jerusalem for his bilateral initiative.

King Hussein favours a conference under the United Nations Security Council umbrella, for he cannot afford to replicate the sweeping magnanimity of the late leader of Egypt. The King of Jordan does not have the sort of claims to support in the West Bank and Gaza without ambiguity that would allow him to make far-reaching concessions. He needs an international cover.

Europeans have favoured a wider conference for complex reasons—a nod to the Arabs, a wink to the Soviets and a traditional penchant for diplomatic congresses with echoes of Vienna, Berlin, Versailles and Geneva. Now that America is a latecomer to the idea, Mr. George Schultz's timetable is one of neckbreaking speed. Israel is divided to the point of making it an issue for a probable rush election, with Vice Premier Shimon Peres for and Premier Shamir against. World public opinion is understandably on Mr. Peres's side.

But before we succumb to the rather fashionable bias against the Israeli Premier, let us consider some of the pitfalls of an international conference which might abort. In doing so I am not defending or indeed quoting Mr. Shamir. I am calling on another witness—the distinguished former United States Secretary of State, Dr. Henry Kissinger. He can justly claim that his achievement, his technique and indeed his philosophy of negotiation in the Middle East changed belligerency into non-belligerency and disengagement, and ultimately led to the only peace treaty between Israel and an Arab neighbour—the Camp David Accord.

In a recent article in the *Washington Post*, Dr. Kissinger argues that peace comes piecemeal and not necessarily through the fiat of an international conclave. Often step-by-step diplomacy and interim arrangements of a durable kind are preferable to contractual peace. He questions whether some of the procedural devices mooted by Mr. Schultz and Mr. Peres, and apparently condoned by King Hussein and President Mubarak, would stand up in the event: whether the Soviets, on the one hand, would be content with the role of fig leaf or umbrella and Americans, on the other hand, would go through with their commitment to help the parties either to break through or break up but not to have a settlement imposed on them.

Above all Dr. Kissinger argues that if a conference is to come off the diplomatic groundwork before it opens has to be as thorough as possible. Indeed, unless the parties concerned sit down with a wide measure of tacit agreement the outcome is likely to be negative, which would have a demoralising effect. It would be far more destructive than if no conference had been summoned.

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Palestine Conflict

[LORD WEIDENFELD.]

It cannot be stressed too strongly that it would be truly beneficial if Her Majesty's Government, either by themselves or in concert with their EC partners, were to play a prominent part in reassuring the parties that if a conference takes place it can succeed only if there is no whiff of a diktat from above and least of all a carefully stage-managed performance designed to put pressure on the Americans to put pressure on Israel. That country, after all, holds the disputed territories. That is one of the reasons why we should take trouble to appeal to both sides of the Israeli coalition.

Compassionate understanding of the Palestinian Arab case implies support for political self-expression, autonomy and possibly sovereignty. Compassionate understanding of Israel implies support for her need of iron-clad security, open borders, the breaking of the economic boycott and human ostracism. It also implies understanding of the broadest band of public opinion. After all, it was Mr. Begin who signed away the Sinai, including the Jewish settlements, in the grand tradition of General de Gaulle's withdrawal from Algeria.

I believe that a genuine will for peace on the part of her Arab neighbours would influence the broadest possible spectrum of Israeli opinion and allay the suspicions that the conference, as envisaged by some Russian and Arab spokesmen and possibly some European governments, might be a trap, a straitjacket or an invitation to a beheading.

Mr. Peres's eight-point programme for an international conference is on the record. It seems to me to contain some very positive suggestions. Negotiations to solve the Palestinian problem in all its aspects are to be conducted in three bilateral geographical committees: a Jordanian-Palestinian and Israeli delegation in one, a Syrian and Israeli delegation in another and a Lebanese and Israeli delegation in the third committee. A fourth multilateral committee would include all the delegations with the addition of Egypt. Whereas the bilateral committees would be engaged in solving the conflicts of the past, the fourth committee would deal with charting opportunities for the region's future.

It is here that Britain and Europe, as friendly bystanders, can be most effective in pledging as well as charting a future for the region that would bring it economic prosperity, social justice and the premium educational, health, technological and cultural offerings of our civilisation. If the people on the ground were to feel that at the other end of a long tunnel there was not just a paper peace, not just a set of hollow declarations but a tangible promise of prosperity it would be worth the risk, the sacrifice of deeply held ideals and the replacement of traditional tenets of faith with a fresh catechism of hope.

The Earl of Winchilsea and Nottingham: My Lords, many people, myself included, believe that Israel deceived the United Nations at the time of its admission to that body. Israel has never honoured the obligations clearly stated and agreed to by her at that time. I refer to General Assembly resolutions, and in particular Resolution 181, which concerns itself with the territory and boundaries of the Arab and Jewish states, the city of Jerusalem, the Holy Places, and minority rights; Resolution 194, which stipulated that all Palestinian refugees be repatriated; and the additional violation of Resolutions 181, 194 and 303 under which Jerusalem remained an international zone. Furthermore, in launching the wars of 1956, 1967 and 1982, Israel has continued to flout the principles of the UN charter and international law.

The state of Israel has argued from its birth that its Arab neighbours pose an intolerable threat to its security and boundaries and that those same neighbours wish to drive all Jews into the sea. This has since been exposed from within Israel as being much Zionist propaganda. Jews and Arabs had lived for centuries in harmony long before the arrival of the first Zionist. However, some Zionists used that argument as an excuse for their own acts of terrorism against innocent civilians, including many British, during and up to the end of the period of the British mandate. We can all remember with horror the blowing up of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem. No methods were deemed off limits by the Stern and Irgun gangs who were responsible for some of the most hideous atrocities ever committed. Organised terror, both physical and psychological, was used against the British and Arabs in an effort to get both to leave the country—the British to return home and the Arabs to go to any other country to which they could be pushed.

When we speak of the present unrest, the rioting and violence in the West Bank and Gaza, we conveniently overlook the fact that it did not begin last December. It began over 60 years ago, grew to a revolting crescendo in 1948-49 and has been a festering sore ever since. It has been responsible for engulfing the entire Middle East in instability. Responsibility for this situation must rest firmly with Great Britain, the architect of the Balfour Declaration of 1919, which created the mess in the first place, and with the United States for its systematic undermining of UN resolutions in support of Israel and at the expense of the Palestinians. These unfortunate people have been the victims of Western duplicity for all that time. Is it any wonder that they are now united in their wish to throw off the yoke of oppression and occupation?

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The Earl of Winchelsea and Nottingham:

I wonder how many noble Lords from all sides of the House would have reacted differently. Would we all have sat down quietly and happily handed over our country to someone else simply because it suited politicians in a far-off land with an eye on their careers? Would we have acquiesced meekly or would we have resisted stoutly? Whenever invasion threatened the United Kingdom we responded as one. We put aside our differences and squarely faced our enemies, even though it meant making sacrifices in terms of lives lost and comfortable lifestyles compromised. We defended our basic human rights, our families, our land, our freedom and our democracy. We fought fiercely and only once did we lose. Not since the Normans have we been invaded and occupied, although we came very close to it in 1940.

The Palestinians have not been so lucky. They were invaded first in 1948, then in 1956 and yet again in 1967. All their land has either been taken from them by force or is under military occupation. Have they not a right to oppose this? Have they not the right to resort to any method to rid their homeland of the aggressor? In fact, is it not their duty to do so? Would it not have been our duty if the same had happened to us in 1940?

There have been many who have criticised the PLO as being a terrorist organisation—myself included. If we have any respect for the sanctity of human life, we must reject and abhor acts that take away the most basic human right of all, that of the right to life. But should we not remember that **the PLO grew out of a desperate need to respond to gross acts of terrorism as practised by members of Jewish terrorist organisations against the Palestinian Arabs?** How were Palestinians supposed to react? Were they not supposed to object to having their land taken away, their families and friends killed and maimed, to being deported or squashed into squalid refugee camps, to having their houses blown up or even to being massacred? Surely there is not one Member of this House who would have tolerated any of those acts had they happened to him.

What is the difference between our commandos in World War II entering a German town and planting a bomb designed to kill German civilians and Palestinians going into Jerusalem to do the same thing to Israeli citizens? There is no difference, yet we praise the first as an act of heroism and condemn the second as an act of terrorism. That is hypocrisy on a grand scale. Do we really have a monopoly on justice and morality?

Until recent television pictures began to give us hard evidence of the brutalities taking place we found it expedient to look the other way. Now we cannot ignore them. It is to our undying shame that it took television finally to force us to bear witness to the hideous reality that is the illegal Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza and the relentless persecution of the Palestinian Arabs.

To quote from the current issue of the *New Statesman*, the PLO:

"has for years put forth a moderated negotiating position, often with considerable clarity, and they have found no politically significant partner in either Israel or the United States".

The noble Lord, Lord Chelwood, said that Yasser Arafat on several occasions has accepted UN Resolution 242. I am glad that he drew the attention of the House to that fact. However, that news was deliberately suppressed in the United States. What Yasser Arafat said on 14th January 1984 was:

"The PLO would recognise Israel's right to exist if it and the United States accept PLO participation in an international Middle East peace conference, based on all United Nations' resolutions including UN 242".

The PLO is and has been ready for direct negotiations with Israel but has only met with US support for Israeli intransigence and a continual refusal by the United States to recognise that it is the recognised representative body of the Palestinian people. It would be interesting to discover just who the United States thinks represents the Palestinian people. Apparently it would accept almost anyone except the Palestinians. The present round of US-led peace mission diplomacy is not aimed at obtaining a just solution to the Palestinian problem but rather at bringing a halt to the violence in an effort to save Israeli and American faces from continued embarrassment. It is doomed to utter failure if it continues to deny full PLO participation.

The United States says that it is seeking a formula acceptable to Israel and Jordan. What about asking the Palestinians? They are the people who are trying to live in that country, which is their right, and whose country it was for centuries until 1948 when Israel was given some of it and 1967 when she took the rest by force. I have every sympathy with the victims of the horrendous holocaust. Indeed there is not to be found a more repulsive example of mass persecution and extermination. **What I have no sympathy with at all is those same methods which were used by Hitler against the Jews in Europe in the 1930s and 1940s, being used against the Palestinians today by the very people who ought to know better from their own bitter experiences. Two wrongs do not make a right.**

The United States holds the key to the lock which could open the door to peace. So far it has been reluctant to turn that key. Time is running out. If the violence, oppression and brutality are allowed to continue, when the United States finally recovers its morality and dignity and goes to turn the key, the lock will have been changed and the key will no longer fit.

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Lord Kagan: My Lords, I shall try to be brief and avoid repeating points already so well made by other noble Lords, particularly the noble Lords, Lord Glenamara and Lord Paget. I should like to ask just one question: are we not looking too narrowly at what is happening at the moment in Israel?

I have recently returned from Israel. There is positive evidence that the instigators of the present troubles are not the PLO but the fundamentalist Jihads. The situation is a creation of Khomeini. I believe that we are witnessing an attempt to re-establish the fundamentalist Islamic empire which extended from the Caspian Sea to the Iberian peninsula. How did Khomeini rise to power? Was it not by taking exactly the same route that is now being taken in Israel. Women, young people and children are brought out into the streets in Tehran.

Certain criticisms of the Shah, which may have been justified, are highlighted. The world media aided and abetted Khomeini. All the sympathy was for Khomeini who was claiming to right the alleged excesses and tyrannies of the Shah. What defeated the Shah was the sympathy and support of the world media. Little did the press realise at that time that the Shah's injustices would be replaced by something far more horrendous and tyrannical. The methods worked.

The next attempt was on Iraq. The Russians now find that even they have problems in Azerbaijan with the Shi'ite fundamentalists. Israel is merely a rehearsal. The process can be repeated and if it can work in Israel it can work anywhere. One can certainly find injustices in Amman and try to de-stabilise the regime there; one can find injustices in Egypt and try to de-stabilise Cairo; one can go straight on from there. Apart from responding to an appeal for sympathy, is it not worth pondering whether this is a problem of the West versus a planned and hoped-for tyrannous dictatorship by the Islamic fundamentalist empire?

Why is the criticism about what is happening in Israel so muted in Cairo and Amman? Why did all the trouble start after the Amman meeting, which attempted to pave the way for a settlement? I should like to ask the Minister to consider whether there is a wider interest than our just assigning right and wrong. Incidentally, if I may return to the question of why there is so much reservation and anxiety in Israel about an international conference, the Israelis are very conscious of that other international conference which was called in the case of Czechoslovakia in 1938 when, in the interests of peace, the Czechs were advised and forced to trade land for stability. One should consider what happened to them.

It would be helpful if the media were to reflect not only on what they are doing but on the further consequences of their actions. My other points have been made so much better by previous speakers.

Lord Sandys: My Lords, I rise first to thank the noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, for giving us this opportunity to discuss a matter of such very great concern, and also to support most strongly the observations of my noble friend Lord Chelwood. I set the context of my remarks in something that he mentioned: the Austrian peace treaty. I shall look about the Mediterranean basin for evidence—which most certainly exists—of diplomatic successes that have led to peace treaties and the resolution of very longstanding problems over the past 35 years. I realise that the Danube basin is a little further away than the Mediterranean but the noble Lord mentioned the Austrian peace treaty as a prime example. I should like to mention another, which is the diplomatic success at Trieste that was achieved in 1953 after a period of years. That again concerned an area closely constricted by mountains and sea. It is a very narrow corridor which was disputed for many years by Austria and Italy. The treaty represented a solution to the problem of a very important and much disputed territory.

Another area of concern for centuries has been the disputes between Greece and Turkey. Only a matter of weeks ago there was the spectacle of the conclusion to the preliminary phase of negotiations—the starting point of an accord of some description, the precise nature of which is a little unclear at this time, between the Prime Ministers of Greece and Turkey. Those are all matters for considerable optimism. I feel that the question the noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, has put before your Lordships this evening has seeds of optimism within it, although certain contributions this evening would perhaps make that seem difficult.

Perhaps I may join with my noble friend Lord Chelwood over the nub of his principal argument: there should be trusteeship in the West Bank and in Gaza. He quoted the most important statement of the noble Lord, Lord Jakobovits,

"the art of living together in harmony".

That is what the principal substance of peacemaking is about.

The Venice Declaration was the subject of the debate held in your Lordships' House, introduced by my noble friend Lord Chelwood on 22nd May 1985. On re-reading that debate, I was particularly struck by the speech of the noble Lord, Lord Cledwyn of Penrhos. He reminded your Lordships of the exact terms of the Venice Declaration. I most warmly commend once again to noble Lords one phrase that he used. It is the statement from the Venice Declaration that justice for all people implies the recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. I may be accused of taking this out of the general ambit of the Venice Declaration. Nevertheless, it is part of that statement and it is one that should be commended in general terms.

Palestine Conflict

[LORD SANDYS.]

Reference has been made in considerable detail to both the West Bank and Gaza. I should like to take up the points on Gaza raised by the noble Lord, Lord Glenamara. Once again, we should bear in mind that in Gaza there are in general terms over 700,000 Arabs and about 3,500 Israelis. I do not know whether the noble Lord would agree with those figures, but I am speaking in general terms. The Israelis now own about one-third of the land—and approximately that encompassed by the best survey that we know at the present time. If one considers therefore the question of the Venice Declaration, it is incumbent upon those who feel that the situation in Gaza should be examined, to consider that justice for all people implies justice for the Palestinians in that territory.

I turn now to the Government's preparation for this conference. I feel that all the efforts that the Government have made for a step-by-step approach are most welcome, and perhaps even more so if it is behind closed doors. There are so many cases where diplomacy in that area can achieve more without the blaze of publicity. However, it was very welcome indeed to hear from the noble Lord, Lord Glenarthur, yesterday of the trouble that the Government have taken to increase their grant to UNRWA. That was announced yesterday in reply to a Starred Question in your Lordships' House. It is an increase to £5.25 million for the year 1988, and a further £5 million towards the European Community contribution. All this is most welcome, and it assists in the general ambit of interest and care that the Government are putting behind the European Community's initiative and the general care that they have towards the Palestinian problem.

I have said that I enjoin with my noble friend Lord Chelwood over the concept of trusteeship. I do so for a very particular reason. I believe that this country, having held the mandate responsibility from the inception of the League of Nations up until 1948, has a particular fund of knowledge which may be drawn upon. It may well be said that anything that took place prior to 1948 is irrelevant. Nevertheless, in the archives in Whitehall there will be found Cmnd. Paper 6019 which was the Government's White Paper of May 1939. It was very significant because it expressed the desire to see established ultimately an independent Palestine state separated from the national Jewish home.

In this step-by-step approach for a conference, I am quite sure that the Government will examine all the past models, and all the past maps and proposals made over a very long period by extremely experienced administrators. Each one had limitations. Each one had drawbacks and each one now can be claimed to be irrelevant. Nevertheless, in examining those White Papers, and in examining models of this very restricted area, there must be points to be raised and taken on board.

I close with the view expressed by the European Community five years ago in 1983. This is again a statement that is very well known to your Lordships. The EC remain convinced that a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East can only be secured on the basis of the principles which they have stated so many times in the past.

Lord Molloy: My Lords, like previous speakers, I should also like to thank the noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, for giving us a further opportunity to debate the almost frightening subject of the Middle East. I find it particularly poignant. I was one of those who, in 1936, with the TUC contingent from Wales, marched to London. I had never been there in my life. I got to know Gardiner's Corner, Whitechapel Road, Commercial Road and all the streets where Jewish people lived and where the Fascist movement was out to disrupt. We did our best to foil that, to stop it. Within four years, Europe was threatened by Nazism and this nation stood alone. If we had surrendered and given in, the holocaust that followed would have been a thousand times worse. I believe that Great Britain's great role should be put on the record.

I remember also spending some time in the East End. I was reading geography and the German language. As an extramural student in the University of Wales I stayed here for two or three months. It was pointless to go home. There was no work. The docks and the pits were closed; most of us were on the dole. During that period I learned to speak a great deal of Yiddish. I began to understand the difference between a *separatist* and an *ashkenazi*. I could understand those issues. I hope that it will be understood when I say that my country stood alone. It gave a massive contribution to anyone who believed in freedom and was opposed to any form of terrorism. However, I also happen to believe that, just like the Palestinians, just like those on the West Bank, just like those in the Gaza Strip who have resisted another nation occupying their land, we in this country would have resisted any Nazi occupation. We might not have been PLO, but I am convinced that we would have been a British Liberation Organisation, led no doubt by people like Winston Churchill, Clement Attlee and Ernest Bevin. I firmly believe that this would have been the role at that time.

It seems to me that mankind will never understand this issue. It arises in Northern Ireland and the Middle East. One of the most terrifying aspects of all political activity is the territorial dimension. When you occupy and steal—I repeat, steal—somebody else's homeland, you are asking for trouble. I am totally convinced that, whatever it may be doing in some respects that is distasteful, the PLO has the same determination in its guts and its heart as we would have had had the Nazis invaded and occupied this country. I should have been very proud to have been a member of the PLO. Therefore, I think that has to be taken into consideration.

When the war was over, we were told of the most appalling crimes in mankind's history—the holocaust and the shudders, the horrors and the terrors it caused. Anger rose in all our breasts. There was total confusion when our British soldiers were slain by the Irgun Zvai Leumi, and they, too, have a right to be honoured and mentioned. I am doing that right now because I think they were quite innocent lads. They were doing their duty. They were certainly not anti-semitic. But they suffered and were slain by the Irgun Zvai Leumi.

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Palestine Conflict

Lord Molloy:

One of the most disturbing features of the whole situation is that it might not have arisen had only the tremendous co-operation and brilliant thinking of Mrs. Golda Meir and King Abdullah become a reality. I believe that would have contributed towards bringing lasting peace between the semitic nations. If one is anti-semitic one is anti-Arab as well, as I understand it.

When Golda Meir and King Abdullah arrived at their conclusions, it seemed to me, and to people much more clear than I who were interested in Middle East progress, that here was a way forward that would be of great help and assistance. Unfortunately King Abdullah was assassinated and things went from bad to worse.

The major issues in this debate have already been raised. It would be boring and upsetting to go over them all again. Late in the debate there is not a great deal more to say. I shall, however, mention one frontier that we all have to endeavour to arrive at. In the words of Aneurin Bevan, the trouble with all mankind is that we seldom arrive at the frontiers of understanding until our own souls are smitten with grief. The hearts of those Jewish people who were in Europe at the time of the holocaust, who lost people but who survived themselves, were stricken with grief just as much as a Palestinian mother or an Israeli mother, and just as much as a British mother when her son was killed by the Irgun Zvai Leumi. We have to put all these things together, for if we do not we shall never arrive at the frontiers of understanding.

I believe therefore that there is enough goodwill if we can only find it and bring it together. That is why I believe that an international conference is so sane. The words of Churchill are still as appropriate today as when he first uttered them against killing, slaying and maiming. Let us have jaw, jaw which is far better than war, war. If we have an international commitment, it must be gathering together people of different nations. The proposal submitted by the noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, and supported on all sides of the House, has at least a modicum of possibility. The coming of peace may be a long way off, but I believe that there is a chance if we stop talking and acknowledge that if someone stole somebody else's land 10,000 years ago they are still thieves.

I remember the problems in the United States of America. I am not anti-American. My grandchildren were born and bred American. I have one little, brilliant granddaughter who may well be the first woman American President. But there was a terrible time when we were fighting the Fascists. Terrible things were happening in the United States of America. In some parts of the deep South in the mid 1930s it was not particularly safe to have a different skin pigmentation from a white man. It was not particularly easy to live in some parts of the Mid-West if one belonged to some kind of Indian tribe. This form of racial hatred has gone on and on.

The tragedy is that if the Anglo-Saxons could not agree on one thing or another, or the Europeans, surely the great semitic nations can find an answer to the problem that now confronts them. I believe that if the determinations and decisions of an international conference were accepted and honoured by all sides, then the desert of enmity could blossom into lasting friendship and understanding and so allow Arabs and Jews, the great semitic peoples, not only to contribute to each other's wellbeing but in so doing could give an example to all mankind.

Viscount Allenby of Meggido: My Lords, I am very aware of the major contribution that many noble Lords have made this evening. I, too, am grateful to the noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, for bringing this Unstarred Question before your Lordships' House. The hour is late and therefore I shall not detain the House for longer than is necessary. But I speak this evening with a deep feeling of respect for the many soldiers of this country and of the Commonwealth who laid down their lives in Palestine in the name of peace. I also have great respect for the many governments and people who have attempted to initiate and to bring about a lasting solution in Palestine. We have become aware tonight of the most serious, indeed the most dangerous, situation developing in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The revolt on the West Bank continues to serve as a grim reminder that the present state of Israel has no right, apart from forcible occupation, to any part of Palestine.

Some 70 years ago this country took possession of Palestine by right of conquest: a conquest that was duly recognised as we have heard by mandate agreed at the San Remo peace conference in 1920 and subsequently approved by the League of Nations two years later. It was as result of terrorist activity by the Zionist organisations and other ideological groups opposed to our occupation that orderly government became totally impossible. We were forced to give up the mandate in May 1948, but I suggest to the House that our sovereignty over the country has never been surrendered.

Being a soldier, I should like to speak for a short while on the military situation. I believe that a similar military situation exists today in Palestine as it did when this country was the paramount power. Israel today has a young and inexperienced conscript army, as we had during the intervening years after World War 2. The young conscript is trained in conventional war, but not in combating carefully orchestrated terrorism. The Israeli army is learning the hard way by painful experience.

Today in Palestine we see an additional element, as again has already been mentioned—the power of the media. The media influence opinion across the world. On our TV screens we have seen the media in their almost daily involvement in street battles. It is clear that the press is adept in setting up traps for the Israeli security forces. Time and again one sees the young, inexperienced and often very frightened soldiers acting in a most fanatical and brutal fashion.

Wednesday, 9th March 1988.

Palestine Conflict

[VISCOUNT ALLENBY OF MEGGIDO.]

However, I remind your Lordships that a similar situation faced this country in the early part of 1946. There were, over a period of four months, 20 acts of terrorism involving our forces and our equipment. These culminated in the destruction of the King David Hotel by the IZL organisation on 20th July, as has already been mentioned. That act alone resulted in 152 deaths, injuries and people missing, principally among civil servants and soldiers and included the Postmaster General, his two assistant secretaries and the Economic Adviser to the Palestinian Government. After that explosion, 700 Jews were interrogated and 30 were detained. Many allegations of brutality followed from both sides to no avail.

Political pressures and worldwide media attention has led to universal condemnation of the Israeli Government for the brutal manner in which their armed forces have been trying to suppress the violent protests of the indigenous population of the occupied territories. As highlighted by a scathing attack by one of the Ministers of Her Majesty's Government, the criticism is sadly justified. However, the cause and the background behind much of what happens is either misconstrued, not understood or deliberately changed to meet the situation.

On the Palestinian side, the deep sense of despair, and the growing sense of patriotism among the ordinary people, cannot forever be ignored. I suggest that the ordinary people regard the Palestinian Liberation Organisation as their own army created as a result of the Arab summit conference of 1964. Under Yassir Arafat's chairmanship the PLO has gained considerable international acceptance as the sole legitimate representative of the people, committed as it is to the elimination of Zionism in Palestine. I do not want to enter the argument as to whether the PLO should be included in any future peace conference. However, the PLO's intransigence and its record of extreme acts of terrorism in recent years must be taken into consideration. I reject the suggestion made by the noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, that it should be included at the present time, but I believe that there may be a place for it in future negotiations.

In its Resolution 608, passed in January this year, the Security Council also condemned the Israeli Government's decision to deport Arab ringleaders and called for negotiations to take place to end the Israeli occupation. Comparisons with the situation in Northern Ireland are totally false. I suggest that this country faced a similar situation in Cyprus when we were instrumental in the deportation of President Makarios in the hope of bringing about a more peaceful situation at that time.

This country has consistently stood by its belief in the right of Israel to exist within secure boundaries, but it has never recognised the right of Israel to govern the City of Jerusalem. Sadly, one must acknowledge our diminishing influence and power in Palestine and the greater involvement of the superpowers in recent years. I believe that, as a member of the European Committee, we have a great deal to offer and an important role to play, as the noble Lord, Lord Sandys, pointed out.

We have a hope as a result of the active diplomatic efforts of the US Government. Agreement exists between Mr. Peres and King Hussein as to how an international conference might work. Though this move is temporarily blocked by the Israeli Government, it has the support of the 12 Foreign Ministers. I applaud the efforts of our Government and those of the US Government to find a solution in an important part of the world. We also have a residual responsibility, and I should like to join with other noble Lords in urging the Government to bring about an international conference which will eventually lead to a lasting peace in the area by every means possible.

Lord Hooson: My Lords, I had not intended to speak in the debate but several points have been made which I believe require answering. I should first like to deal with a point made by several noble Lords. It is that the violence that has been observed on the West Bank was greatly exaggerated by the media and that it was a media creation. Reference was also made to the fact that 800 journalists were present and that they affected the projection of the violence to the outside world. The South African Government have always used exactly that argument as regards violence in South Africa and it is unjustified. We know that film editors show the worst pieces of film and not the best, and viewers understand that. There is no doubt that the conditions in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip have created the violence that has been seen on television, just as in South Africa. I understand the concern of lovers of Israel that she should not try to defend the indefensible. I believe that one cannot blame the media for the violence that is taking place when one considers the violence from the Israeli troops that has been seen on television.

I wish to deal with the point which directly followed from that and which was raised by the noble Lord, Lord Paget of Northampton. He criticised the Foreign Office Minister, Mr. Mellor, who intervened in the actions of the Israeli colonel. I should like to ask the noble Lord what he would have done if he had been invited to another country and had seen an officer commanding troops who were acting in what was to his mind a totally unjustifiable and unjust manner. I remind him of the Nuremberg judgments where it was held that even obedience to the orders of a superior officer was no defence when the acts being perpetrated were against common humanity.

I believe that the Palestinians have suffered displacement and an injustice. Until that is put right the position of Israel will steadily become less secure. The ayatollahs were able to use the festering injustice felt among the Palestinians to put forward their extreme views and I believe that that has not been sufficiently appreciated in the Middle East.

Palestine Conflict

Lord Cledwyn of Penrhos: My Lords, the noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, has chosen the right moment to initiate this debate on the problems of Palestine. We listened to his speech with great interest, as we have listened to all the speeches that have reflected the differing views on both sides of the problem. The House is aware that there are a number of crises in the Middle East and I find it difficult to separate one from the other. From Teheran and Baghdad to Beirut and the West Bank and Gaza the whole of the Middle East is in a ferment. The need for a settlement of the various disputes is obvious and acute. The slaughter in the Iran-Iraq war continues unabated. The Lebanon is an almost uncontrollable shambles. We were shocked to hear of the recent kidnapping of Mr. Peter Coleridge and were delighted and relieved to hear today that he has been released. We hope that Mr. Terry Waite and others will also be released in the near future. The fact that good men are so mistreated reveals the black depths of the problem.

As has been explained in the debate, the violence has now extended to the occupied territories. It has resulted in many deaths and more casualties and in some excesses, as described by my noble friend Lord Glenamara. That is most sad, and we are concerned because of our respect for Israel and her democratic tradition. Such events must mean that she has—temporarily, we trust—lost ground in international esteem. That has not helped Israel's longer-term interest. However, it is necessary to add that part of the problem is the failure of all Arab countries save one to endorse United Nations Security Council Resolution 242, which implicitly recognises Israel's right to exist within secure pre-1967 war boundaries. This has lain at the root of Israel's reactions and fears from the start. Furthermore, Arab countries, especially those with great wealth, may wish to ponder their own record on the refugee problem over the years.

The noble Lord and others have dealt with Mr. George Shultz's troubles in an effort to find a solution and to seek agreement for an international conference, which appears to find almost universal approbation in the House in this debate. Mr. Shultz deserves the utmost praise and our support for his persistent efforts. I am glad that both Government and Opposition in this country gave him sympathetic support.

Mr. Mellor, the Minister of State, has recently visited the Middle East, as have my right honourable friends Mr. Kinnoch and Mr. Kaufman, and we have of course noted their reactions. Mr. Kaufman believes that the Israeli Prime Minister Mr. Shamir, should indicate his willingness to sit down at the conference table and negotiate with the Arab countries. Mr. Kinnoch was moved by the damage the conflict is inflicting both on the Palestinian people and on the Israeli democratic tradition. He also said that he believes the key to the solution lies in the attitude of the Israeli people in that at the end of the day they must choose between the seemingly military option offered by Mr. Shamir and the prospect of peaceful negotiations offered by Mr. Shimon Peres, who supports the proposal for an international conference. I quote my two honourable friends because they have recently returned from Israel.

From Britain's viewpoint, therefore, it is encouraging that we can all agree upon the need for a conference and that we should do all we can to bring it about, and that, I believe, was the view of the noble Lord, Lord Mayhew. But there are complications and these have been manifested during Mr. Shultz's strenuous travels. At the start the United States Secretary of State appeared to be pessimistic in his comments on the chances of success. He was not receiving a very warm welcome. On 1st March the *Guardian* stated:

"Syria was unhelpful... and Jordan sceptical", and that he was marching from one inconclusive meeting to another."

However, I am not as pessimistic as the noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, because mercifully there is another mood abroad and this has been reflected in the more helpful remarks of the distinguished Israeli Foreign Affairs expert, Mr. Abba Eban. He referred to the statement of over 100 leading Israeli academic figures, including some who had never before issued a controversial political word but who urged an early end to the occupation regime. He recalled the last words written by Mrs. Golda Meir to the nation, which was referred to in the speech of my noble friend Lord Molloy. Her speech to the nation included the fact that no sane Israeli ever believed that Israel could permanently rule all the territories and populations in the West Bank and Gaza and that new borders would have to be fixed with Jordan. In my view, that is the spirit of the Venice Declaration, to which the noble Lord, Lord Sandys, referred.

We also recall the London Agreement of 11th April 1987 in which King Hussein, who must be praised for his constant efforts to seek a solution to this problem, and Mr. Shimon Peres elaborated a scenario for bringing the Israeli-Palestinian problem under serious negotiation.

Mr. Schultz can take comfort from this as he comes to the end of his very difficult mission. However, as has been said already, the problem is the division within the Israeli Government themselves. We must hope that Mr. Shamir will find a compromise which will enable him to move towards a conference which we all think should be held. Mr. Abba Eban has asked the crucial question:

"Can Mr. Shamir maintain his position against the opinion of the entire world including the United States and half the Israeli people?"

I should be grateful to the noble Lord if he could clarify one matter. Can he say what steps were taken for Mr. Schultz to meet representatives of the PLO during his mission? The timetable proposed by Mr. Schultz is that the conference would be convened by the United Nations Secretary General in mid-April and that negotiations between Israel and a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation on an interim arrangement of limited self-rule for the 1.5 million occupied Palestinians would start in mid-May; talks on a final settlement would be next December. As I understand it, that was the timetable which the United States Secretary of State had in mind.

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[LORD CLEDWYN OF PENRHOS.]

The aim of the negotiations would be United Nations Security Resolution 242, which, as the House will recall, insists on the:

"inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force".

The latest news is that Mr. Shamir will pay a crucial visit to Washington next week and we must hope some constructive results will emerge from what could be an historic visit.

As the noble Lord, Lord Weidenfeld, said, we must appeal and not dictate. He referred to the necessity to avoid a diktat from above. I thoroughly agree with what he said. It would be a tragedy if the Schultz initiative drifted into the sand.

As I have said before in these debates, there is a limit to what Britain can do, although we are conscious of old historic associations; but we must give this worthy initiative all our support and encouragement. We can work through the United Nations, which, if I may say so to the noble Lord, Lord Paget, is given the most thankless tasks in all the world's trouble spots and which, contrary to his view, I believe does a remarkable job in all the circumstances. We can work with the United States, which is our ally and friend. We can work within the EC, which has taken positive initiatives to seek a settlement. We should also keep in contact with the Soviet Union.

We owe this to the innocent people of the Middle East who are suffering so much this time. Furthermore, we know that the beginning of stabilisation in the Middle East, which is a great prize and must be a great objective, would be a huge step towards the creation of more stable world peace.

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Glenarthur): My Lords, I believe we all agree that the question of the noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, is timely. It is taking place at a time of intense diplomatic activity on the subject and against a background of disturbing events portrayed in almost nightly reports on our television screens. I am grateful to him for enabling us to discuss a matter of considerable international concern. One matter which this evening's interventions have made clear is the deep interest which your Lordships have in a part of our history in that part of the world and the deep concern we all feel about the situation in the occupied territories and the need for early progress towards a negotiated settlement of the underlying Arab-Israeli conflict. Perhaps I may make it perfectly plain at the outset that the Government fully share that concern.

The toll of suffering and death in the occupied territories since the current wave of unrest began on 9th December last year has been immense. At least 80 Palestinians have been killed. We deeply deplore these acts and all acts of violence such as those which the noble Lord, Lord Glenamara cited and, indeed, the sort of matter to which the noble Viscount, Lord Buckmaster, referred. We call on all sides to exercise maximum restraint in order to avoid further bloodshed.

The noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, referred to what I think he described as our alleged ambivalence towards the PLO. The PLO is an umbrella organisation which expresses the aspirations of many thousands of Palestinians to secure their legitimate rights. We deplore the terrorist activities of several of its component organisations. However, I have taken careful note of the points made by the noble Lord.

We fully agree that the Palestinians must be allowed a voice in the negotiations which will determine their future. However, for the PLO alone to represent that voice it is necessary for the PLO to end the ambiguity of its policy on three points which will have to form the core of any negotiations: that is, the acceptance of United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 238; recognition of Israel's right to a secure existence and renunciation of the use of violence to achieve its ends.

Lord Mayhew: My Lords, may I be permitted to intervene? My point was that that is a requirement unilaterally imposed on the PLO. If Israel and the PLO agree to recognise each other and jointly rejected violence and terrorism that would be splendid. Why do the Government put those conditions only on the PLO and not on the Israeli Government?

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Lord Glenarthur: My Lords, I hope that, by taking note of the point made by the noble Lord and by explaining to him the importance that taking into account those three points has in considering whether the PLO represent that voice of the Palestinians which the noble Lord seems to indicate in his remarks it does, he will understand why I have made plain those three points since they govern whether the PLO is to be included in the sort of negotiations which the noble Lord seeks.

History such as we have heard this evening and particularly as referred to by the noble Earl, Lord Winchelsea, the noble Viscount, Lord Allenby, whose name is much associated through his forbears with that part of the world, my noble friend Lord Sandys and the noble Lord, Lord Molloy, is important and it is relevant. Like my noble friend Lord Chelwood, I should like to deal with the present and look towards the future.

We have expressed our concern vigorously to the Israeli authorities, both bilaterally and, as many of your Lordships would have us do, with our European Community partners. In particular, we urge the Israeli occupation authorities to refrain from the use of lethal force and beatings. These only fuel Palestinian resentment and escalate the violence. The appalling nature of this policy was recently demonstrated most disturbingly by the burying alive of four Palestinians and the shocking pictures of soldiers attempting to break the limbs of Palestinian detainees. Those responsible for these and similar abuses must be brought to book.

Until Israel eventually withdraws from the occupied territories, we will continue to urge it to administer the occupation in strict accordance with international law and respect for human rights standards.

Lord Molloy: My Lords, are we going to say that to the Russians, too, in regard to the lands that they occupy? Are we to tell them that they must occupy those lands humanely and not, as we do in the case of Afghanistan, tell them to stop occupying someone else's country? Why not say that in the case of Israel's occupation?

Lord Glenarthur: My Lords, it is always easy to draw instances from other parts of the world and not compare like with like. I suspect that that is what the noble Lord may be doing in citing instances of the sort that he mentioned. Let us deal with one subject at a time and concentrate on this particular problem, which we all agree is most disturbing.

The noble Lords, Lord Glenamara and Lord Kagan, regretted the picture of the situation in the occupied territories which is given by the world's press. It is true that the media will focus on the sensational. I understand the point made by the noble Viscount, Lord Allenby, about the role of soldiers in these circumstances, particularly young soldiers.

However, it is also true that the reports of acts of violence which the press publish also bring home to us the need for an early negotiated settlement. We all agree that the suffering must be brought to a quick end. However, essentially that is a short-term measure and will not solve the root causes of the unrest.

I have to say that I have some reservation about the analysis offered by the noble Lords, Lord Glenamara and Lord Kagan, that this unrest stems from a Moslem fundamentalist conspiracy. I do not believe that the available evidence bears this out. Palestinian protests arise from a deeply felt resentment at the suffering experienced over the years. The current violence adds fresh urgency to the search for a just and comprehensive negotiated settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

With the diverging views that have been expressed, this debate has also highlighted the many difficulties that exist in promoting and establishing the settlement we all wish to see. In his excellent speech based on his wide experience, my noble friend Lord Chelwood pointed to some of these problems. The principles for a settlement are clearly established; indeed, they have been rehearsed many times from this Dispatch Box and they were referred to by the noble Lord, Lord Mayhew. They are the right of all states in the region, including Israel, to a secure existence within recognised borders and the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination. I can assure your Lordships that the Government are actively involved in promoting all efforts to help the parties to achieve a settlement on this basis. I am grateful to my noble friend Lord Sandys for his recognition of that. We are in close touch with several of those concerned. For example, my right honourable friend the Prime Minister met King Hussein last week. We remain in step with the King's courageous work to advance the cause of peace.

I listened with care to the noble Lord, Lord Paget of Northampton, but I have to say that I found very little with which to agree, perhaps particularly on the matter of an international conference. I hope that he will accept that there is broad agreement, and he will have heard much of it this evening, that an international conference involving the parties to the conflict and the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council can provide a suitable framework for the necessary negotiations. The conference would have no right to veto solutions reached by the parties or to impose solutions on them. It is true, as the noble Lord, Lord Glenamara, indicated, that Israeli government policy remains opposed to the holding of an international conference to resolve the dispute. He asked whether my right honourable friend the Prime Minister would use her influence with Mr. Shamir to advance progress towards a solution. We take all available opportunities to make clear to the Israeli Government our firmly held belief that it is in their own interests to trade territory for peace, and to reach a settlement which will guarantee their own long-term security.

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[LORD GLENARTHUR.]

We have given our full and active support to the proposal for an international conference. Support for the idea was reiterated after the Prime Minister's recent meeting with King Hussein, and in another place on 2nd March. The support of the 12 member states of the EC was most recently expressed by the Foreign Ministers in their statement of 8th February.

My noble friend Lord Chelwood has advocated a more prominent role for the United Nations in bringing about a solution. The Security Council and the General Assembly pay close and continuous interest to the issue that we are debating. However, for the present I am sure that we are right to lend support to the initiative taken by the United States as the noble Lord, Lord Cledwyn, did in his remarks. We stand ready to play our part in further consultations in the Security Council at the appropriate time.

My noble friend, supported also by my noble friend Lord Sandys, suggested a United Nations trusteeship as a solution for the occupied territories. I hope that both my noble friends will accept that for us to espouse precise arrangements for a settlement is at present premature. Those directly involved in the dispute must be encouraged to enter into negotiations themselves which they find mutually acceptable. We would not rule out a role for the United Nations in an eventual settlement. I believe that my noble friends will agree that time and negotiations will show whether that is appropriate.

Several of your Lordships have referred, as I did just now, to the current initiative by the United States to advance the peace process. My right honourable friend the Prime Minister had valuable discussions with President Reagan and with his Secretary of State, Mr Shultz last week. She welcomed the steps being taken by the United States to give fresh impetus to the search for a settlement, and she encouraged Mr. Shultz to continue his efforts. I am very grateful to the noble Lord, Lord Cledwyn, for his endorsement of those efforts.

The noble Lord asked specifically about the aborted meeting which was to have taken place recently in Jerusalem between Mr. Shultz and the Palestinian representatives. Obviously, I cannot comment on the details of the shuttle of Mr. Shultz; however, I am aware that such a meeting was proposed but that the Palestinians concerned declined it.

We hope that the parties will be able to reach early agreement with the United States on detailed proposals which can offer a sound basis for progress. I believe that to be compatible with the scenario given to us by the noble Lord, Lord Weidenfeld. We support the American approach towards the peace process. It provides for careful preparation for a conference and a solution by stages. I agree with him that what we are aiming at is a conference which offers not a trap for the participants but an opportunity for lasting peace. The American proposals are not intended as a substitute in any way;

they would build on the wide consensus in support of a solution. We shall continue to work with those directly concerned in order to achieve the measure of common ground and compromise necessary if a peaceful settlement is to be found.

I am grateful to the noble Lord, Lord Weidenfeld, for his remarks about the long-term future and economic prosperity of the area. I agree that we must not lose our vision of the future. We are convinced that the first need is a political solution to the present conflict. We remain prepared to play our part, once a settlement is in place, in the reconstruction of the economies of the area where development has been so sadly held up by the failure to obtain peace.

Perhaps I may say (as the noble Lord, Lord Cledwyn, referred to it) that any discussion of the region would be incomplete without at least some reference to the tragic occurrences in Lebanon. The Lebanon has suffered a tragic waste of human and material resources during almost 13 years of war. Its economy is under increasing strain; it has become the base for numerous terrorist groups and it is one of the world's major drug-producing centres.

As I have said to your Lordships at Question Time yesterday, we remain committed to the Lebanon's sovereignty, unity, independence and territorial integrity. External intervention from whatever quarter cannot solve her problems. Only by the Lebanese themselves working together to rebuild their country can a solution be found. A restoration of central government authority appears essential. The international community is not immune to the Lebanon's problems. As the noble Lord, Lord Cledwyn, reminded us, we have a constant and a grim reminder in the fate of foreign hostages. We are doing all we can to secure the release of British hostages within our firm policy of making no substantive concessions to terrorism. Concessions only feed more hostage-taking. We were delighted to hear of the release, unharmed, of the two UNRWA officials who were kidnapped last month and of Mr. Peter Coleridge of Oxfam.

We have an interest in peace for the Lebanon as much as for any other part of the Middle East. A settlement there should not have to wait on a resolution of the wider Arab-Israeli dispute. Equally, it is difficult to envisage Lebanon not being present at an international conference. Meanwhile we continue to press Israel to complete her withdrawal from Southern Lebanon in accordance with Security Council Resolution 425.

I hope I have made clear the Government's concern at the suffering and the tragic waste of human lives and resources which result from the failure to bring about just and lasting settlements to the conflicts besetting this troubled region. I can assure your Lordships that we remain determined to play whatever part we can in helping to restore peace in the area.



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כ"ח באדר תשמ"ח

17 במרץ 1988

סימוכין: 2557

שגרירות ישראל
לונדון

אל: ארופה 2 ✓

מאת: הציר-יועץ, לונדון

קרא 7.10.88

הנדון: דיוני הפרלמנט: בריה"מ

לוטה עותקים משאלות ותשובות שהועלו בדיוני הפרלמנט בימים 7-10/3 בנושאי
בריה"מ. (זכויות האדם).

כברכה,
יורם שני.

העתק: מזא"ר

המרכז



HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Written Answers to Questions
FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Human Rights (Soviet Union)

Mr. Mullin: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the human rights issues in the United Kingdom raised by the Soviet Union during his recent visit to the Soviet Union.

Mr. Mellor: During my right hon. and learned Friend's discussion of human rights, Mr. Shevardnadze raised alleged violation of human rights in the United Kingdom and handed over a list of so-called "political prisoners" in Northern Ireland. We have so far established that, of the eight individuals on the list, seven have been duly convicted of murder and one of attempted murder.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Written Answers to Questions

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Moscow (Ministerial Visit)

Mr. Mullin: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if, pursuant to his answer of 7 March, he will list the eight individuals whose cases were raised by Mr. Shevardnadze during his recent visit to Moscow.

Mr. Mellor: It is not our practice to reveal details of individual prisoners without their consent.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Written Answers to Questions

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Miss Elena Gurevich

Mr. John Marshall: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will raise the case of Miss Elena Gurevich of Moscow with the Government of the Soviet Union; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Mellor: We regularly raise the plight of refuseniks with the Soviet authorities and shall continue to do so. We understand that Elena Gurevich may already have received permission to leave the Soviet Union.



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17 במרץ 1988
סימוכין: 2552

שגרירות ישראל
לונדון

אל: ארופה 2 ✓

מאת: הציר-יועץ, לונדון

ג.פ.ל
ג.נ.

הנדון: דיוני הפרלמנט: המזה"ת

לוטה עותקים משאלות ותשובות שהועלו בדיוני הפרלמנט ב- 7-9/3 בתחומים הבאים:

1. סנקציות כלכליות ולוב.
2. מעורבות אונר"א בשיכון וביוזב בעזה.
3. אפשרות יישוב עזתיים במצרים.
4. אזרחים בריטים בסוריה ובלוב.
5. חגים נוצרים בסעודיה.
6. מספרי אבדות במלחמת איראן-עיראק.

בברכה,
יורם שני.

העתק: המרכז.

7 March 1988

Mr Roy Beggs (East Antrim): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make it his policy to seek to end exports from the United Kingdom to Libya, in view of the recent arms discoveries in Northern Ireland believed to have originated in Libya.

No 168W

MR DAVID MELLOR I have been asked to answer

No. We do not operate economic sanctions against Libya, and British firms remain free to use their own judgement on whether to trade with Libya. We do not however actively promote trade with Libya. Nor is there any question of the Government issuing Licences for defence exports to Libya or of resuming diplomatic relations whilst Libyan involvement in terrorist activity and support for the IRA continue.

WRITTEN REPLY

FOR WEDNESDAY 9 MARCH 1988

11
W
MR MICHAEL LATHAM : To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what is the current budget for housing construction and sewage systems within the Gaza Strip of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency; what were the equivalent figures for each of the last five years; and what were the contributions to these budgeted figures from (a) the United Kingdom; (b) each of the other four permanent members of the Security Council, (c) Saudi Arabia, (d) Kuwait and (e) Iraq.

ANSWER

MR CHRIS PATTEN : UNRWA has not been involved in the construction of housing or sewerage systems in Gaza for many years. The agency has undertaken a modest programme of essential maintenance of shelters for special hardship families and a limited amount of surface drain construction in the eight Gaza camps. Expenditure on these programmes for the period 1983-88 is as follows:

	Shelter Maintenance US Dollars	Surface Drains US Dollars
1983	44000	175000
1984	104000	72000
1985	72000	33000
1986	111000	13000
1987	129000	72000
1988 (Projected)	135000	94000

These programmes are funded from the core budget. UNRWA has not received earmarked contributions for this type of expenditure and cannot therefore provide a breakdown by donor country.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Written Answers to Questions

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Gazans (Travel to Egypt)

Mr. Latham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what requests he has made, on humanitarian grounds, to the Egyptian Government to permit Gazans to travel to Egypt without a visa through the security fence, and to assist in the resettlement of overcrowded families within Egyptian territory in Sinai; and what response he has received.

Mr. Mellor: None.

9 March 1988

Mr Michael Latham (Rutland and Melton): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what is the number of British citizens currently in: (a) Libya and (b) Syria; and what were the equivalent figures before Her Majesty's Government broke off diplomatic relations with those states.

No W13

MR TIM EGGAR

There are estimated to be about 3250 British citizens currently in Libya and 300 in Syria. The corresponding figures before we broke off relations with those States were 8,250 and 300.

9 March 1988

Mr Michael Latham (Rutland and Melton): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether he will give details of the arrangements made by Her Majesty's Ambassador in Saudi Arabia, and by the British Interests Section in the embassy of the protecting power in Libya, for British subjects who wish to attend Christian worship at Easter, in the light of the ban on holding public Christian services in those countries.

No W10

MR TIM EGGAR

The Saudi Arabian Government confirmed recently that Christians are permitted to worship individually according to their conscience. Her Majesty's Ambassador in Riyadh has not made any special arrangements for British nationals to attend Christian worship at Easter.

British nationals in Tripoli may attend the weekly religious services at either the Anglican, Roman Catholic or Non-Conformist Union church, and there is also a Roman Catholic church in Benghazi. The Anglican chaplain in Tripoli makes fortnightly visits to the 500-strong British community in Marsa Al Brega and he also regularly visits the Anglican community in Benghazi.

9 March 1988

Mr Michael Latham (Rutland and Melton): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether he will make a statement on the progress to date in implementing the mandatory United Nations Security Council Resolution requiring a cease-fire in the war between Iran and Iraq; what is the latest estimate available to him of the number of deaths in this conflict, including civilian deaths; and how many are believed to have died as a result of the use of chemical weapons officially banned by international agreements.

No W8

MR DAVID MELLOR

Despite the efforts of the United Nations Secretary-General Security Council Resolution 598 remains unimplemented after 7 months. The Security Council are therefore actively working on enforcement measures to be applied to the recalcitrant party.

It is estimated that approximately 150 thousand Iraqi and 500 thousand Iranian troops have been killed so far, together with a total of some 200 thousand civilians. The number of deaths directly attributable to the use of chemical weapons is not known.



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כ"ח באדר תשמ"ח

17 במרץ 1988

סימוכין: 2555

שגרירות ישראל
לונדון

אל: ארופה 2 ✓

מאת: הציר-יועץ, לונדון

103.7
(כ)

הנדון: דיוני הפרלמנט: איראן- עיראק

לוטה עותקים משאלות ותשובות שהועלו בדיוני הפרלמנט בימים 11-14/3 לרבות הדיון
בבית הלורדים מ-15/3 בנושאים הבאים:

- א. פיתוח גרעיני באיראן.
- ב. יכולת לחימה כימית בעיראק.
- ג. התחרות הגרעינית במזה"ת.
- ד. היחס העיראקי לכורדים.
- ה. מלחמת איראן-עיראק.

בברכה,
יורם שני.

העתק: המרכז



HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Written Answers to Questions

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Amirabad Nuclear Complex, Tehran

Dr. Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what information he possesses concerning the Amirabad nuclear complex near Tehran in terms of its technical capacity to assist in nuclear weapons production.

Mr. Mellor: I assume the hon. Member is referring to the Tehran university nuclear centre which is sited in Amirabad. The centre possesses a research reactor which was designed for the production of medical isotopes. Iran has signed the non-proliferation treaty and has placed all her nuclear materials under International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards. We have no evidence to suggest that these are being circumvented.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Written Answers to Questions

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Iraq

Dr. Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what is his latest estimate of the chemical weapon capacity of Iraq.

Mr. Mellor: Iraq's use of chemical weapons against Iranian forces has been confirmed by several United Nations reports since March 1984. We believe that Iraq has a capacity to manufacture chemical weapons and is capable of using such weapons effectively.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Written Answers to Questions

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

"Nuclear Rivals in the Middle East"

Dr. Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will seek to obtain for his departmental library a copy of "Nuclear Rivals in the Middle East" by Shyam Bhatia published by Routledge in March.

Mr. Mellor: Yes; the book has already been ordered.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Written Answers to Questions

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Iraq

Mr. John Marshall: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations have been made to the Iraqi authorities about their brutality towards Kurds; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Mellor: We regret the denial of basic human rights in Iraq, and the harsh treatment meted out to the Kurds causes particular concern. We take every opportunity to express our concern to the Iraqis about abuses of human rights in their country, and did so most recently during my visit to Iraq from 23 to 26 February.

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No. 96



Tuesday
15 March 1988

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)

HOUSE OF LORDS

OFFICIAL REPORT

Iran-Iraq War: UN Resolution 598

Lord Molloy asked Her Majesty's Government:

What steps they are considering to seek to replace United Nations Resolution No. 598 concerning the Iran-Iraq war with one to contain effective arms sanctions.

Lord Glenarthur: My Lords, there is no question of replacing Security Council Resolution 598. It is a mandatory resolution which remains in force. We are actively engaged in discussion aimed at obtaining implementation of Security Council Resolution 598. This may well require imposition of an arms embargo.

Lord Molloy: My Lords, does the Minister not agree that in the circumstances of the Iran-Iraq war both the relevant chapter and the specific United Nations resolution are totally and completely useless? To say that we cannot change something just because a regulation states that we cannot means that people will continue to be killed and slain and the appalling war will continue. Ought we not to consult our senior allies to see whether something more realistic can be achieved by imposing effective arms sanctions on the participants in this appalling war?

Lord Glenarthur: My Lords, it is a fact, nevertheless, that Resolution 598 is mandatory and it is underpinned by the unity of the five. It has been adopted unanimously; it must be obeyed and it remains the best basis for a negotiated settlement. We must therefore move to measures to enforce implementation, which is what I think the noble Lord wants us to do. We continue to play a leading part in the discussions in New York as co-ordinator of the Five on progress towards an arms embargo.

House of Lords

Tuesday, 15th March 1988.

Iran-Iraq War: UN Resolution 598

Lord Cledwyn of Penrhos: My Lords, on the question of implementation, can the Minister confirm that following the visit of the Chinese Foreign Minister to this country China is prepared to impose an arms embargo on Iran? Secondly, will he give the view of Her Majesty's Government on the Soviet Union's proposals to appoint a mediator?

Lord Glenarthur: My Lords, I am afraid that I cannot tell the noble Lord the response of the Chinese or indeed go into detail on the discussions which my right honourable friend the Secretary of State had with the Chinese Foreign Minister. I am not aware of the position at the moment on the question of a mediator. A draft document towards an arms embargo is under discussion among the Five and it has now been circulated to non-permanent members. We are awaiting further discussions. There would be no fixed timing as regards any enforcement resolution but the movement towards enforcement must be carefully prepared. I think that the noble Lord will agree that the unity of the Five and the unanimity of counsel are important objectives which would add weight to the resolution.

Lord Cledwyn of Penrhos: My Lords, I should like to thank the noble Lord for giving that full reply. Can he say a little more about the discussions to which he referred? What is the form of the discussions and how long will they take?

Lord Glenarthur: My Lords, there is no short answer to the point raised by the noble Lord. Neither side can expect to continue to flout the wishes of the international community, as expressed by Security Council Resolution 598, without serious repercussions. We are trying to achieve progress towards the arms embargo, which appears to be the best way forward, and we in the United Kingdom are playing an important part in that.

Lord Molloy: My Lords, is not the Minister aware that over the past few months he has quite rightly stated the Government's endeavours in trying to bring some form of arms embargo and sanctions into a reality? It appears that that will be quite impossible simply by adhering to Chapter III and to this resolution of the United Nations. There must be other nations with which our Government have had discussions in New York and which would be prepared to work with the British Government in imposing arms sanctions in order to bring an end to this horrid war.

Lord Glenarthur: My Lords, the discussions among the Five on the now circulated document are precisely about that point. We are awaiting further opportunities for discussion and we are as keen as the noble Lord to see progress in this difficult matter. We shall continue to pursue the matter with all vigour.



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שגרירות ישראל
לונדון

כ"ח באדר תשמ"ח
17 במרץ 1988
סימוכין: 2559

5763
103.7
כ"ח

אל: ארופה 2 ✓

מאת: הציר-יועץ, לונדון

הנדון: דיוני הפרלמנט: שונות

לוטה עותקים משאלות ותשובות שהועלו בדיוני הפרלמנט ב- 14/3 בנושאים הבאים:

- א. ציוד בריטי לאש"פ .
- ב. ראול וולנברג .
- ג. מדיניות התביעה הממשלתית .
- ד. הצבעות בריטיות באו"ם .

בברכה,
יורם שני .

העתק: המרכז



HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Written Answers to Questions

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Racal Ltd

Mr. Janner: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster whether he has completed his investigations concerning the question of the alleged sale of radio equipment by Racal Ltd. to the Palestine Liberation Organisation in 1981; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Alan Clark: A conclusion to the investigation is expected shortly.

Mr. Janner: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster whether the current investigation concerning the alleged sale of radio equipment by Racal Ltd. to the Palestine Liberation Organisation in 1981 includes an inquiry into the training of militiamen from the Palestine Liberation Organisation in battleground communications provided by Racal Ltd.

Mr. Alan Clark: No.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Written Answers to Questions

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Mr. Raoul Wallenberg

Mr. Ken Hargreaves: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what is his latest information on the case of Mr. Raoul Wallenberg; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Mellor: The Soviet authorities have maintained since 1957 that Mr. Wallenberg died in prison in 1947. There have been reports over the years suggesting that Mr. Wallenberg may have been alive and in prison in the Soviet Union considerably later than 1947, but these accounts were never confirmed. We have frequently pressed the Soviet Union for a full account of the fate of Mr. Wallenberg, including, if he did indeed die in 1947, a detailed statement of the manner in which he died. The Soviet authorities have not so far provided adequate information.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Oral Answers to Questions

ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Prosecution Policy

48. **Mr. Janner:** To ask the Attorney-General when he next expects to meet the Director of Public Prosecutions to discuss matters relating to prosecution policy.

The Solicitor-General: In the near future.

Mr. Janner: When the hon. and learned Gentleman sees the Director of Public Prosecutions, will he please discuss once again the question of the Director's failure to prosecute the perpetrators of "Holocaust News". In that context, does the hon. and learned Gentleman agree that it is monstrous that the law is too weak to allow people who are stirring Fascist and racist ill will in this decent country to be brought to book?

The Solicitor-General: I advise the hon. and learned Gentleman that this matter has been considered with great care, not only by the Director's office but by the Director himself, with the benefit of advice of senior Treasury counsel and by both Law Officers. Having regard to all the material factors, including the nature and effect of the defences likely to be open to and relied on by the defendants, the likelihood or otherwise of a conviction, and the circumstances as a whole, it is not thought appropriate to prosecute.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Written Answers to Questions

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

United Nations (United Kingdom Voting Record)

Mr. Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the 14 resolutions on which the United Kingdom abstained and the 14 on which the United Kingdom voted against, in each case giving the reason for such decisions, at the 42nd sessions of the United Nations General Assembly (1987) First Committee.

Mr. Eggar: At the first committee of the 42nd General Assembly, the United Kingdom voted against the following resolutions:

Explanations of Vote

We gave national explanations of vote on:

- Resolution 34b - Denuclearisation of Africa
- Resolution 35 - New Weapons of Mass Destruction
- Resolution 38j - Implementation on UN Disarmament Resolutions
- Resolution 39a - Role of Security Council
- Resolution 39g - World Disarmament Campaign
- Resolution 42b - Participation in the CD

House of Commons

Friday 11 March 1988

Written Answers to Questions

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

United Nations (United Kingdom Voting Record)

<i>Resolution number</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>United Kingdom position</i>
Resolution 31 Resolution 39b Resolution 39c Resolution 39h Resolution 42a Resolution 42c Resolution 42e Resolution 42m	Negative Security Assurances Nuclear Weapons Freeze Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons Nuclear Arms Freeze Non-use of Nuclear Weapons Cessation of Nuclear Arms Race International Cooperation for Disarmament Follow-up to the First Special Session on Disarmament	Because they contained language that conflicted with our strategy of nuclear deterrence.
Resolution 26a Resolution 26b Resolution 42l	Test ban Test ban Report of the Conference on Disarmament (CD)	Because we believe a nuclear test ban to be in present circumstances unverifiable.
Resolution 34b	Denuclearisation of Africa	Because it contained unacceptable language in connection with South Africa and the presumption that a South African nuclear weapons capability is an established fact.
Resolution 42d	Prevention of Nuclear War	Because it contained unrealistic and unnecessary proposals for work at the Conference on Disarmament.
<i>Abstentions</i> Resolution 93	Comprehensive System of International Peace and Security	Because it tended to duplicate and undermine the UN Charter.
Resolution 27 Resolution 38c	Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and Monitoring Notification of Tests	Because they did not provide a practical way of making progress on the issues of nuclear testing.
Resolution 34a	Denuclearisation of Africa	Because of the presumption that a South African nuclear weapons capability is an established fact.
Resolution 35	New Weapons of Mass Destruction	Because it contained a proposal for an unverifiable and limitless ban on new weapons systems.
Resolution 38d	Bilateral Nuclear Arms Negotiations	Because it covered the same ground as a resolution the United Kingdom had sponsored.
Resolution 38f	Israeli attack on Iraqi reactor	Because we do not consider the First Committee to be the appropriate forum for discussion of the Israeli attack on an Iraqi nuclear reactor.
Resolution 38j	Implementation of UN Disarmament Resolutions	Because it calls on all member states of the UN to facilitate the implementation of disarmament resolutions, some of which we oppose.
Resolution 38l	Cut-off	Because the prohibition of production of fissionable material for weapons purposes remains in practice an unverifiable measure.
Resolution 39a	Role of Security Council	Because of reservations about both the principle and the practicalities of the suggested role for the Security Council.
Resolution 39g	World Disarmament Campaign	Because it criticises those states that do not make contributions to the World Disarmament Campaign in addition to those made through regular contributions to the UN budget.
Resolution 42b	Participation in the Conference on Disarmament	Because we consider that it is for the Conference on Disarmament to decide its own membership.
Resolution 44	Israeli Nuclear Capability	Because we consider it invidious and counter-productive to single out specific nations for criticism.
Resolution 91	Implementation of Declaration on the Preparation of Societies for Life in Peace	Because it was a purely declaratory resolution designed to serve Warsaw Pact propaganda interests.
Resolution 92	Implementation of Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security	Because it contained unrealistic and outdated references to comprehensive disarmament and colonial domination.
Resolution 42h	Disarmament Week	Mistakenly recorded as having been passed by consensus in the First Committee; we abstained during the vote in Plenary because the resolution encourages UN specialised agencies to engage in activities likely to detract from the task with which they have been mandated.

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No. 93



Wednesday
9 March 1988

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)

HOUSE OF LORDS

OFFICIAL REPORT

Palestine Conflict

Lord Mayhew rose to ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will promote an international conference on the conflict in Palestine.

The noble Lord said: My Lords, I ask this Unstarred Question in no spirit of criticism of the Government. Indeed, except in one respect, they deserve credit for their current policies on Palestine. Ministers are assiduously canvassing for an international conference and for the other three essential elements of a peaceful settlement—namely, security for Israel, self-determination for the Palestinians in the occupied territories and the participation of the PLO in the peace negotiations. Moreover, Mr. David Mellor and other Ministers have expressed publicly, with evident sincerity, their repugnance to the methods used by the Israelis in the occupied territories. On all these points the Government are at one with the other governments of the European Community, with virtually all the members of the United Nations and, I believe, with the opposition parties in this country. I suspect that there is more common ground today between the parties on Palestine than ever before, and that is most welcome.

What is difficult to defend is the Government's ambivalent attitude towards the PLO. On the one hand, Ministers correctly assert its right to participate in peace negotiations and they rightly deny that it can be described as a terrorist organisation. On the other hand, Ministers continue to refuse to talk to the PLO unless and until it unilaterally recognises Israel and unilaterally renounces violence. If Israel and the Palestinians both recognised each other and jointly renounced violence, that would be a huge step forward. However, that is not the Government's position. They are insisting on conditions from the PLO conditions on which they are not insisting in the case of Israel.

However terrorism is defined, a head count of the victims shows that the four men with the worst terrorist records in the Middle East are Gaddafi, Abu Nidal, Begin and Shamir. All terrorist acts are to be utterly condemned, whoever perpetrates them. This includes, if the reports are true, which they may not be, this week's outrage in the Negev. But compared with these four men Arafat and the PLO are not in the same league. If Ministers are ready, as they have been, to receive Mr. Shamir at No. 10, they ought to be ready to talk to the PLO in the interests of reaching a settlement. The PLO is an essential element in the search for a settlement and by refusing to talk to it Ministers are weakening the contribution that they can make to peace.

House of Lords

Wednesday, 9th March 1988.

Palestine Conflict

Lord Mayhew

The same is true of Mr. Shultz. We must hope that, despite his ostracism of the PLO, his initiative will have positive results. However, the prospects seem very unpromising. Israel rejects the idea of an international conference, rejects the idea of any withdrawal from the occupied territories and rejects any contact with the PLO. Nor are there any signs at present that the United States is ready to require Israel to compromise, as it could easily do. Therefore it is of the utmost importance for the British Government and the European Community to use all their influence with Israel and the United States to persuade them that failure to compromise at this time would end in disaster for Israel itself.

The Israelis put forward two objections to withdrawal from the occupied territories. The first, an objection put forward by only a minority, is that Judea and Samaria were promised by Jehovah to Abraham. It is possible to hold Judaism in the greatest respect without finding this a credible justification for Israeli rule in the occupied territories, especially if, as Palestinians are fond of arguing, conversions to and from Judaism over the centuries mean that today a Palestinian Arab is as likely as an Israeli settler to be descended from the Jews of Biblical times. The more important objection, widely held in Israel, is that a Palestinian state would undermine Israel's security.

Let us consider the possible military threat to Israel from such a state. A glance at the map shows that the new state will be embraced on three sides by Israel, that its one airstrip will be within artillery range of the Israeli army, that its one small port in Gaza will be at the mercy of the Israeli navy and that its two mountainous roads linking it with Jordan could be destroyed in five minutes by the Israel air force. Even if this state was not demilitarised, as is very likely in a settlement, and even if there was no neutral zone between the two countries manned by an international peacekeeping force, which again is a likely outcome of a settlement, the new Palestinian state would be a military hostage rather a military threat to the state of Israel.

The last time I was in Israel I established that the chiefs of staff have made no appreciation of the possible military threat of a Palestinian state to Israel. The reason is obvious: there is no such threat. However, the Israelis go on to argue that the new state might ally itself with Syria, Jordan or Egypt for an attack on Israel. But if the oppression of the Palestinians is ended, Arab support for an attack on Israel would be lessened and not increased. Equally, the Palestinians themselves, having shaken off Israeli rule and established their new state—which inevitably would be vulnerable to economic and military reprisals—would be less and not more inclined to start a war or to launch guerrilla or terrorist attacks on Israel.

No state can ever enjoy perfect security, least of all perhaps a specifically Jewish one implanted in the heart of the Arab world by force at the expense of the native inhabitants. However, if Israel were to change course and to come to an international conference to negotiate a settlement on the lines suggested, for example, by the European Community and the United Nations, she would stand a fair chance of achieving security and surviving in peace.

On the other hand, what are her chances of survival otherwise? Certainly Israel is still dominant militarily in the region. She still has an effective alliance with the United States. However, year by year the balance of power, financial, economic, diplomatic, demographic and even military, is slowly swinging against Israel.

Demography presents a particular threat to the survival of Israel. The great majority of Jewish people do not want to live in Israel. Many Israelis want to leave and are doing so in increasing numbers. The birth rates of Jews and Arabs in Palestine are different. If Israel does not change course there is a serious long-term threat of a new exodus which would undermine the viability of the state. In addition, there are increasing numbers of Jewish people inside and outside Israel who now publicly criticise the Israeli occupation, demanding that land should be traded for peace. They are showing the moral courage and the independence of mind, together with a hatred of oppression of all kinds, which the world rightly associates with Jewish

One thinks of the recent brave stand on principle of Labour's foreign affairs spokesman, Mr. Kaufman. Not the least achievement of all those people is to have convinced the Arabs that their adversary is not the Jewish people but the Israeli Government and their supporters; it is not Judaism but a debased form of Zionism. In the years ahead this could prove to have been a vital service to the Jewish people. I wish that more Jewish people would follow their example. Sadly there are many who speak out passionately and well against crimes committed by non-Jews against Jews but who when crimes are committed by Jews against non-Jews remain shamefully silent.

I think that all noble Lords recognise the limitations on British power in the region. As a member of the European Community we can play an important part in persuading Israel and the United States that withdrawal from the occupied territories is in Israel's own vital interests. Forty years ago Israel began, and has since continued, to try to establish itself in the Middle East by the ruthless use of military power and by attempts to repress the Palestinian and neighbouring people. At one time or another Israel has bombed Baghdad, Damascus, Cairo, Tunis, Amman and Beirut. It has especially inflicted terrible suffering on the Lebanese people by invading and bombarding them and still in the south subjecting them to ruthless military intervention. That policy of expansion and repression has failed. Israel is now less respected and less secure than it was before. I urge that the Israeli Government now take the advice of their own Jewish critics, change course, trade land for peace and find security in the only way that it can be found—by giving justice and freedom to the Palestinian people.

House of Lords

Wednesday, 9th March 1988.

Palestine Conflict

Lord Chelwood: My Lords, the noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, has I think done us a good turn this evening by putting down this Unstarred Question at this critical and delicate time. I shall not dwell on events in Gaza and on the occupied West Bank, save to say that the Palestinian INTAFABA has alerted world-wide opinion to the urgent need to find a lasting solution to the Arab-Israeli dispute. Strangely, Israel's operation which they call "Peace in Galilee"—which achieved none of its objects—did not have the same effect in spite of the awful casualties (at least 15,000 people were killed) which resulted from it. I shall not dwell on that aspect, either.

I want to look forward and not back to the Balfour declaration, Suez, the 1967 war, and the partition of Palestine because all those, and other things, are water under the Allenby bridge. Since 1945 I have consistently expressed my views that Palestinian rights were being endangered and might be extinguished. That opinion has led to my receiving a good deal of abuse, both verbal and written; it has been very unpleasant—but perhaps my skin is too thin. The question that I have asked myself consistently is this: where do British interests lie and how can one be even-handed between Jews and Arabs? I should like to strike a personal note here. My Jewish mother, the daughter of Henry Simon (well known in Manchester) often gave me excellent and balanced advice as, indeed, did my uncle Ernest who is well known to many of your Lordships as Lord Simon of Wythenshawe. We frequently discussed those issues from the time when I first went to Palestine as a young soldier in 1938. The essence of their advice—and of many other Jewish friends of mine—was that peace in Palestine could never be achieved by force or repression. I believe that that assertion is as true now as it was then.

I think that Eretz Israel and Palestinian rights are incompatible, and I am sorry to have to say that. However, I sincerely believe that Israel, within her 1967 armistice lines—because that is what they are—with her age-long experience of democracy world wide, could thrive and prosper beside a reborn Palestine. Despite what is happening today in Gaza, and in the occupied territories, the Palestinians and the Israelis now have the opportunity, if they will seize it, to practice:

"the art of living together in harmony".

Those words were used in the dramatic maiden speech made by the noble Lord, Lord Jakobovits—although in another context (col. 377 of *Hansard* for 4th March). I refuse to believe that Israeli security and Palestinian self-determination are mutually exclusive. That is how they were described to me by a very distinguished and senior representative of the Israeli Government the week before last. I refuse to believe it.

Therefore, where do we go from here? The European Community, with Britain in the lead, pointed the way in 1980 through the Venice Declaration. I thought the principle that was then laid down could not be criticised, and was entirely right. Unhappily, the follow-up to the declaration has been feeble, leaving aside only the Prime Minister's own brave initiative when she went to Amman which, unfortunately, came to nothing. It did, however, prove certain points.

The noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, spoke of the importance of the European Community playing a leading roll in finding a solution to the problem. I should like to see them playing a much more forceful role. I should also like to see this country in the lead because of our unrivalled experience in those parts of the world, in spite of all the mistakes that we have made. The United Nations created the problem that we are discussing this evening when Palestine was partitioned. I say that not because Palestine was partitioned, but because the partition was ill-thought out and unpoliced; it therefore led to the disaster that we now see. Why cannot the Security Council make a supreme effort to find the path to peace now? I am sure it exists. Is it not possible that the United Nations might take on the trusteeship of the West Bank and Gaza? That is a very difficult undertaking; but do not let us forget that UNWRA are on the spot and already have trusteeship for all the Palestinian refugees. Do not let us forget, either, the great success the UN have had in Cyprus since 1964, on the Golan Heights since 1974, and in Sinai after Israel's withdrawal. Admittedly, their efforts in South Lebanon have been a total failure; but the reasons for that are clearly understood and they lie at Israel's door.

Is it not possible that during the coming months and years work can be done in great detail on a blueprint for demilitarisation and policing after Israel's withdrawal behind the 1967 armistice lines so that Israel's genuine fears—and I accept that they are genuine—can be stilled? Is there any hope in trying to find an Austrian solution, as I call it, by which I mean writing into the Palestinian constitution non-alignment and a ceiling on forces? Had that not been done with Austria, the Soviet Union would still be occupying the Soviet zone. Is that a possibility?

Lastly, I should like to turn to a few points in fairly quick succession and in telegraphese on some of the things which concern me and on some of the phraseology which has been used. We talk about autonomy. The autonomy of a state means the right of self-government, according to the dictionary. It can occasionally be qualified by political, local or administrative considerations. But the United States' policy, as expounded by Mr. Schulz, will go no further, according to *The Economist*—I think this is an accurate summary—than semi-autonomous Palestine in federation with Jordan. How can one have a semi-autonomous country in federation with another country? I do not begin to understand that. I say this without disrespect, but that sounds to me like some sort of gobbledegook.

On the subject of self-determination, surely the Palestinians have as much right to seek to regain their statehood as had, for example, the Polish Home Army during the war under General Bor-Komorowski or, for instance, as have now the Mujahadin in Afghanistan. I do not think that can be denied.

Having mentioned the PLO, I wish to make some criticisms of them. They always go for all or nothing. That is a dead end. They can only achieve their rights step by step. All too often the PLO trump their own aces. In spite of that, I do not believe that it is possible to short circuit the PLO. Too many efforts have been made to try to do just that.

House of Lords

Wednesday, 9th March 1988.

Palestine Conflict

[LORD CHELWOOD.]

On the same subject, I wish to see the Palestine National Council, and therefore the PLO, change the charter which denies Israel's right to exist by promising to strike out any such references to Israel immediately Israel recognises their right to self-determination. We are entitled to ask for that.

Turning to terrorism, is it not as wrong to label the whole PLO as terrorists, as has been done fairly often (The noble Lord, Lord Paget, is guilty of that, and may have some riposte to make), as it would have been to label the Haganah or even the Jewish Agency as terrorists because of the shocking things done by Irgun, Lehi and the Stern group? I say that bearing in mind the equally shocking things done by Abu Nidal and other minority groups which come roughly under the umbrella of the PLO, though I think their activities have never been condoned by Arafat.

Yet under this heading the PLO are asked to renounce terrorism and the Israeli Government are not. At the same time the PLO are asked to recognise the 1967 armistice lines before they can attend a conference, but Israel is not so asked. The PLO are asked to recognise Resolution 242, which incidentally Yasser Arafat did quite recently and I have the date here. He has done so on several occasions. Why is there undue emphasis on that resolution which regards the Palestinians as refugees and which was specifically drafted, I think by the noble Lord, Lord Caradon, immediately after the 1967 war came to an end, requiring Israel's withdrawal? It had nothing to do with Palestinian rights and was not intended to have anything to do with them. None of this seems to me to be even-handed, which I suggested was the first important principle.

To conclude, I mention two glimpses of the obvious. First, the *status quo* is not sustainable. That has been said on both sides of the Atlantic and by many people whose opinions we must value. Secondly, the parties—as they are so frequently called from my own Front Bench—will not solve this problem on their own. I am certain that there is no chance of that at all. The noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, said that time is running out for Israel, and I agree with him. Their survival depends on their coming to terms with their Arab neighbours and coming to terms with themselves.

I should like to see a United Nations trusteeship of the West Bank and Gaza which would give a desperately needed breathing space of several years during which a series of conferences could be held, and many working parties could get down to work to try to find the way to a comprehensive peace settlement under strict UN supervision. I fervently pray that that will happen.

Lord Glenamara: My Lords, during one of the recent demonstrations in Jerusalem a mullah was heard to shout through a loud-hailer from the steps of a mosque, "The Ayatollah demands a martyr a day". That remark is very revealing about the present troubles in Israel—not a series of spontaneous riots but a carefully organised and carefully sustained uprising, as three weeks ago President Reagan said was the case, based on information the Americans had from intelligence sources.

The uprising is organised from Moslem fundamentalist sources outside Israel, the same sources which hold most of the hostages and which are trying constantly to destabilise the moderate Arab governments in the Middle East. Is it not significant that in all this trouble criticism of Israel from the surrounding Arab countries has been extremely muted?

The uprising has been nurtured by the world press and the media. The spectacular and sickening daily stone throwing, the throwing of Molotov Cocktails, the wielding of knives and guns, have been as manna from heaven for the 800 representatives of the world's press who are now in Israel. I am told there are more there than in any other country in the world. There are well authenticated examples of stone throwing actually being organised by the media to enable the cameras to get their pictures.

The uprising has presented young Israeli soldiers—they are not professional but 18-year-old conscripts—with a situation that they were never trained to handle, any more than our young soldiers were trained to handle the situation into which they were put in Northern Ireland 20 years ago. The functions of the soldier and the policeman are quite different. Of course there have been excesses—terrible excesses—which we and everyone in Israel very much regret.

The International Federation of Human Rights in Paris recently carried out an investigation and published its report last week. Perhaps I may quote from the report:

"The Israel Defence Forces, responsible for maintaining order in the territories, did carry out acts of punishment, but those were departures from, and not part of, deliberate policy".

It continued:

"The members of the delegation confirm that they did not find evidence of the use of dum dum bullets by the Israel Defence Forces, in contrast to the charges voiced by the British Labour leader, Neil Kinnock".

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[LORD GLENAMARA.]

When a kindly English lady visits Israel she is whisked off immediately to hospital to see tragic young Arabs who have been wounded. She would be less than human if she did not shed a tear and less than human if she did not see her own son in those boys there. But we are entitled to ask what they were doing when they got themselves wounded. They were throwing bricks through the windscreens of Israeli army jeeps; they were throwing Molotov cocktails; or they were wielding knives or guns. That is how they got wounded. Then perhaps the kindly English lady should go to the other hospital and see the 300 young Israeli soldiers who have been wounded, who are lying there and who also look like her son.

The image that the world press has fostered in recent weeks of savage, inhuman, ferocious Israelis against peace-loving, gentle Arabs is as far from reality as it could possibly be. Quite apart from the hundreds of acts of terrorism—the noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, knows that there are hundreds of examples—by the PLO in Israel and abroad which, for example, in 1985 alone, caused 124 deaths, there are most appalling examples of the way in which Arab countries have dealt with dissent and riots in their territories. Let me quote one or two. A few years ago in the town of Hama there was a riot. The town was circled by the Syrians, who levelled it with artillery fire and killed 20,000 people. In 1980 the Syrians killed 5,000 people in the El Zatar refugee camp in Lebanon. In 1987 the Amal militia laid siege to Bourj-al-Barajneh and killed hundreds of people by bombardment and starvation. At the university of Yarmouk in Jordan, the Jordanian authorities killed eight students in putting down a minor riot. I could quote many other examples of the way in which the Arab countries deal with dissent in their territories. Of course, none of these was reported at any length in the world press. The press was not there; the cameras were not there.

Between the Atlantic coast of Morocco and the borders of India there is one democracy, the state of Israel—one country alone where the press is allowed to come and go as it pleases and photograph and report whatever it likes. But does Israel get any credit for this? Of course not. All that happens is that its democratic freedom is abused.

In the grossly distorted image being projected in the world today, there is, I believe, a clearly discernible strand of anti-semitism. Anti-semitism in my opinion is the biggest blot there has ever been on Western civilisation. After centuries of persecution culminating in the holocaust, the Jewish people must have the added dimision of a secure homeland. I believe that the West must ensure that security.

Britain, of all the nations in the West, surely has a major responsibility for this commitment. We were responsible for the Balfour declaration. We were the mandatory power after the war. We were the people who walked out on the mandate and left Jews and Arabs to fight it out. The present impasse is the result of 40 years of Arab rejection of two nations, a concept that Israel has been prepared to accept ever since it was proposed by the United Nations in 1949.

The noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, talked about land for peace. He forgets that Israel has offered land for peace. In 1956, in 1967 and in 1978 it traded land for peace with the Egyptians and concluded a peaceful settlement with them. The PLO, on the other hand, has consistently reaffirmed its position as "no peace, no negotiation, no recognition".

Displaced persons are always one of the saddest and most tragic consequences of war. In Europe after World War Two there were millions of displaced Poles, Germans, Czechs and others. Mercifully they are now all resettled. When we walked out on the mandate there was a vast number—approaching a million—of displaced Palestinians. The Arab states then set about creating another million displaced persons by expelling all Jews from their territory. The number of Jews displaced by the Arab countries was certainly as great as the number of Palestinians displaced after the war of liberation. All those Jews displaced from the Arab countries were quickly absorbed and resettled by Israel in spite of its limited resources and limited territory. The Arabs with their vast territory—one sees from a map of the Middle East, that Saudi Arabia is as big as most of Europe—and their vast resources from oil could have settled the Palestinians refugees quite easily. But they choose not to do so.

The United Nations offered resettlement. Its offer was spurned. Since 1971 the United Nations, with Britain acquiescing, passed the most astonishing resolution. It has passed a resolution 17 times calling upon Israel, to desist from rehousing the refugees and to leave them in squalor in the camps. The last time was 30th October last year. Britain voted for the resolution. It now includes the West Bank as well as Gaza.

Appalling though the squalor of the camp is, anyone who knows Cairo will be aware that it is not as bad as the slums of Cairo. That does not make it any better; but let us keep it in perspective. It is not as bad as a thousand Arab villages across the Arab world. In spite of the United Nations resolution, however, Israel, from its limited resources, has rehoused 10,000 refugees in nine separate residential projects. Of those 10,000, 70 per cent. were given land and allowed to have houses built according to their own preferences.

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[LORD GLENAMARA.]

In addition, Israel has built an infrastructure in the area of the camps. It has started many new industries—carpet making, furniture making, floor tile making and so on. It has created many new facilities and services, including universities, public buildings, mosques and clinics.

To hear the press accounts, one would think that Gaza was a slum from end to end. I wonder whether your Lordships are aware that some of the most opulent housing in the whole of the Mediterranean is in Gaza, some of it occupied by rich Saudis who are only too glad to live in the state of Israel. But a completely distorted view is given of Gaza. Why do not the media give a complete picture of the situation instead of this simplistic picture of goodies versus baddies, of Arabs versus Israelis? Their failure to do so simply hardens the intransigence on both sides and does not help to find a solution one little bit.

There is one point I want to make quite firmly because we must bear it in mind. Israel must restore order no matter what the cost—the tragic, unfortunate cost in loss of world esteem and goodwill. Bearing in mind the overthrow of the Shah's regime in Iran which none of us thought was possible before it happened, by a mob inspired by religious fanaticism, Israel cannot allow the situation to get out of hand because Israel is unique in the world. It can never afford to lose. Israel is the one-chance country and it cannot afford to be beaten.

I do not often praise Her Majesty's present Government. Leaving aside the aberration of Mr. Mellor, I want to applaud them for the efforts they are making to get agreement on a Middle East conference. I know from a number of sources that they are making real efforts to get a conference under the auspices of the five members of the Security Council. But the Prime Minister knows, as we all know, that the major impediment to holding such a conference is Mr. Shamir.

I should like to ask that Mrs. Thatcher use her considerable influence to try to persuade her fellow Conservative prime ministers to show a bit of flexibility about this conference. I am sure she is doing that. I do not say this at all critically because I have applauded all that she is doing to try to get a conference. I also applaud Mr. Shultz for his efforts. His modest plan probably represents the maximum common ground among the maximum number of participants in the region. It certainly holds out the prospect of a short-term, even a medium-term solution, which, if the will is there, could lead to a long-term solution. I sincerely hope that it will do so.

Viscount Buckmaster: My Lords, I should like to start by thanking the noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, for his very revealing speech, with which I entirely sympathise. As your Lordships may know, I have spoken four or five times on this subject in the past four or five years; the last occasion was in a debate which I myself initiated in April last year. Noble Lords also know that I am sympathetic to the Arab cause, although of course not in any way opposed to the Jews themselves.

I shall not dwell on the press reports, the broadcasts and the television reports which we have had about the horrors in the part of the world we are talking about. They must be familiar to many noble Lords. The noble Lord, Lord Glenamara, who has just spoken, referred particularly to Gaza. I see the noble Lord, Lord Molloy, looking towards me: he knows a good deal about this subject also. I would only ask him to refer to the speech that I made in April 1987 about conditions in the Gaza Strip which have been described by many people. There are such horrible things as the deprivation of water rights for the Arabs in that area, torture and so on, with conditions in the hospitals which have been accurately described as quite appalling.

I do not want to go into the details of the horrors and persecutions, the tortures, stonings and so on because I think that is quite pointless. But there is growing evidence that the Israelis themselves are turning against their own regime. I can quote two examples of this from the *Israeli Mirror*. That is a paper which is produced in Israel and it is strongly critical of the Israeli Government. One of these reports describes an ex-brigadier calling on his soldiers to refuse army service. Another one which I think even more revealing is by an Israeli army doctor who said: "I never imagined Jews could do this". This is the story, it is quite brief:

"I am of European origin and I know what my parents suffered. Not even in my worst nightmares did I ever imagine that we, the Jews, would do to another people what the Germans did to us."

I think that is a most revealing statement.

"We may not be building gas chambers and we have no organised extermination structure, but we are not very far from that. All those beatings and humiliations. They were sent to me—

these are the patients—

"wet and covered in mud and marks of beatings, blindfolded and with their hands tied. I saw signs of blows on their hands, legs, backs and sometimes heads. The soldiers have learned to administer dry beatings, that hurt a lot and leave marks, but do not cause damage. I saw two cases of swollen testicles but could not tell whether they were caused by blows or illness."

I emphasise again that that is by an Israeli doctor.

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Viscount Buckmaster:

Secondly I want to deal with the PLO, which has been referred to by most speakers so far. I remind your Lordships that, as has already been said, the PLO is by no means a wholly terrorist organisation, though I feel sure that the noble Lord, Lord Paget, will challenge me on this. Although the point was made previously I feel that I must make it again that the largest of these groups, Al-Fatah, is a most moderate group and that the PLO's own representative in London, Mr. Faisal Awaidha, has been consistently moderate and helpful in every way. We know of course that one of the most extreme terrorist groups is Abu Nidal, which has been mentioned by the noble Lord, Lord Mayhew. But I must emphasise that it is not typical of the group as a whole.

I should like to call to the notice of noble Lords something which has not been mentioned before and which I think is particularly important. That is Arafat's own peace plan. This peace plan was presented in Tunis at an international press conference two or three months ago. In this declaration, Arafat lists four stages. Stage one: transfer to the United Nations for a period of six months of the rule in the occupied territories; UN forces to be stationed on the Palestinian side of the border for an unlimited period, as long as the Israeli government wishes. Stage two: general elections to be held in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Stage three: an international peace conference to be held, attended by all sides including the Israeli government and the PLO, the PLO taking part in an independent capacity. Stage four: the establishment of a Palestinian state, and also co-existence between the Palestinian state and the state of Israel for as long as the Israelis wish.

A great deal has been said on this very difficult and delicate issue over many years. I feel that there is nothing of any great substance that I can add. But I hope strongly that the Minister will continue to press Her Majesty's Government to do all they can to use their good offices to achieve this conference, which we all feel is of the utmost importance. I hope that the inclusion of the PLO will be one of the prime factors of the conference.

Lord Paget of Northampton: My Lords, I find this a rather curious debate because of the degree of naivety with which a world which is unknown to the participants in the debate is being described. The situation is so utterly unlike that when one gets over there. This conflict is represented as a great national uprising of a people trying to get their own country back. Curiously enough Palestine is a country that has belonged to a great many people. The only people to whom it has never belonged at any point is this Levantine—Arab is a false name for it—population. That population has never been there except upon the basis of being in somebody else's country.

When we go back, we find that the Philistines lived there. They were Achaean Greeks who were driven south and to the sea by the Dorians. Then we find it was Egypt. Then the Jews came over. There was a period under David and Ahab when Israel established an empire that reached from the Nile to the Orontes. Then came Assyria and Babylon who divided Palestine between them. Then came Persia. Then came the Greeks of Alexander and again for a short period the Jews under the Maccabees. Then came the Romans, the Byzantines and the Franks of the Crusades. Saladin was the only Arab who ever ruled and he certainly was no relation to the present Levantines.

Finally there came the Turks and the British. But the British rule was the most interesting because it came after the first world war. Our mandate was to provide a national home for the Jews. We did not do very much about providing a national home for the Jews. The Jews provided themselves with a national home. Basically they bought it. To a very high degree Palestine was bought by the Jews in deals with the Arabs carried out at the Hotel Georges V in Beirut. There was a room kept for the purpose.

Then we come to the post-war period. This is where the participation of the noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, becomes so interesting. The question then was the desperate search for a home by the victims of the holocaust. They passionately wanted to get into Israel. That really was a case of people looking for a home.

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[LORD PAGET OF NORTHAMPTON.]

We had Ernie Bevin in charge. He was a tremendous man but he was certainly not without blemish. His dominant force was hatred. He hated the employers; he had to put them down. He hated the Germans. I shall never forget one occasion when I had to go and see him when I was working with Victor Gollancz in trying to get some food to the Germans in that awful winter when they were down to 700 calories.

Ernie Bevin said to me, "Tell your friends in Germany to go and look at the concentration camps. That is all that interests me." He was a very very formidable person. But to him the Jews were the sweatshop masters in the East End against whom he had organised. One could never persuade him that the people who were ruling Palestine were very different from that. If at that period Ernie Bevin was our Batman, the noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, was his Boy Robin. He was there when these awful things occurred. Ernie decided that we would end the mandate and that we would withdraw our defences and the army and leave four Arab armies, including the famous Arab Legion under the command of Glubb Pasha, in the region free to invade. It was Ernie's intention that Israel should be destroyed and smashed. We know what sort of mercy it would have received then.

In those circumstances, when the noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, tells us that all he is saying about the need to compromise and to help the PLO armed terrorists is for the good of Israel could there be any man from whom Israel would be less inclined to take advice?

Then we come to the noble Lord, Lord Chelwood. I am sorry that he is not here for the moment. He came out with the to my mind quite terrifying suggestion that these areas where order must be kept should be handed over to the United Nations. Just look at the record of the United Nations here. There is the complaint of the damage that has been done. In 1971 the Israelis were building very substantially in Gaza at the rate of 12,000 yards of brickage a year. In that year and in every year since the United Nations has passed a resolution calling upon Israel to cease its housing efforts and to take effective steps immediately for the return of the refugees concerned to the camps from which they were removed. That is the body which it is suggested should act as trustee. The one thing that can be said about the United Nations is that if things are bad almost anywhere in the world one can rely upon the United Nations to make them worse.

The Arabs repeatedly condemn rehousing, apparently because they realise that reasonably contented people cannot be exploited for political ends. In the Gaza Strip the camps are administered by the United Nations, which is also responsible for the housing, the sewage system and other services there. We should be sending for the very people who are responsible for what we are complaining about and putting them in charge. That is not a practical or a sensible idea.

The Arab nations have had all the facilities in the world to take in every one of the refugees. They had the money. They had the industry. They could have absorbed the whole lot of them. But they have kept them in Gaza and maintained them there as a propaganda instrument. That is why they are there. They would not be there otherwise.

Now there is an Arab rising. Could anything be much more disgusting than to see how such a rising works? The fathers keep under pretty safe cover and the children are sent out to throw the stones. Anybody who comes along to the hospital is shown those wretched beaten children. What were they doing to get themselves beaten?

The important matter is order. I do not happen to agree with my noble friend in his call for a conference. I do not think that in such conditions a conference would be worth a damn. What we ought to do is to leave the job to the Israelis, who are the people who know the job, and we should get out of the way. But that job has to be done and order has to be restored. The system was working fairly well until a few months ago; now it has gone bad. But the job can be done if we get out of the way. The highly efficient Israeli army were not originally trained to deal with such matters. They are getting trained and we know that. The last thing we ought to do is to send people out to tell them how to do their job.

The Foreign Office sent out a minister who proceeded, in circumstances of violence, to dress down an Israeli army colonel who was in charge of the situation. Nothing can be more important than the prestige of an officer in charge; and to undermine the officer's prestige was wrong. If the colonel had told a sergeant to take the young man along, paste his bottom and send him away until he had learnt manners, he would have been entirely within his rights. I wish he had done that. It was disgraceful conduct.

The Israelis are highly able people and they can do the job if we will keep out of the way and not try to tell them that their real interest is to surrender a strip of land which runs the length of their country and another strip of land that pinches them to within 20 miles of the sea. The noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, said that it was to Israel's strategic advantage. It is not to Israel's strategic advantage to place the whole of its country within artillery range from three directions at the same time.

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Lord Weidenfeld: My Lords, it was just a little over 50 years ago that the eminent Zionist leader, Dr. Weizmann, addressing a Royal Commission described the Jewish-Arab conflict as not so much one of right and wrong as of two rights and two wrongs. He added:

"And ours is much the smaller wrong"

A moderate and fair-minded Arab might well have made a similar remark, though I do not know whether any such remark is on the record.

The prerequisite of peacemaking is even-handedness and compassionate understanding. I respect the consistent and staunch endorsement of Arab causes by the noble Lord, Lord Mayhew. But I cannot help feeling that the fair-minded even-handedness which is so often present when he speaks on other issues was missing from his speech. Of course we all deplore transgressions and repressive acts of violence on the West Bank and in Gaza. But anyone who claims first-hand experience of one party's excesses should pause to ponder on the foul deeds of the other.

Have those who are so forceful in their attack on the Israeli authorities that try to restore order and protect human life ever been in a casualty ward where wounded Israeli soldiers, maimed civilians or mauled innocent bystanders languish? Have they paused to reflect that Israel has since its very inception been pleading for the razing of refugee camps and the reintegration of refugees? Have they thought that the Israelis are in the West Bank and Gaza simply because 20 years before King Hussein joined Nasser in his high-risk venture to smash the Jewish state—the state which on the morrow of the Six Day War asked for negotiations, only to be met by the famous "three nos of Khartoum": no recognition, no negotiation, no peace?

Today we are debating the need for an international peace conference. It is an old notion of mixed parentage and varied motivation. Mr. Brezhnev was the first to advocate such a format to allow the Soviet Union to re-enter the Middle East arena. For a long time the Americans saw little point in it. Presidents Nixon and Ford stonewalled the idea. But when President Carter seemed to warm to it, a wary President Sadat, who had only recently ejected the Russians from Egypt, was prompted—one might almost say stung—into flying to Jerusalem for his bilateral initiative.

King Hussein favours a conference under the United Nations Security Council umbrella, for he cannot afford to replicate the sweeping magnanimity of the late leader of Egypt. The King of Jordan does not have the sort of claims to support in the West Bank and Gaza without ambiguity that would allow him to make far-reaching concessions. He needs an international cover.

Europeans have favoured a wider conference for complex reasons—a nod to the Arabs, a wink to the Soviets and a traditional penchant for diplomatic congresses with echoes of Vienna, Berlin, Versailles and Geneva. Now that America is a latecomer to the idea, Mr. George Schultz's timetable is one of neckbreaking speed. Israel is divided to the point of making it an issue for a probable rush election, with Vice Premier Shimon Peres for and Premier Shamir against. World public opinion is understandably on Mr. Peres's side.

But before we succumb to the rather fashionable bias against the Israeli Premier, let us consider some of the pitfalls of an international conference which might abort. In doing so I am not defending or indeed quoting Mr. Shamir. I am calling on another witness—the distinguished former United States Secretary of State, Dr. Henry Kissinger. He can justly claim that his achievement, his technique and indeed his philosophy of negotiation in the Middle East changed belligerency into non-belligerency and disengagement, and ultimately led to the only peace treaty between Israel and an Arab neighbour—the Camp David Accord.

In a recent article in the *Washington Post*, Dr. Kissinger argues that peace comes piecemeal and not necessarily through the fiat of an international conclave. Often step-by-step diplomacy and interim arrangements of a durable kind are preferable to contractual peace. He questions whether some of the procedural devices mooted by Mr. Schultz and Mr. Peres, and apparently condoned by King Hussein and President Mubarak, would stand up in the event, whether the Soviets, on the one hand, would be content with the role of fig leaf or umbrella and the Americans, on the other hand, would go through with their commitment to help the parties either to break through or break up but not to have a settlement imposed on them.

Above all Dr. Kissinger argues that if a conference is to come off the diplomatic groundwork before it opens has to be as thorough as possible. Indeed, unless the parties concerned sit down with a wide measure of tacit agreement the outcome is likely to be negative, which would have a demoralising effect. It would be far more destructive than if no conference had been summoned.

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[LORD WEIDENFELD.]

It cannot be stressed too strongly that it would be truly beneficial if Her Majesty's Government, either by themselves or in concert with their EC partners, were to play a prominent part in reassuring the parties that if a conference takes place it can succeed only if there is no whiff of a diktat from above and least of all a carefully stage-managed performance designed to put pressure on the Americans to put pressure on Israel. That country, after all, holds the disputed territories. That is one of the reasons why we should take trouble to appeal to both sides of the Israeli coalition.

Compassionate understanding of the Palestinian Arab case implies support for political self-expression, autonomy and possibly sovereignty. Compassionate understanding of Israel implies support for her need of iron-clad security, open borders, the breaking of the economic boycott and human ostracism. It also implies understanding of the broadest band of public opinion. After all, it was Mr. Begin who signed away the Sinai, including the Jewish settlements, in the grand tradition of General de Gaulle's withdrawal from Algeria.

I believe that a genuine will for peace on the part of her Arab neighbours would influence the broadest possible spectrum of Israeli opinion and allay the suspicions that the conference, as envisaged by some Russian and Arab spokesmen and possibly some European governments, might be a trap, a straitjacket or an invitation to a beheading.

Mr. Peres's eight-point programme for an international conference is on the record. It seems to me to contain some very positive suggestions. Negotiations to solve the Palestinian problem in all its aspects are to be conducted in three bilateral geographical committees: a Jordanian-Palestinian and Israeli delegation in one, a Syrian and Israeli delegation in another and a Lebanese and Israeli delegation in the third committee. A fourth multilateral committee would include all the delegations with the addition of Egypt. Whereas the bilateral committees would be engaged in solving the conflicts of the past, the fourth committee would deal with charting opportunities for the region's future.

It is here that Britain and Europe, as friendly bystanders, can be most effective in pledging as well as charting a future for the region that would bring it economic prosperity, social justice and the premium educational, health, technological and cultural offerings of our civilisation. If the people on the ground were to feel that at the other end of a long tunnel there was not just a paper peace, not just a set of hollow declarations but a tangible promise of prosperity it would be worth the risk, the sacrifice of deeply held ideals and the replacement of traditional tenets of faith with a fresh catechism of hope.

The Earl of Winchilsea and Nottingham: My Lords, many people, myself included, believe that Israel deceived the United Nations at the time of its admission to that body. Israel has never honoured the obligations clearly stated and agreed to by her at that time. I refer to General Assembly resolutions, and in particular Resolution 181, which concerns itself with the territory and boundaries of the Arab and Jewish states, the city of Jerusalem, the Holy Places, and minority rights; Resolution 194, which stipulated that all Palestinian refugees be repatriated; and the additional violation of Resolutions 181, 194 and 303 under which Jerusalem remained an international zone. Furthermore, in launching the wars of 1956, 1967 and 1982, Israel has continued to flout the principles of the UN charter and international law.

The state of Israel has argued from its birth that its Arab neighbours pose an intolerable threat to its security and boundaries and that those same neighbours wish to drive all Jews into the sea. This has since been exposed from within Israel as being so much **Zionist propaganda**. Jews and Arabs had lived for centuries in harmony long before the arrival of the first Zionist. However, some Zionists used that argument as an excuse for their own acts of terrorism against innocent civilians, including many British, during and up to the end of the period of the British mandate. We can all remember with horror the blowing up of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem. No methods were deemed off limits by the Stern and Irgun gangs who were responsible for some of the most hideous atrocities ever committed. Organised terror, both physical and psychological, was used against the British and Arabs in an effort to get both to leave the country—the British to return home and the Arabs to go to any other country to which they could be pushed.

When we speak of the present unrest, the rioting and violence in the West Bank and Gaza, we conveniently overlook the fact that it did not begin last December. It began over 60 years ago, grew to a revolting crescendo in 1948-49 and has been a festering sore ever since. It has been responsible for engulfing the entire Middle East in instability. Responsibility for this situation must rest firmly with Great Britain, the architect of the Balfour Declaration of 1919, which created the mess in the first place, and with the United States for its systematic undermining of UN resolutions in support of Israel and at the expense of the Palestinians. These unfortunate people have been the victims of Western duplicity for all that time. Is it any wonder that they are now united in their wish to throw off the yoke of oppression and occupation?

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The Earl of Winchilsea and Nottingham:

I wonder how many noble Lords from all sides of the House would have reacted differently. Would we all have sat down quietly and happily handed over our country to someone else simply because it suited politicians in a far-off land with an eye on their careers? Would we have acquiesced meekly or would we have resisted stoutly? Whenever invasion threatened the United Kingdom we responded as one. We put aside our differences and squarely faced our enemies, even though it meant making sacrifices in terms of lives lost and comfortable lifestyles compromised. We defended our basic human rights, our families, our land, our freedom and our democracy. We fought fiercely and only once did we lose. Not since the Normans have we been invaded and occupied, although we came very close to it in 1940.

The Palestinians have not been so lucky. They were invaded first in 1948, then in 1956 and yet again in 1967. All their land has either been taken from them by force or is under military occupation. Have they not a right to oppose this? Have they not the right to resort to any method to rid their homeland of the aggressor? In fact, is it not their duty to do so? Would it not have been our duty if the same had happened to us in 1940?

There have been many who have criticised the PLO as being a terrorist organisation—myself included. If we have any respect for the sanctity of human life, we must reject and abhor acts that take away the most basic human right of all, that of the right to life. But should we not remember that the PLO grew out of a desperate need to respond to gross acts of terrorism as practised by members of Jewish terrorist organisations against the Palestinian Arabs? How were Palestinians supposed to react? Were they not supposed to object to having their land taken away, their families and friends killed and maimed, to being deported or squashed into squalid refugee camps, to having their houses blown up or even to being massacred? Surely there is not one Member of this House who would have tolerated any of those acts had they happened to him.

What is the difference between our commandos in World War II entering a German town and planting a bomb designed to kill German civilians and Palestinians going into Jerusalem to do the same thing to Israeli citizens? There is no difference, yet we praise the first as an act of heroism and condemn the second as an act of terrorism. That is hypocrisy on a grand scale. Do we really have a monopoly on justice and morality?

Until recent television pictures began to give us hard evidence of the brutalities taking place we found it expedient to look the other way. Now we cannot ignore them. It is to our undying shame that it took television finally to force us to bear witness to the hideous reality that is the illegal Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza and the relentless persecution of the Palestinian Arabs.

To quote from the current issue of the *New Statesman*, the PLO:

"has for years put forth a moderated negotiating position, often with considerable clarity, and they have found no politically significant partner in either Israel or the United States".

The noble Lord, Lord Chelwood, said that Yasser Arafat on several occasions has accepted UN Resolution 242. I am glad that he drew the attention of the House to that fact. However, that news was deliberately suppressed in the United States. What Yasser Arafat said on 14th January 1984 was:

"The PLO would recognise Israel's right to exist if it and the United States accept PLO participation in an international Middle East peace conference, based on all United Nations' resolutions including UN 242".

The PLO is and has been ready for direct negotiations with Israel but has only met with US support for Israeli intransigence and a continual refusal by the United States to recognise that it is the recognised representative body of the Palestinian people. It would be interesting to discover just who the United States thinks represents the Palestinians. Apparently it would accept almost anyone except the Palestinians. The present round of US-led peace mission diplomacy is not aimed at obtaining a just solution to the Palestinian problem but rather at bringing a halt to the violence in an effort to save Israeli and American faces from continued embarrassment. It is doomed to utter failure if it continues to deny full PLO participation.

The United States says that it is seeking a formula acceptable to Israel and Jordan. What about asking the Palestinians? They are the people who are trying to live in that country, which is their right, and whose country it was for centuries until 1948 when Israel was given some of it and 1967 when she took the rest by force. I have every sympathy with the victims of the horrendous holocaust. Indeed there is not to be found a more repulsive example of mass persecution and extermination. What I have no sympathy with at all is those same methods which were used by Hitler against the Jews in Europe in the 1930s and 1940s being used against the Palestinians today by the very people who ought to know better from their own bitter experiences. Two wrongs do not make a right.

The United States holds the key to the lock which could open the door to peace. So far it has been reluctant to turn that key. Time is running out. If the violence, oppression and brutality are allowed to continue, when the United States finally recovers its morality and dignity and goes to turn the key, the lock will have been changed and the key will no longer fit.

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Lord Kagan: My Lords, I shall try to be brief and avoid repeating points already so well made by other noble Lords, particularly the noble Lords, Lord Glenamara and Lord Paget. I should like to ask just one question: are we not looking too narrowly at what is happening at the moment in Israel?

I have recently returned from Israel. There is positive evidence that the instigators of the present troubles are not the PLO but the fundamentalist Jihads. The situation is a creation of Khomeini. I believe that we are witnessing an attempt to re-establish the fundamentalist Islamic empire which extended from the Caspian Sea to the Iberian peninsula. How did Khomeini rise to power? Was it not by taking exactly the same route that is now being taken in Israel. Women, young people and children are brought out into the streets in Tehran.

Certain criticisms of the Shah, which may have been justified, are highlighted. The world media aided and abetted Khomeini. All the sympathy was for Khomeini who was claiming to right the alleged excesses and tyrannies of the Shah. What defeated the Shah was the sympathy and support of the world media. Little did the press realise at that time that the Shah's injustices would be replaced by something far more horrendous and tyrannical. The methods worked.

The next attempt was on Iraq. The Russians now find that even they have problems in Azerbaijan with the Shi'ite fundamentalists. Israel is merely a rehearsal. The process can be repeated and if it can work in Israel it can work anywhere. One can certainly find injustices in Amman and try to de-stabilise the regime there; one can find injustices in Egypt and try to de-stabilise Cairo; one can go straight on from there. Apart from responding to an appeal for sympathy, is it not worth pondering whether this is a problem of the West versus a planned and hoped-for tyrannous dictatorship by the Islamic fundamentalist empire?

Why is the criticism about what is happening in Israel so muted in Cairo and Amman? Why did all the trouble start after the Amman meeting, which attempted to pave the way for a settlement? I should like to ask the Minister to consider whether there is a wider interest than our just assigning right and wrong. Incidentally, if I may return to the question of why there is so much reservation and anxiety in Israel about an international conference, the Israelis are very conscious of that other international conference which was called in the case of Czechoslovakia in 1938 when, in the interests of peace, the Czechs were advised and forced to trade land for stability. One should consider what happened to them.

It would be helpful if the media were to reflect not only on what they are doing but on the further consequences of their actions. My other points have been made so much better by previous speakers.

Lord Sandys: My Lords, I rise first to thank the noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, for giving us this opportunity to discuss a matter of such very great concern, and also to support most strongly the observations of my noble friend Lord Chelwood. I set the context of my remarks in something that he mentioned: the Austrian peace treaty. I shall look about the Mediterranean basin for evidence—which most certainly exists—of diplomatic successes that have led to peace treaties and the resolution of very longstanding problems over the past 35 years. I realise that the Danube basin is a little further away than the Mediterranean but the noble Lord mentioned the Austrian peace treaty as a prime example. I should like to mention another, which is the diplomatic success at Trieste that was achieved in 1953 after a period of years. That again concerned an area closely constricted by mountains and sea. It is a very narrow corridor which was disputed for many years by Austria and Italy. The treaty represented a solution to the problem of a very important and much disputed territory.

Another area of concern for centuries has been the disputes between Greece and Turkey. Only a matter of weeks ago there was the spectacle of the conclusion to the preliminary phase of negotiations—the starting point of an accord of some description, the precise nature of which is a little unclear at this time, between the Prime Ministers of Greece and Turkey. Those are all matters for considerable optimism. I feel that the question the noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, has put before your Lordships this evening has seeds of optimism within it, although certain contributions this evening would perhaps make that seem difficult.

Perhaps I may join with my noble friend Lord Chelwood over the nub of his principal argument: there should be trusteeship in the West Bank and in Gaza. He quoted the most important statement of the noble Lord, Lord Jakobovits.

"the art of living together in harmony".

That is what the principal substance of peacemaking is about.

The Venice Declaration was the subject of the debate held in your Lordships' House, introduced by my noble friend Lord Chelwood on 22nd May 1985. On re-reading that debate, I was particularly struck by the speech of the noble Lord, Lord Cledwyn of Penrhos. He reminded your Lordships of the exact terms of the Venice Declaration. I most warmly commend once again to noble Lords one phrase that he used. It is the statement from the Venice Declaration that justice for all people implies the recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. I may be accused of taking this out of the general ambit of the Venice Declaration. Nevertheless, it is part of that statement and it is one that should be commended in general terms.

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[LORD SANDYS.]

Reference has been made in considerable detail to both the West Bank and Gaza. I should like to take up the points on Gaza raised by the noble Lord, Lord Glenamara. Once again, we should bear in mind that in Gaza there are in general terms over 700,000 Arabs and about 3,500 Israelis. I do not know whether the noble Lord would agree with those figures, but I am speaking in general terms. The Israelis now own about one-third of the land—and approximately that encompassed by the best survey that we know at the present time. If one considers therefore the question of the Venice Declaration, it is incumbent upon those who feel that the situation in Gaza should be examined, to consider that justice for all people implies justice for the Palestinians in that territory.

I turn now to the Government's preparation for this conference. I feel that all the efforts that the Government have made for a step-by-step approach are most welcome, and perhaps even more so if it is behind closed doors. There are so many cases where diplomacy in that area can achieve more without the blaze of publicity. However, it was very welcome indeed to hear from the noble Lord, Lord Glenarthur, yesterday of the trouble that the Government have taken to increase their grant to UNRWA. That was announced yesterday in reply to a Starred Question in your Lordships' House. It is an increase to £5.25 million for the year 1988, and a further £5 million towards the European Community contribution. All this is most welcome, and it assists in the general ambit of interest and care that the Government are putting behind the European Community's initiative and the general care that they have towards the Palestinian problem.

I have said that I enjoy with my noble friend Lord Chelwood over the concept of trusteeship. I do so for a very particular reason. I believe that this country, having held the mandate responsibility from the inception of the League of Nations up until 1948, has a particular fund of knowledge which may be drawn upon. It may well be said that anything that took place prior to 1948 is irrelevant. Nevertheless, in the archives in Whitehall there will be found Cmd. Paper 6019 which was the Government's White Paper of May 1939. It was very significant because it expressed the desire to see established ultimately an independent Palestine state separated from the national Jewish home.

In this step-by-step approach for a conference, I am quite sure that the Government will examine all the past models, and all the past maps and proposals made over a very long period by extremely experienced administrators. Each one had limitations. Each one had drawbacks and each one now can be claimed to be irrelevant. Nevertheless, in examining those White Papers, and in examining models of this very restricted area, there must be points to be raised and taken on board.

I close with the view expressed by the European Community five years ago in 1983. This is again a statement that is very well known to your Lordships. The EC remain convinced that a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East can only be secured on the basis of the principles which they have stated so many times in the past.

Lord Molloy: My Lords, like previous speakers, I should also like to thank the noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, for giving us a further opportunity to debate the almost frightening subject of the Middle East. I find it particularly poignant. I was one of those who, in 1936, with the TUC contingent from Wales, marched to London. I had never been there in my life. I got to know Gardiner's Corner, Whitechapel Road, Commercial Road and all the streets where Jewish people lived and where the Fascist movement was out to disrupt. We did our best to foil that, to stop it. Within four years, Europe was threatened by Nazism and this nation stood alone. If we had surrendered and given in, the holocaust that followed would have been a thousand times worse. I believe that Great Britain's great role should be put on the record.

I remember also spending some time in the East End. I was reading geography and the German language. As an extramural student in the University of Wales I stayed here for two or three months. It was pointless to go home. There was no work. The docks and the pits were closed; most of us were on the dole. During that period I learned to speak a great deal of Yiddish. I began to understand the difference between a *separatist* and an *ashkenazi*. I could understand those issues. I hope that it will be understood when I say that my country stood alone. It gave a massive contribution to anyone who believed in freedom and was opposed to any form of terrorism. However, I also happen to believe that, just like the Palestinians, just like those on the West Bank, just like those in the Gaza Strip who have resisted another nation occupying their land, we in this country would have resisted any Nazi occupation. We might not have been PLO, but I am convinced that we would have been a British Liberation Organisation, led no doubt by people like Winston Churchill, Clement Attlee and Ernest Bevin. I firmly believe that this would have been the role at that time.

It seems to me that mankind will never understand this issue. It arises in Northern Ireland and the Middle East. One of the most terrifying aspects of all political activity is the territorial dimension. When you occupy and steal—I repeat, steal—somebody else's homeland, you are asking for trouble. I am totally convinced that, whatever it may be doing in some respects that is distasteful, the PLO has the same determination in its guts and its heart as we would have had had the Nazis invaded and occupied this country. I should have been very proud to have been a member of the PLO. Therefore, I think that has to be taken into consideration.

When the war was over, we were told of the most appalling crimes in mankind's history—the holocaust and the shudders, the horrors and the terrors it caused. Anger rose in all our breasts. There was total confusion when our British soldiers were slain by the Irgun Zvai Leumi, and they, too, have a right to be honoured and mentioned. I am doing that right now because I think they were quite innocent lads. They were doing their duty. They were certainly not anti-semitic. But they suffered and were slain by the Irgun Zvai Leumi.

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Lord Molloy:

One of the most disturbing features of the whole situation is that it might not have arisen had only the tremendous co-operation and brilliant thinking of Mrs. Golda Meir and King Abdullah become a reality. I believe that would have contributed towards bringing lasting peace between the semitic nations. If one is anti-semitic one is anti-Arab as well, as I understand it.

When Golda Meir and King Abdullah arrived at their conclusions, it seemed to me, and to people much more clear than I who were interested in Middle East progress, that here was a way forward that would be of great help and assistance. Unfortunately King Abdullah was assassinated and things went from bad to worse.

The major issues in this debate have already been raised. It would be boring and upsetting to go over them all again. Late in the debate there is not a great deal more to say. I shall, however, mention one frontier that we all have to endeavour to arrive at. In the words of Aneurin Bevan, the trouble with all mankind is that we seldom arrive at the frontiers of understanding until our own souls are smitten with grief. The hearts of those Jewish people who were in Europe at the time of the holocaust, who lost people but who survived themselves, were stricken with grief just as much as a Palestinian mother or an Israeli mother, and just as much as a British mother when her son was killed by the Irgun Zvai Leumi. We have to put all these things together, for if we do not we shall never arrive at the frontiers of understanding.

I believe therefore that there is enough goodwill if we can only find it and bring it together. That is why I believe that an international conference is so sane. The words of Churchill are still as appropriate today as when he first uttered them against killing, slaying and maiming. Let us have jaw, jaw which is far better than war, war. If we have an international commitment, it must be gathering together people of different nations. The proposal submitted by the noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, and supported on all sides of the House, has at least a modicum of possibility. The coming of peace may be a long way off, but I believe that there is a chance if we stop talking and acknowledge that if someone stole somebody else's land 10,000 years ago they are still thieves.

I remember the problems in the United States of America. I am not anti-American. My grandchildren were born and bred American. I have one little, brilliant granddaughter who may well be the first woman American President. But there was a terrible time when we were fighting the Fascists. Terrible things were happening in the United States of America. In some parts of the deep South in the mid 1930s it was not particularly safe to have a different skin pigmentation from a white man. It was not particularly easy to live in some parts of the Mid-West if one belonged to some kind of Indian tribe. This form of racial hatred has gone on and on.

The tragedy is that if the Anglo-Saxons could not agree on one thing or another, or the Europeans, surely the great semitic nations can find an answer to the problem that now confronts them. I believe that if the determinations and decisions of an international conference were accepted and honoured by all sides, then the desert of enmity could blossom into lasting friendship and understanding and so allow Arabs and Jews, the great semitic peoples, not only to contribute to each other's wellbeing but in so doing could give an example to all mankind.

Viscount Allenby of Meggido: My Lords, I am very aware of the major contribution that many noble Lords have made this evening. I, too, am grateful to the noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, for bringing this Unstarred Question before your Lordships' House. The hour is late and therefore I shall not detain the House for longer than is necessary. But I speak this evening with a deep feeling of respect for the many soldiers of this country and of the Commonwealth who laid down their lives in Palestine in the name of peace. I also have great respect for the many governments and people who have attempted to initiate and to bring about a lasting solution in Palestine. We have become aware tonight of the most serious, indeed the most dangerous, situation developing in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The revolt on the West Bank continues to serve as a grim reminder that the present state of Israel has no right, apart from forcible occupation, to any part of Palestine.

Some 70 years ago this country took possession of Palestine by right of conquest; a conquest that was duly recognised as we have heard by mandate agreed at the San Remo peace conference in 1920 and subsequently approved by the League of Nations two years later. It was as result of terrorist activity by the Zionist organisations and other ideological groups opposed to our occupation that orderly government became totally impossible. We were forced to give up the mandate in May 1948, but I suggest to the House that our sovereignty over the country has never been surrendered.

Being a soldier, I should like to speak for a short while on the military situation. I believe that a similar military situation exists today in Palestine as it did when this country was the paramount power. Israel today has a young and inexperienced conscript army, as we had during the intervening years after World War 2. The young conscript is trained in conventional war, but not in combating carefully orchestrated terrorism. The Israeli army is learning the hard way by painful experience.

Today in Palestine we see an additional element, as again has already been mentioned—the power of the media. The media influence opinion across the world. On our TV screens we have seen the media in their almost daily involvement in street battles. It is clear that the press is adept in setting up traps for the Israeli security forces. Time and again one sees the young, inexperienced and often very frightened soldiers acting in a most fanatical and brutal fashion.

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[VISCOUNT ALLENBY OF MEGGIDO.]

However, I remind your Lordships that a similar situation faced this country in the early part of 1946. There were, over a period of four months, 20 acts of terrorism involving our forces and our equipment. These culminated in the destruction of the King David Hotel by the IZL organisation on 20th July, as has already been mentioned. That act alone resulted in 152 deaths, injuries and people missing, principally among civil servants and soldiers and included the Postmaster General, his two assistant secretaries and the Economic Adviser to the Palestinian Government. After that explosion, 700 Jews were interrogated and 30 were detained. Many allegations of brutality followed from both sides to no avail.

Political pressures and worldwide media attention has led to universal condemnation of the Israeli Government for the brutal manner in which their armed forces have been trying to suppress the violent protests of the indigenous population of the occupied territories. As highlighted by a scathing attack by one of the Ministers of Her Majesty's Government, the criticism is sadly justified. However, the cause and the background behind much of what happens is either misconstrued, not understood or deliberately changed to meet the situation.

On the Palestinian side, the deep sense of despair, and the growing sense of patriotism among the ordinary people, cannot forever be ignored. I suggest that the ordinary people regard the Palestinian Liberation Organisation as their own army created as a result of the Arab summit conference of 1964. Under Yassir Arafat's chairmanship the PLO has gained considerable international acceptance as the sole legitimate representative of the people, committed as it is to the elimination of Zionism in Palestine. I do not want to enter the argument as to whether the PLO should be included in any future peace conference. However, the PLO's intransigence and its record of extreme acts of terrorism in recent years must be taken into consideration. I reject the suggestion made by the noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, that it should be included at the present time, but I believe that there may be a place for it in future negotiations.

In its Resolution 608, passed in January this year, the Security Council also condemned the Israeli Government's decision to deport Arab ringleaders and called for negotiations to take place to end the Israeli occupation. Comparisons with the situation in Northern Ireland are totally false. I suggest that this country faced a similar situation in Cyprus when we were instrumental in the deportation of President Makarios in the hope of bringing about a more peaceful situation at that time.

This country has consistently stood by its belief in the right of Israel to exist within secure boundaries, but it has never recognised the right of Israel to govern the City of Jerusalem. Sadly, one must acknowledge our diminishing influence and power in Palestine and the greater involvement of the superpowers in recent years. I believe that, as a member of the European Committee, we have a great deal to offer and an important role to play, as the noble Lord, Lord Sandys, pointed out.

We have a hope as a result of the active diplomatic efforts of the US Government. Agreement exists between Mr. Peres and King Hussein as to how an international conference might work. Though this move is temporarily blocked by the Israeli Government, it has the support of the 12 Foreign Ministers. I applaud the efforts of our Government and those of the US Government to find a solution in an important part of the world. We also have a residual responsibility, and I should like to join with other noble Lords in urging the Government to bring about an international conference which will eventually lead to a lasting peace in the area by every means possible.

Lord Hooson: My Lords, I had not intended to speak in the debate but several points have been made which I believe require answering. I should first like to deal with a point made by several noble Lords. It is that the violence that has been observed on the West Bank was greatly exaggerated by the media and that it was a media creation. Reference was also made to the fact that 800 journalists were present and that they affected the projection of the violence to the outside world. The South African Government have always used exactly that argument as regards violence in South Africa and it is unjustified. We know that film editors show the worst pieces of film and not the best, and viewers understand that. There is no doubt that the conditions in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip have created the violence that has been seen on television, just as in South Africa. I understand the concern of lovers of Israel that she should not try to defend the indefensible. I believe that one cannot blame the media for the violence that is taking place when one considers the violence from the Israeli troops that has been seen on television.

I wish to deal with the point which directly followed from that and which was raised by the noble Lord, Lord Paget of Northampton. He criticised the Foreign Office Minister, Mr. Mellor, who intervened in the actions of the Israeli colonel. I should like to ask the noble Lord what he would have done if he had been invited to another country and had seen an officer commanding troops who were acting in what was to his mind a totally unjustifiable and unjust manner. I remind him of the Nuremberg judgments where it was held that even obedience to the orders of a superior officer was no defence when the acts being perpetrated were against common humanity.

I believe that the Palestinians have suffered displacement and an injustice. Until that is put right the position of Israel will steadily become less secure. The ayatollahs were able to use the festering injustice felt among the Palestinians to put forward their extreme views and I believe that that has not been sufficiently appreciated in the Middle East.

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Lord Cledwyn of Penrhos: My Lords, the noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, has chosen the right moment to initiate this debate on the problems of Palestine. We listened to his speech with great interest, as we have listened to all the speeches that have reflected the differing views on both sides of the problem. The House is aware that there are a number of crises in the Middle East and I find it difficult to separate one from the other. From Teheran and Baghdad to Beirut and the West Bank and Gaza the whole of the Middle East is in a ferment. The need for a settlement of the various disputes is obvious and acute. The slaughter in the Iran-Iraq war continues unabated. The Lebanon is an almost uncontrollable shambles. We were shocked to hear of the recent kidnapping of Mr. Peter Coleridge and were delighted and relieved to hear today that he has been released. We hope that Mr. Terry Waite and others will also be released in the near future. The fact that good men are so mistreated reveals the black depths of the problem.

As has been explained in the debate, the violence has now extended to the occupied territories. It has resulted in many deaths and more casualties and in some excesses, as described by my noble friend Lord Glenamara. That is most sad, and we are concerned because of our respect for Israel and her democratic tradition. Such events must mean that she has—temporarily, we trust—lost ground in international esteem. That has not helped Israel's longer-term interest. However, it is necessary to add that part of the problem is the failure of all Arab countries save one to endorse United Nations Security Council Resolution 242, which implicitly recognises Israel's right to exist within secure pre-1967 war boundaries. This has lain at the root of Israel's reactions and fears from the start. Furthermore, Arab countries, especially those with great wealth, may wish to ponder their own record on the refugee problem over the years.

The noble Lord and others have dealt with Mr. George Shultz's troubles in an effort to find a solution and to seek agreement for an international conference, which appears to find almost universal approbation in the House in this debate. Mr. Shultz deserves the utmost praise and our support for his persistent efforts. I am glad that both Government and Opposition in this country gave him sympathetic support.

Mr. Mellor, the Minister of State, has recently visited the Middle East, as have my right honourable friends Mr. Kinnoch and Mr. Kaufman, and we have of course noted their reactions. Mr. Kaufman believes that the Israeli Prime Minister Mr. Shamir, should indicate his willingness to sit down at the conference table and negotiate with the Arab countries. Mr. Kinnoch was moved by the damage the conflict is inflicting both on the Palestinian people and on the Israeli democratic tradition. He also said that he believes the key to the solution lies in the attitude of the Israeli people in that at the end of the day they must choose between the seemingly military option offered by Mr. Shamir and the prospect of peaceful negotiations offered by Mr. Shimon Peres, who supports the proposal for an international conference. I quote my two honourable friends because they have recently returned from Israel.

From Britain's viewpoint, therefore, it is encouraging that we can all agree upon the need for a conference and that we should do all we can to bring it about, and that, I believe, was the view of the noble Lord, Lord Mayhew. But there are complications and these have been manifested during Mr. Shultz's strenuous travels. At the start the United States Secretary of State appeared to be pessimistic in his comments on the chances of success. He was not receiving a very warm welcome. On 1st March the *Guardian* stated:

"Syria was unhelpful... and Jordan sceptical", and that he was marching from one inconclusive meeting to another."

However, I am not as pessimistic as the noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, because mercifully there is another mood abroad and this has been reflected in the more helpful remarks of the distinguished Israeli Foreign Affairs expert, Mr. Abba Eban. He referred to the statement of over 100 leading Israeli academic figures, including some who had never before issued a controversial political word but who urged an early end to the occupation regime. He recalled the last words written by Mrs. Golda Meir to the nation, which was referred to in the speech of my noble friend Lord Molloy. Her speech to the nation included the fact that no sane Israeli ever believed that Israel could permanently rule all the territories and populations in the West Bank and Gaza and that new borders would have to be fixed with Jordan. In my view, that is the spirit of the Venice Declaration, to which the noble Lord, Lord Sandys, referred.

We also recall the London Agreement of 11th April 1987 in which King Hussein, who must be praised for his constant efforts to seek a solution to this problem, and Mr. Shimon Peres elaborated a scenario for bringing the Israeli-Palestinian problem under serious negotiation.

Mr. Schultz can take comfort from this as he comes to the end of his very difficult mission. However, as has been said already, the problem is the division within the Israeli Government themselves. We must hope that Mr. Shamir will find a compromise which will enable him to move towards a conference which we all think should be held. Mr. Abba Eban has asked the crucial question:

"Can Mr. Shamir maintain his position against the opinion of the entire world including the United States and half the Israeli people?"

I should be grateful to the noble Lord if he could clarify one matter. Can he say what steps were taken for Mr. Schultz to meet representatives of the PLO during his mission? The timetable proposed by Mr. Schultz is that the conference would be convened by the United Nations Secretary General in mid-April and that negotiations between Israel and a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation on an interim arrangement of limited self-rule for the 1.5 million occupied Palestinians would start in mid-May; talks on a final settlement would be next December. As I understand it, that was the timetable which the United States Secretary of State had in mind.

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[LORD CLEDWYN OF PENRHOS.]

The aim of the negotiations would be United Nations Security Resolution 242, which, as the House will recall, insists on the:

"inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force".

The latest news is that Mr. Shamir will pay a crucial visit to Washington next week and we must hope some constructive results will emerge from what could be an historic visit.

As the noble Lord, Lord Weidenfeld, said, we must appeal and not dictate. He referred to the necessity to avoid a diktat from above. I thoroughly agree with what he said. It would be a tragedy if the Schultz initiative drifted into the sand.

As I have said before in these debates, there is a limit to what Britain can do, although we are conscious of old historic associations; but we must give this worthy initiative all our support and encouragement. We can work through the United Nations, which, if I may say so to the noble Lord, Lord Paget, is given the most thankless tasks in all the world's trouble spots and which, contrary to his view, I believe does a remarkable job in all the circumstances. We can work with the United States, which is our ally and friend. We can work within the EC, which has taken positive initiatives to seek a settlement. We should also keep in contact with the Soviet Union.

We owe this to the innocent people of the Middle East who are suffering so much this time. Furthermore, we know that the beginning of stabilisation in the Middle East, which is a great prize and must be a great objective, would be a huge step towards the creation of more stable world peace.

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Glenarthur): My Lords, I believe we all agree that the question of the noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, is timely. It is taking place at a time of intense diplomatic activity on the subject and against a background of disturbing events portrayed in almost nightly reports on our television screens. I am grateful to him for enabling us to discuss a matter of considerable international concern. One matter which this evening's interventions have made clear is the deep interest which your Lordships have in a part of our history in that part of the world and the deep concern we all feel about the situation in the occupied territories and the need for early progress towards a negotiated settlement of the underlying Arab-Israeli conflict. Perhaps I may make it perfectly plain at the outset that the Government fully share that concern.

The toll of suffering and death in the occupied territories since the current wave of unrest began on 9th December last year has been immense. At least 1,000 Palestinians have been killed. We deeply deplore these acts and all acts of violence such as those which the noble Lord, Lord Glenamara cited and, indeed, the sort of matter to which the noble Viscount, Lord Buckmaster, referred. We call on all sides to exercise maximum restraint in order to avoid further bloodshed.

The noble Lord, Lord Mayhew, referred to what I think he described as our alleged ambivalence towards the PLO. The PLO is an umbrella organisation which expresses the aspirations of many thousands of Palestinians to secure their legitimate rights. We deplore the terrorist activities of several of its component organisations. However, I have taken careful note of the points made by the noble Lord.

We fully agree that the Palestinians must be allowed a voice in the negotiations which will determine their future. However, for the PLO alone to represent that voice it is necessary for the PLO to end the ambiguity of its policy on three points which will have to form the core of any negotiations: that is, the acceptance of United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 238; recognition of Israel's right to a secure existence and renunciation of the use of violence to achieve its ends.

Lord Mayhew: My Lords, may I be permitted to intervene? My point was that that is a requirement unilaterally imposed on the PLO. If Israel and the PLO agree to recognise each other and jointly rejected violence and terrorism that would be splendid. Why do the Government put those conditions only on the PLO and not on the Israeli Government?

House of Lords

Wednesday, 9th March 1988.

Palestine Conflict

Lord Glenarthur: My Lords, I hope that, by taking note of the point made by the noble Lord and by explaining to him the importance that taking into account those three points has in considering whether the PLO represent that voice of the Palestinians which the noble Lord seems to indicate in his remarks it does, he will understand why I have made plain those three points since they govern whether the PLO is to be included in the sort of negotiations which the noble Lord seeks.

History such as we have heard this evening and particularly as referred to by the noble Earl, Lord Winchelsea, the noble Viscount, Lord Allenby, whose name is much associated through his forbears with that part of the world, my noble friend Lord Sandys and the noble Lord, Lord Molloy, is important and it is relevant. Like my noble friend Lord Chelwood, I should like to deal with the present and look towards the future.

We have expressed our concern vigorously to the Israeli authorities, both bilaterally and, as many of your Lordships would have us do, with our European Community partners. In particular, we urge the Israeli occupation authorities to refrain from the use of lethal force and beatings. These only fuel Palestinian resentment and escalate the violence. The appalling nature of this policy was recently demonstrated most disturbingly by the burying alive of four Palestinians and the shocking pictures of soldiers attempting to break the limbs of Palestinian detainees. Those responsible for these and similar abuses must be brought to book.

Until Israel eventually withdraws from the occupied territories, we will continue to urge it to administer the occupation in strict accordance with international law and respect for human rights standards.

Lord Molloy: My Lords, are we going to say that to the Russians, too, in regard to the lands that they occupy? Are we to tell them that they must occupy those lands humanely and not, as we do in the case of Afghanistan, tell them to stop occupying someone else's country? Why not say that in the case of Israel's occupation?

Lord Glenarthur: My Lords, it is always easy to draw instances from other parts of the world and not compare like with like. I suspect that that is what the noble Lord may be doing in citing instances of the sort that he mentioned. Let us deal with one subject at a time and concentrate on this particular problem, which we all agree is most disturbing.

The noble Lords, Lord Glenamara and Lord Kagan, regretted the picture of the situation in the occupied territories which is given by the world's press. It is true that the media will focus on the sensational. I understand the point made by the noble Viscount, Lord Allenby, about the role of soldiers in these circumstances, particularly young soldiers.

However, it is also true that the reports of acts of violence which the press publish also bring home to us the need for an early negotiated settlement. We all agree that the suffering must be brought to a quick end. However, essentially that is a short-term measure and will not solve the root causes of the unrest.

I have to say that I have some reservation about the analysis offered by the noble Lords, Lord Glenamara and Lord Kagan, that this unrest stems from a Moslem fundamentalist conspiracy. I do not believe that the available evidence bears this out. Palestinian protests arise from a deeply felt resentment at the suffering experienced over the years. The current violence adds fresh urgency to the search for a just and comprehensive negotiated settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

With the diverging views that have been expressed, this debate has also highlighted the many difficulties that exist in promoting and establishing the settlement we all wish to see. In his excellent speech based on his wide experience, my noble friend Lord Chelwood pointed to some of these problems. The principles for a settlement are clearly established; indeed, they have been rehearsed many times from this Dispatch Box and they were referred to by the noble Lord, Lord Mayhew. They are the right of all states in the region, including Israel, to a secure existence within recognised borders and the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination. I can assure your Lordships that the Government are actively involved in promoting all efforts to help the parties to achieve a settlement on this basis. I am grateful to my noble friend Lord Sandys for his recognition of that. We are in close touch with several of those concerned. For example, my right honourable friend the Prime Minister met King Hussein last week. We remain in step with the King's courageous work to advance the cause of peace.

I listened with care to the noble Lord, Lord Paget of Northampton, but I have to say that I found very little with which to agree, perhaps particularly on the matter of an international conference. I hope that he will accept that there is broad agreement, and he will have heard much of it this evening, that an international conference involving the parties to the conflict and the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council can provide a suitable framework for the necessary negotiations. The conference would have no right to veto solutions reached by the parties or to impose solutions on them. It is true, as the noble Lord, Lord Glenamara, indicated, that Israeli government policy remains opposed to the holding of an international conference to resolve the dispute. He asked whether my right honourable friend the Prime Minister would use her influence with Mr. Shamir to advance progress towards a solution. We take all available opportunities to make clear to the Israeli Government our firmly held belief that it is in their own interests to trade territory for peace, and to reach a settlement which will guarantee their own long-term security.

House of Lords

Wednesday, 9th March 1988.

Palestine Conflict

[LORD GLENARTHUR.]

We have given our full and active support to the proposal for an international conference. Support for the idea was reiterated after the Prime Minister's recent meeting with King Hussein, and in another place on 2nd March. The support of the 12 member states of the EC was most recently expressed by the Foreign Ministers in their statement of 8th February.

My noble friend Lord Chelwood has advocated a more prominent role for the United Nations in bringing about a solution. The Security Council and the General Assembly pay close and continuous interest to the issue that we are debating. However, for the present I am sure that we are right to lend support to the initiative taken by the United States as the noble Lord, Lord Cledwyn, did in his remarks. We stand ready to play our part in further consultations in the Security Council at the appropriate time.

My noble friend, supported also by my noble friend Lord Sandys, suggested a United Nations trusteeship as a solution for the occupied territories. I hope that both my noble friends will accept that for us to espouse precise arrangements for a settlement is at present premature. Those directly involved in the dispute must be encouraged to enter into negotiations themselves which they find mutually acceptable. We would not rule out a role for the United Nations in an eventual settlement. I believe that my noble friends will agree that time and negotiations will show whether that is appropriate.

Several of your Lordships have referred, as I did just now, to the current initiative by the United States to advance the peace process. My right honourable friend the Prime Minister had valuable discussions with President Reagan and with his Secretary of State, Mr Shultz last week. She welcomed the steps being taken by the United States to give fresh impetus to the search for a settlement, and she encouraged Mr. Shultz to continue his efforts. I am very grateful to the noble Lord, Lord Cledwyn, for his endorsement of those efforts.

The noble Lord asked specifically about the aborted meeting which was to have taken place recently in Jerusalem between Mr. Shultz and the Palestinian representatives. Obviously, I cannot comment on the details of the shuttle of Mr. Shultz; however, I am aware that such a meeting was proposed but that the Palestinians concerned declined it.

We hope that the parties will be able to reach early agreement with the United States on detailed proposals which can offer a sound basis for progress. I believe that to be compatible with the scenario given to us by the noble Lord, Lord Weidenfeld. We support the American approach towards the peace process. It provides for careful preparation for a conference and a solution by stages. I agree with him that what we are aiming at is a conference which offers not a trap for the participants but an opportunity for lasting peace. The American proposals are not intended as a substitute in any way;

they would build on the wide consensus in support of a solution. We shall continue to work with those directly concerned in order to achieve the measure of common ground and compromise necessary if a peaceful settlement is to be found.

I am grateful to the noble Lord, Lord Weidenfeld, for his remarks about the long-term future and economic prosperity of the area. I agree that we must not lose our vision of the future. We are convinced that the first need is a political solution to the present conflict. We remain prepared to play our part, once a settlement is in place, in the reconstruction of the economies of the area where development has been so sadly held up by the failure to obtain peace.

Perhaps I may say (as the noble Lord, Lord Cledwyn, referred to it) that any discussion of the region would be incomplete without at least some reference to the tragic occurrences in Lebanon. The Lebanon has suffered a tragic waste of human and material resources during almost 13 years of war. Its economy is under increasing strain; it has become the base for numerous terrorist groups and it is one of the world's major drug-producing centres.

As I have said to your Lordships at Question Time yesterday, we remain committed to the Lebanon's sovereignty, unity, independence and territorial integrity. External intervention from whatever quarter cannot solve her problems. Only by the Lebanese themselves working together to rebuild their country can a solution be found. A restoration of central government authority appears essential. The international community is not immune to the Lebanon's problems. As the noble Lord, Lord Cledwyn, reminded us, we have a constant and a grim reminder in the fate of foreign hostages. We are doing all we can to secure the release of British hostages within our firm policy of making no substantive concessions to terrorism. Concessions only feed more hostage-taking. We were delighted to hear of the release, unharmed, of the two UNRWA officials who were kidnapped last month and of Mr. Peter Coleridge of Oxfam.

We have an interest in peace for the Lebanon as much as for any other part of the Middle East. A settlement there should not have to wait on a resolution of the wider Arab-Israel dispute. Equally, it is difficult to envisage Lebanon not being present at an international conference. Meanwhile we continue to press Israel to complete her withdrawal from Southern Lebanon in accordance with Security Council Resolution 425.

I hope I have made clear the Government's concern at the suffering and the tragic waste of human lives and resources which result from the failure to bring about just and lasting settlements to the conflicts besetting this troubled region. I can assure your Lordships that we remain determined to play whatever part we can in helping to restore peace in the area.

Vol. 494
No. 92



Tuesday
8 March 1988

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)

HOUSE OF LORDS

OFFICIAL REPORT

Middle East Conflict: Refugee Aid

Lord Molloy asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether in concert with the United Kingdom's allies they will seek to provide food and medicaments to the people in the refugee camps of Gaza and the West Bank in Palestine.

Lord Glenarthur: Yes, my Lords. Our national contribution to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency whose programmes include supplementary feeding will be £5.25 million in 1988, 5 per cent. more than in 1987. Our share of planned 1988 Community contributions amounts to a further £5 million. Since December 1987, the Community has also provided directly £450,000-worth of emergency medical supplies and food. We are ready to consider requests for special funding, both nationally and with our colleagues in the Community.

Lord Molloy: My Lords, may I thank the Minister for that very encouraging reply? It certainly stands our Government in good stead and gives them a good name in the terrible tragedy in the Middle East.

However, there are some countries among our allies which do not seem to be pulling their weight. According to the Red Cross, some European voluntary organisations appear to be in need of a little more co-ordination, both in respect of medicaments and of food supplies. Would the Minister not agree that there could be a closer examination of whether or not the relief dispatched from Great Britain and our allies reaches the proper places and fulfils the proper purposes?

Lord Glenarthur: My Lords, we believe it to be effective but if we can see ways of improving it we shall use them.

House of Lords

Tuesday, 8th March, 1988.

Middle East Conflict: Refugee Aid

Lord Glenarthur: My Lords, I think it is fair to say that not a lot has been forthcoming. Nevertheless, I am certain that they would share in some respects at least the noble Lord's concern about the conditions.

Lord McNair: My Lords, is the noble Lord aware that his original Answer to the noble Lord, Lord Molloy, has our full support? Would he perhaps also agree that the camps in the Lebanon are every bit as deserving and perhaps more so than those in Gaza and the occupied territories?

Lord Glenarthur: My Lords, that is a point of view. The Lebanon is a matter which concerns us. Of course, we support Lebanon's sovereignty, its unity, independence and territorial integrity. As regards my original Answer, the way in which the United Nations Relief and Works Agency disburses its funds is a matter for that organisation.

Lord Cledwyn of Penrhos: My Lords, I warmly welcome the practical assistance described by the noble Lord. But can he confirm that it is getting through to the occupied territories?

Lord Glenarthur: My Lords, so far as I am aware, the answer is yes. Perhaps I should say, in amplification of my answer to the noble Lord, Lord McNair, that the United Nations Relief and Works Agency does not predetermine the funding levels by area.

Returning to the question of the noble Lord, Lord Cledwyn, I have no evidence to suppose that it is not getting through. We have also a bilateral programme for Gaza and the West Bank outside the refugee camps which approaches £1 million per year. The story is encouraging.

Lord Molloy: My Lords, does the Minister not agree that there is a great deal of truth in what the noble Lord, Lord McNair, said about the situation in the Lebanon? Many of us who have been there and to the Middle East have seen the terrible tragedies. We are irritated that those who could contribute are not contributing. It is almost like saying that the problem of Ethiopia, the great drought and the starvation affecting thousands if not millions of refugees is the fault of the Almighty for allowing the drought to happen. Will the Minister take on board the proposition I made initially that, with our allies, we want to see that what we are giving so generously to help those in urgent need is arriving at the intended destination?

Lord Glenarthur: My Lords, I agree with the noble Lord. We certainly do not want to see going adrift the money of an agency such as the United Nations Relief and Works Agency to which we and our partners donate much for the benefit of these unfortunate people. We believe that it is getting through.

Lord Mayhew: My Lords, will the noble Lord not agree that in very difficult circumstances UNRWA is doing a first class job and fully deserves the support of the European Community?

Lord Glenarthur: My Lords, yes, I agree entirely with the noble Lord. I am grateful to him for making that point. In fact, that agency held a consultation with donors only last week in Vienna. We await further proposals and its latest plans which we shall also consider sympathetically.



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כא' באדר תשמ"ח

10 במרץ 1988

סימוכין: 2541

אל: מנהל ארופה 2

מאת: הציר-יועץ, לונדון

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הנדון: דיוני הפרלמנט: גבולות וריבונות בתחומי המנדט
הבריטי לשעבר (פלסטין)

לוטה עותקים משאלות ותשובות שהועלו בדיוני הפרלמנט ב-8/3 והעוסקים כולם
בשאלות של ריבונות, גבולות וההכרה הבריטית בהם - באזורי ירושלים, הגולן
יו"ש ועזה.

בברכה,
יורם שני.

העתק: השגריר, כאן
המרכז

8 March 1988

Mr Michael Latham (Rutland and Melton): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether he will list the specific claims to sovereignty over that area of the former British mandate in Palestine, now variously described as the West Bank or Judaea and Samaria, and currently under Israeli administration, which are: (a) accepted and (b) noted by Her Majesty's Government.

No W41

MR DAVID MELLOR

Since 27 April 1950, we have recognised Jordanian sovereignty over the West Bank. No other Government has formally claimed sovereignty to this area, except those parts which Israel purports to have incorporated within the municipal boundaries of Jerusalem.

8 March 1988

Mr Michael Latham (Rutland and Melton): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what are the international boundaries on the Golan Heights which are currently recognised by Her Majesty's Government; and how they relate to those areas currently supervised by the United Nations under the 1974 disengagement agreements.

No W44

MR DAVID MELLOR

The international boundary between Israel and Syria remains to be negotiated but the Armistice line established by the 1949 Syria-Israel Armistice Agreement has generally been accepted as the de facto boundary. The demilitarized zone, in which the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force operates, lies well to the east of this line.

8 March 1988

Mr Michael Latham (Rutland and Melton): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether he will list the specific claims to sovereignty over the Gaza Strip which are: (a) accepted and (b) noted by Her Majesty's Government.

No W45

MR DAVID MELLOR

No government has made a specific, formal claim to sovereignty over the Gaza strip.

8 March 1988

Mr Michael Latham (Rutland and Melton): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what are the boundaries of Jerusalem which are currently recognised by Her Majesty's Government; and whether they include those previously unoccupied areas on which new housing estates have been built since 1967, and which have been incorporated under Israeli law within the Jerusalem municipality.

No W39

MR DAVID MELLOR

The status of the whole Jerusalem area, as defined by United Nations General Assembly Resolution 303 (IV) of 9 December 1949, remains to be determined. All Israeli settlements in the territories occupied since 1967 are illegal.



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שגרירות ישראל
לונדון

יט' באדר תשמ"ח
8 במרץ 1988
סימוכין: 2532

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ואל: ארופה 2

מאת: הציר-יועץ, לונדון

הנדון: דיוני הפרלמנט: ישראל

לוטה עותקים משאלות ותשובות שהועלו בדיוני הפרלמנט ב- 2/3/88 בתחומים הבאים:

- א. הפגיעה באש"פ בקפריסין.
- ב. העמדה הבריטית בנושא הועידה הבינ"ל והמאמץ האמריקני.
- ג. העמדה הבריטית בנושא השטחים.
- ד. מפגש שרי החוץ ב- 8/2.

בברכה,
יורם שגל.

העתק: המרכז.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Written Answers to Questions

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Israel

64. **Mr. Ernie Ross:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Israeli Government about the activities of their armed forces in the occupied territories.

Mr. Mellor: We have made clear to the Israeli authorities—both in bilateral contacts and in demarches with our European partners—our view that Israel should refrain from repressive measures which violate international law and human rights standards.

72. **Mr. Parry:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the latest situation on the West Bank.

Mr. Mellor: The situation remains tense. We advise those proposing to travel to the occupied territories to postpone their journey if possible. We deeply deplore the repressive measures taken by Israel and call on all parties to exercise maximum restraint, in order to reduce the dangerous level of tension.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Written Answers to Questions

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Israel (PLO Assassinations)

28. **Mr. Galloway:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Israeli Government about the assassinations in Cyprus of three members of the Palestine Liberation Organisation; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Mellor: None.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Written Answers to Questions

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

European Political Co-operation

43. **Mr. John M. Taylor:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what was the outcome of the meeting he recently attended on European political co-operation.

Mrs. Chalker: My right hon. and learned Friend has met his colleagues from the Twelve to discuss European political co-operation matters on 8 February. The Twelve issued a statement expressing concern about the situation in the Occupied Territories, reaffirming support for an international conference, and welcoming recent efforts to inject new impetus into the search for a negotiated settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict. A copy has been placed in the Library of the House. They had a separate meeting on this subject with His Majesty King Hussein of Jordan.

The Twelve also exchanged views on East-West relations, Central America and Southern Africa. They approved the seventh synthesis report on the application of the code of conduct by Community companies with subsidiaries in South Africa, which has been forwarded to the European Parliament. A copy has been placed in the Library of the House.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Written Answers to Questions

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Middle East

59. **Mr. Walters:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will report on further initiatives aimed at making progress for a middle east peace settlement.

75. **Mr. Marlow:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on progress towards an international conference on the middle east.

Mr. Mellor: We welcome recent efforts to give new impetus to the search for a negotiated settlement of the Arab/Israel conflict. We and our European partners strongly support an international conference as the suitable framework for negotiations between the parties directly concerned.

74. **Mr. Cox:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps he is taking to support American efforts aimed at breaking the impasse in the Arab/Israeli dispute.

Mr. Mellor: We welcome United States efforts to give new impetus to the search for peace and keep in close touch with the United States Administration on this issue. The Prime Minister discussed this with Mr. Shultz yesterday.

81. **Mr. Cunliffe:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assistance he has given to the proposal for a peace conference initiated by Mr. Shimon Peres and King Hussein.

Mr. Mellor: We are in close contact with both King Hussein and with Mr. Peres. We believe that an international conference can provide a suitable framework for negotiations between the parties directly concerned.



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יט' באדר תשמ"ח
8 במרץ 1988
סימוכין: 2534

גיא 103.7

אל: ארופה 2

מאת: הציר-יועץ, לונדון

הנדון: דיוני הפרלמנט: שונות

לוטה עותקים משאלות ותשובות שהועלו בדיוני הפרלמנט ובבית הלורדים
בנושאים הבאים:

א. יחסי אוסטריה - בריטניה.

ב. איראן - עיראק.

ברכה,
יורם שני.

העתק: המרכז



HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Written Answers to Questions

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Austria

18. **Mr. Canavan:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent communications his Department has had with the Austrian Government about Anglo-Austrian relations.

Mrs. Chalker: My Department maintains necessary contacts with the Austrian Government appropriate to maintaining relations between our two states.

83. **Mr. Janner:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he will make a further statement on the current state of relations between the United Kingdom and Austria.

Mrs. Chalker: Relations between the United Kingdom and Austria are good and reflect the common interests of our Governments and peoples.

Vol. 494
No. 89



Thursday
3 March 1988

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)

HOUSE OF LORDS

OFFICIAL REPORT

Iran-Iraq Conflict

Lord Molloy asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether they, in conjunction with other governments with naval forces active in the Gulf, will arrange a meeting with the governments of Iran and Iraq.

Lord Trefgarne: My Lords, we have no plans to arrange a multilateral meeting of the type envisaged by the noble Lord. We keep in close touch with allies with naval forces in the Gulf, and maintain contact with Iran and Iraq.

Lord Molloy: My Lords, I thank the Minister for his Answer. Does he agree that there has been a massive escalation of the war; an increase in the attacks on commercial shipping, and that British sailors' lives are in danger on British and foreign ships? Ought we not to make some endeavour, since the United Nations has not made much of an impact in bringing about a cease-fire and subsequent peace? Should not the idea at least be examined by our Government and a proposition made to other governments who have naval vessels in the area?

Lord Trefgarne: My Lords, there has in fact been a reduction in the level of attacks on shipping in recent weeks which is of course a welcome sign. However, there has been an unfortunate escalation of the attacks between the two capital cities of Iran and Iraq—a fact which we deplore. A United Nations Security Council resolution some months ago called for a cease-fire. We believe that the right way forward is for both parties to recognise and implement that resolution.

Lord Cledwyn of Penrhos: My Lords, in the light of what the noble Lord has just said about the welcome reduction in the number of attacks upon shipping, have Her Majesty's Government any proposals to scale down our naval forces in the Gulf? Furthermore, will he say whether there are any prospects of an agreement between the five permanent members of the Security Council for an arms embargo against Iran?

House of Lords

Thursday, 3rd March 1988.

Iran-Iraq Conflict

Lord Trefgarne: My Lords, as regards our naval presence in the Gulf, I expect the noble Lord will be aware that we recently announced that there would be a reduction from four to three in the number of minesweepers that we have in the region. We have no plans for any other significant changes in our naval presence in that area for the time being. As for the implementation of the resolution calling for a cease-fire (Resolution 598), we think that the time has come for a further resolution to secure the implementation of the earlier one. We believe that such further resolution should be in the form of an arms embargo on Iran.

Lord Rodney: My Lords, does my noble friend think that it is within the realms of reality to suggest that our Government should call a meeting between the governments of Iran and Iraq?

Lord Trefgarne: My Lords, for reasons that I am certain he can well understand, we think it would be difficult to proceed in the way that my noble friend suggested. We think that the best way forward lies in the implementation of the earlier Security Council resolution. We wish to give all our support to the Secretary General of the United Nations in achieving that implementation.

Lord Cledwyn of Penrhos: My Lords, I welcome what the noble Lord has said regarding the possibility of a further resolution. However, can he say what action Her Majesty's Government propose to take in that matter.

Lord Trefgarne: My Lords, I can assure the noble Lord that we are actively canvassing support for such a resolution among all the members of the Security Council. The permanent member who is dragging his or her feet is the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union has accepted in principle the idea of a resolution to achieve an arms embargo, but has so far not agreed to the means of implementation.

Lord Kennet: My Lords, can the noble Lord say whether any progress has been made towards removing the obstacles proposed by the Soviet Union to the presence of a United Nations naval force in the Gulf? The noble Lord recently told the House they were mainly to do with difficulties in regard to co-ordinating rules of engagement. Can he also say between which members of such a force would those difficulties be most pronounced?

Lord Trefgarne: My Lords, we continue to see formidable practical difficulties in the way of any such idea under present circumstances. There are not only the problems in relation to the rules of engagement and operational instructions (to which I referred on an earlier occasion); but there are also those of actually obtaining the agreement of the Security Council for such an implementation; and, for example, equitable costs and burden sharing.

Lord Mellish: My Lords, will the Minister be good enough to explain to me how it would be possible for the British Government to have conversations with Ayatollah Khomeini when the only person he is talking to at the moment is Allah?

Lord Trefgarne: My Lords, the noble Lord is right to point to the difficulties of having a sensible conversation with people of influence in Iran. But I hope that in due course they will see the force of international opinion which is behind the implementation of the United Nations resolution in this matter and will enter into proper conversations; for example, with the United Nations Secretary General.

Lord Molloy: My Lords, does the Minister agree that there is a serious side to this Question? Tens of thousands of people are being slain and maimed almost weekly. The increase in missile alerts augurs a horrendous escalation. Although Chapter VI of the United Nations charter says that mandatory sanctions cannot be imposed on anyone, the Minister said that Resolution 598 inspires hope. Would not that be fulfilled by a ban on the sale of arms to both sides?

Lord Trefgarne: My Lords, that is what I have been trying to say. We now think it right that the United Nations Security Council should move to a further resolution imposing an arms embargo. We are supporting moves to that end. We hope that the Soviet Union, which of course plays a major part in this consideration will also reach that conclusion.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Written Answers to Questions

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Iran-Iraq War

13. **Mr. Peter Archer:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will initiate discussions at the United Nations with a view to establishing an international peace-keeping force in the Persian Gulf.

Mr. Mellor: No. Discussions in New York are rightly concentrating on finding ways to implement Security Council resolution 598. This may well require the imposition of an arms embargo. Until there is a peace to keep, discussion of a peace-keeping force is entirely premature.

16. **Mr. Sackville:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a further statement about the situation in the Gulf.

Mr. Mellor: The situation in the Gulf remains tense. Although there is currently a lull in the Gulf itself, though not of course in the land war, this year so far there have already been a large number of successful attacks on shipping by both Iran and Iraq. We continue to urge both sides to end these attacks through the implementation of Security Council resolution 598.

Mr. Teddy Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent contact he has had with the Government of Iran with regard to the Iran and Iraq conflict: and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Mellor: We have intermittent contact at official level with representatives of the Iranian Government in London and at the United Nations in New York. The Iran/Iraq conflict is naturally one of the issues discussed.



EMBASSY OF ISRAEL
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5632 שגרירות ישראל
לונדון

יט' באדר תשמ"ח
8 במרץ 1988
סימוכין: 2533

(Handwritten signature)

(Handwritten in green: 2 קצ'ט, 2 כ"א)

✓ אל: ארופה 2

מאת: הציר-יועץ, לונדון

הנדון: דיוני הפרלמנט: בדיה"מ

לוטה עותקים משאלות ותשובות שהועלו בדיוני הפרלמנט ב- 2/2/88

בנושאים הבאים:

א. זכויות האדם.

ב. ביקור שה"ח במוסקבה.

(Handwritten signature)
בברכה,
יורם שני.

העתק: המרכז
מזא"ר



HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Written Answers to Questions

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

USSR (Ministerial Visit)

38. **Mr. Sumberg:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether, during his recent discussions in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics he raised the subject of telecommunications and interference with international radio broadcasts.

Mr. Mellor: No. Jamming of the BBC vernacular services to the Soviet Union has ceased. We hope that the Soviet Union will take steps to end all jamming and will continue to make our views known in appropriate fora. My right hon. and learned Friend took the opportunity of his visit to press the need for greater access by Western media to the Soviet public, for example through free circulation of newspapers.

78. **Dr. Reid:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on his recent trip to the Soviet Union.

Mr. Mellor: My right hon. and learned Friend had full and wide-ranging talks with Mr. Gorbachev, Mr. Shevardnadze and others covering bilateral matters including trade, arms control, human rights and regional issues. He also met human rights activists and was able to put our views directly to the Soviet public in their press and on television. The visit was a further contribution to our active dialogue with the Soviet leadership and to the improving atmosphere of East-West relations.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Written Answers to Questions

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

USSR (Human Rights)

60. **Mr. Gale:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what success the Government have had in persuading the Soviet Union to alter its policy on human rights and emigration.

Mr. Mellor: We have established human rights as an important element in our bilateral dialogue with the Soviet authority and their agreement to regular official consultations on the subject will take this process further. We have been encouraged by increases in emigration figures and the release of some political prisoners during the past year but will continue to press for further progress, including the repeal of repressive legislation.

~~file~~
~~7/11~~
e New-Grp 20

10937 (12)

'Israel is losing its MP friends'

Jewish Chronicle
4.3.88

By DAVID WINNER

4.3.88

As the number of Palestinian deaths on the West Bank and Gaza steadily grows, Israel's reputation is suffering inside the House of Commons.

A sign of the times was that last month the PLO held a two-hour meeting at the House.

Dr John Blackburn, the chairman of the parliamentary group of the Conservative Friends of Israel, the largest group of its kind in the House, said:

"There is a growing hostility to Israel in the Commons which cuts across party lines. The uncommitted are being persuaded by the media coverage that Israel is behaving abominably. The whole thing is terribly adverse to the cause of Israel, particularly when it's celebrating its 40th anniversary."

Dr Blackburn, who visited Israel in January, also criticised "selective" reporting by international TV crews. "I saw 14-year-old boys throwing flaming torches into shops which refused to open during the strikes. That sort of thing is not being reported."

Pro-Israel Labour MP, Mr Greville Janner, observed: "The political climate is extremely hostile towards Israel. It's very unpleasant and there is no prospect

of it getting better. Presenting a fair hearing for Israel's case becomes increasingly difficult."

One trade union leader has resigned from Trade Union Friends, said Lady Cocks, director of Labour and Trade Union Friends of Israel, although she refused to identify him because she was trying to persuade him to change his mind.

The violence in the occupied territories had harmed Israel, she admitted. "Our enemies are writing much worse letters than usual, but most of our friends are saying they understand the situation, being supportive and asking what they can do to help correct the disgraceful media coverage," she said.

"Quite a few have said: 'We know what Israel is facing.' They're very proud that they're members of Labour Friends of Israel. No army in the world would just stand and let people throw rocks and Molotov cocktails at them."


But Mr Michael Fidler, director of CFI, which has 257 members in Parliament, said that the uprising had not affected his members' support. "I haven't had a single complaint. Christian members have been expressing solidarity and support. There is an understanding of the situation," he said.



Telephone: 01-937 8050

שגרירות ישראל
לונדון

תשמ"ח	באדר	יד'
1988	במרץ	3
2527	סימוכין:	


 משרד החינוך
 מנהל מחוז תל אביב
 תל אביב

אל: ארופה 2

מאת: הציר-יועץ, לונדון

הנדון: דיוני הפרלמנט: דרום-אפריקה ומלור

(1) לוטה עותק מדבריו של ג'רלד קאופמן בפרלמנט מיום 29/2 הקורא תגר על מדיניות הממשלה כלפי דרום-אפריקה.

(2) בין הדוגמאות שמביא קאופמן למשוא הפנים המדיני נמצאת גם דוגמת ד. מלור בעזה.

יורם שני
כברכה,



HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES

(HANSARD)

South Africa (Apartheid)

Mr. Gerald Kaufman (Manchester, Gorton):

The Government's lack of commitment to fighting apartheid is illustrated by the strong line that they take on other issues. Last month, the Minister of State, the hon. and learned Member for Putney (Mr. Mellor), created a stir when he visited the Gaza strip. When will a Minister stand outside Soweto and tell television cameras,

"Conditions here are an affront to civilised values . . . a blot on the face of civilisation"?

Last week, all of us who have been involved in the efforts to secure the release from gaol in Iraq of the British prisoner, John Smith, were delighted when he was released after the Prime Minister sent a personal letter to President Saddam Hussein. When will the Prime Minister send a Minister with a personal letter to President Botha pleading for the release of Nelson Mandela?

The Prime Minister has given boosts to Soviet dissidents by receiving Irina Ratushinskaya and Anatol Shcharansky at 10, Downing street. When will she invite Albertina Sisulu and Winnie Mandela to No. 10, Downing street? Such actions would have an enormous impact. They would show the Prime Minister's commitment to the destruction of apartheid. Her failure to take action, either materially through sanctions or symbolically through public moral support for the opponents and victims of apartheid, shows her complete lack of concern at the abomination of apartheid.



2555

שגרירות ישראל
לונדון

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יד' באדר תשמ"ח
3 במרץ 1988
סימוכין: 2529

ד.ס. 1
גכ

אל: מנהל ארופה 2 ✓

מאת: הציר-יועץ, לונדון

הנדון: דיוני הפרלמנט: שליחות שולץ והמזה"ת

- (1) לוטה עותק מהדיון הפרלמנטרי שהתפתח בנושא הנ"ל, ב-2/3/88.
- (2) תשומת הלב לתשובותיו של שר המדינה מלור ובפרט לגבי "התפקיד" הבריטי כלפי שליחות שולץ ופגישת רוח"מ.
- (3) בדף המתייחס לביקור האו בבריה"מ מציין מלור כי בביקורו בירדן ב-1/3 הוברר לו כי אין שום התנגדות ירדנית למשלחת משותפת.

בברכה,
יורם שני.

העתק: לשכת מנכ"ל מדיני
המרכז



HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Oral Answers to Questions
FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Middle East

4. **Mr. Adley:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on progress towards a middle east peace settlement.

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Mr. David Mellor): We welcome recent efforts to give new impetus to the search for a negotiated settlement of the Arab-Israel conflict. We and our European partners support strongly an international conference as the suitable framework for negotiations between the parties directly concerned.

Mr. Adley: I thank my hon. and learned Friend and congratulate him on his active participation in the process during the past few weeks. Has he had a chance to look at the *Hansard* extract I sent to him dated 23 July 1946 entitled "Terrorist Outrage, Jerusalem" and the statement made by the then Prime Minister, Mr. Attlee? Does he agree that as Messrs. Shamir and Sharon were involved in those terrorist activities, it is utter hypocrisy for them to condemn the PLO as a terrorist organisation? On that basis, does he agree that if Mr. Shultz is to play any useful role, it is essential that the United States and our Government include the PLO in any discussions, if they are to be meaningful?

Mr. Mellor: I appreciate my hon. Friend's sincere interest in this matter. The tragic events of the King David hotel are matters for historians, and our concern has to be with the present. Plainly, the PLO is accepted widely within the occupied territories as the representative of the Palestinian people. We have never accepted it as the sole representative of those people and there has been an inhibition on the part of the Americans and the British Government at Cabinet level to receive the PLO because of the need for it to make a clean break with terrorist activities of the past. I hope that the PLO will do that, so that it can play a proper role in the unfolding peace process, which as I said earlier, we very much welcome.

Oral Answers to Questions

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Middle East

Sir Russell Johnston: Does the Minister accept that the unfolding peace process, as he put it, has been unfolding for a terribly long time without any real progress? We warmly welcome his support for an international conference, but would he go as far as to say that there will be no progress until Mr. Shultz makes proposals which go considerably beyond those he has made so far?

Mr. Mellor: I thank the hon. Gentleman for his consistent support for a bipartisan approach to the matter. I welcome that. Mr. Shultz is properly taking all possible pains to consult as widely as he can among the Governments in the region. He is trying to break down the old objections to peace, to which the hon. Gentleman referred, in order to see whether some new development is possible. Our role is to assist him in that. Of course, we assist him by talking frankly to him about difficulties and the need for the United States to tackle some of those difficulties. I think that the hon. Gentleman will find that that is exactly what my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister did in her talks with Mr. Shultz yesterday.

Mr. Walters: Is my hon. and learned Friend aware that in 1973 the United Nations Commission on Human Rights described Israeli conduct on the West Bank as "an affront to humanity and tantamount to war crimes"? The only thing that has changed there is the presence of the television cameras. In the circumstances, should not the Palestinians, after all these years of injustice, at least have the right to choose their own representatives?

Mr. Mellor: Our condemnation of many of the practices in the occupied territories by the Israeli defence force is well known. Sadly, those problems appear to be growing rather than diminishing. I believe that they will fundamentally undermine the reputation of the Government of Israel unless something is done about them. I hope very much that out of this will come the progress that my hon. Friend seeks.

We wish to see the Palestinians properly represented at any conference. Of course that is primarily a matter for the Arab side. The idea which has been floated—should there be an international conference—of a joint Palestinian and Jordanian delegation would appear to be the right way forward.

Mr. Ernie Ross: The Minister must know that the Shultz mission will fail because Shultz is unable to talk to the Palestine Liberation Organisation. If there is to be a peace settlement in the middle east, the Minister, Shultz and the Americans must drop this reluctance to talk to a main player. Shultz can talk to the Israelis, but he must talk to the other side, the PLO. The best thing that the Minister and the British Government can do is to urge the Americans to drop their refusal to accept that the Palestine Liberation Organisation is the representative of the Palestinians.

Mr. Mellor: I know the hon. Gentleman's serious concern for this issue. I urge him, as I have done in the past, to make the PLO aware of the central inhibition of the Americans in talking to the PLO and of the British Government at Cabinet level in receiving the PLO because of the need for it to make a break with the past.

Mr. Skinner: The Minister is not on television now—he has had his knuckles rapped by the Prime Minister.

Mr. Mellor: Of course the Americans would like to talk to the Palestinians, just as a number of us have been able to do and just as I was able to do when I visited the occupied territories during a visit from which the hon. Member for Bolsover (Mr. Skinner) says I am retreating. There is no question of retreating from that or anything else.

It is important that the Palestinians should be able to put their case directly. That will best come about when the PLO has legitimatised itself in a form that enables it to repudiate the past which, as the hon. Member for Dundee, West (Mr. Ross) knows, was disfigured by terrorist actions that caused grave difficulty and resentment in Europe. That is the way forward that we all want to see.

Mr. John Marshall: Does my hon. and learned Friend agree that a necessary precondition of peace in the middle east is that Israel's Arab neighbours must accept Israel's right to exist and its right to secure borders? Does my hon. and learned Friend agree that it is an international scandal that, 40 years after the foundation of the state of Israel, only one Arab country has done that? Does my hon. and learned Friend regard it as significant that those Arabs who are willing to bankroll the PLO have also been seen to be supporters of the IRA?

Mr. Mellor: That last observation is a bit strong and I do not think it is in accordance with the facts; nor do I think that the football supporter approach to this problem—taking positions on one side rather than striking a balance—is at all helpful in resolving this difficult matter. A sensible policy for the peace process, which I believe we have, is based, first, on the right of the Palestinians to self-determination and, secondly, and every bit as important, on the right of all states in the region—including, of course, Israel—to exist behind secure boundaries. I am sure that no progress is possible until all states in the region appreciate that.

Mr. Kaufman: Is the Minister aware that, from my own talks with the PLO and the Governments of Iraq, Egypt and Jordan, it is perfectly clear to me that there is no problem about their taking part in an international conference under the auspices of the five permanent members of the United Nations, which could lead to a settlement that would provide security for Israel as well as self-determination for the Palestinians? Is he also aware that the principal, and so far immovable, obstacle to the holding of such a conference is Mr. Shamir, the Prime Minister of Israel? Is he further aware that, instead of trailing new and circuitous solutions to the problem, Mr. Shultz and the United States Administration should tell Mr. Shamir, in no uncertain terms, to sit down at a conference and negotiate with the Arab countries?

Mr. Mellor: The right hon. Gentleman's progress around the middle east has been most welcome to me, as it has allowed a great deal of bipartisan agreement between the two Front Benches. I certainly agree with him about the attitude of the Arab world towards an international conference. It is our view just as much as his—and I believe that that view has all the more authority because it appears to be a view that commands majority support in Parliament—that an international conference is the best way forward. There is no doubt that one section of the Israeli Government has consistently rejected that and I hope very much that, as part of the tireless work that Mr. Shultz is doing, he will be able to tackle that issue.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Oral Answers to Questions
FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS
USSR (Ministerial Visit)

7. **Mr. Dykes:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on his recent discussions with the Soviet authorities during his visit to Moscow.

Mr. Mellor: My right hon. and learned Friend had full and wide-ranging talks with Mr. Gorbachev, Mr. Shevardnadze and others covering bilateral matters including trade, arms control, human rights and regional issues. He also met human rights activists and was able to put our views directly to the Soviet public in their press and on television. The visit was a further contribution to our active dialogue with the Soviet leadership and to the improving atmosphere of East-West relations.

Mr. Dykes: On the assumption that my right hon. and learned Friend's successful visit also included talks on middle eastern peace prospects, does my hon. and learned Friend agree that it is no good the United States objecting to the Soviet and Syrian presence in a possible future international peace conference, and it is no good us repeating that we think that the Jordanian cum Palestinian option is the best way forward if, quite manifestly and clearly, the Jordanians object to the Palestinians being included with them rather than having their own independent and legitimate position in the negotiations?

Mr. Mellor: Perhaps I should explain to my hon. Friend the inhibiting factor in some of the earlier answers. While Mr. Shultz is still active—as he is and there is no question of his mission having come to an end—it is difficult for us to comment on the substance of it when it is at the heart of Mr. Shultz's efforts that the substance should emerge as a result of his careful negotiations. However, in private we advise Mr. Shultz with all candour about the ways we think things should move forward. Let me correct my hon. Friend on one point. I was in Jordan yesterday, and I can assure him there is no question of the Jordanians objecting to a mixed delegation. It is their policy to press for one.

Mr. John M. Taylor: Did my hon. and learned Friend, in the course of his discussions, give as part of his appreciation of the middle east situation the view that Israel is entitled to secure frontiers but not to occupy all the territory up to those frontiers?

Mr. Mellor: I think that I understand the point that my hon. Friend is making. Israel is entitled to have internationally recognised borders, but those are not the borders that are taken as a result of war and the occupied territories are not part of Israel. It is the view of the British Government and, I believe, of the world community as a whole, that they should not remain so. Nor will that secure peace, so long as the Israeli Government fail to recognise that the principles of territories at peace will be the crucial element in any future discussions.



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שגרירות ישראל
לונדון

5574

יב' באדר תשמ"ח
1 במרץ 1988
סימוכין: 2523



76

103.7

אל: ארופה 2 ✓

מאת: הציר-יועץ, לונדון

הנדון: דיוני הפרלמנט: תהליך השלום

לוטה נוסח השאלה ותשובת רוח"מ כפי שנרשמה בדיוני הפרלמנט ב 23/2/88.

בדקה,
יורם
שני.

העתק: המרכז



HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Oral Answers to Questions

PRIME MINISTER

Engagements

Mr. Dykes: As this is such a crucial moment, will my right hon. Friend today and in coming weeks continue her determined and much appreciated efforts to secure an international peace conference and a lasting settlement in the middle east, bearing in mind that this must be done without preconditions on either side, that the credibility of the United States is inevitably reduced by its historic and strategic closeness to one party to the dispute, and that Europe and the United Kingdom have a unique role to play in this process?

The Prime Minister: As my hon. Friend knows, our policy has not changed, over the past year in particular, when we have espoused the cause of an international conference as a background for direct negotiations between King Hussein and the Palestinians and Israel. It has not been possible to get that going because it has not met with a sufficient degree of support from Mr. Shamir. We shall continue to espouse that course because we think it is the best one. The other side of the problem arises as to who shall negotiate on behalf of the Palestinians, but I believe that that particular part is soluble.

Mr. Kinnock: I warmly welcome the reply that the Prime Minister just gave on the international conference.



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שגרירות ישראל
לונדון

5745

סימוכין: 2502
ד' באדר תשמ"ח
23 בפברואר 1988



7.3.88
ברוכ

אל: ארופה 2

מאת: הציר-יועץ, לונדון

הנדון: דיוני הפרלמנט: מכשירי קשר לאש"פ

לוטה עותקים משאלות ותשובות שהועלו בדיוני הפרלמנט ב-4-15/2 בנושא הנ"ל.

בברכה,
יורם שבי

העתק: המרכז



HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Written Answers to Questions

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

PLO (Training)

Mr. Janner: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he will institute an inquiry into the training of militamen from the Palestine Liberation Organisation in battleground communications, provided by Racal Ltd. in the United Kingdom.

Mr. Mellor: No. The question of the alleged sale of radio equipment by Racal Ltd. to the Palestine Liberation Organisation in 1981 is currently under investigation, as my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Corporate Affairs told the House on 2 February.

E.R.

Monday, 15th February, 1988

Written No. 58 and 60

- W Mr Greville Janner (Leicester West): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, on what basis his Department gave permission for the entry of members of the Palestine Liberation Organisation to be trained at RACAL Training College, Heckfield Place.
- W Mr Greville Janner (Leicester West): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when applications were made by members of the Palestine Liberation Organisation to enter the United Kingdom for the purpose of training in battlefield communications by RACAL Ltd.; and if he will make a statement.

MR. TIM RENTON

Without full particulars of the individuals concerned we have been unable to trace these applications, which were apparently made some years ago.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Written Answers to Questions

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Radio and Electronic Equipment

Mr. Marlow: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, what has been the level of exports of radio and electronic equipment suitable for military use to (a) Israeli and (b) Palestinian destinations over each of the last four years.

Mr. Alan Clark: Information on such exports to countries in the middle east could only be provided at disproportionate cost.



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שגרירות ישראל
לונדון

ד' באדר תשמ"ח
23 בפברואר 1988
סימוכין: 2507

103.10
כ"א

אל: ארופה 2

מאת: הציר-יועץ, לונדון

הנדון: דיוני הפרלמנט: אש"פ

1. לוטה עותקים משאלות ותשובות כמו-גם הצעות לסדר היום בנושא "ספינת השיבה" והפיגוע בקפריסין.
2. חשומת הלב לתשובתו של מלור בנושא הפליטים הפלסטינים וחוסר הרצון להעניק קרדיט כל-שהוא לישראל.

בברכה,
יורם שני.

העתק: המרכז



HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Written Answers to Questions

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Palestinian Refugees

Mr. John Marshall: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what information he has as to (a) how many Palestinian refugees there were in 1958 and at the last available date, (b) how many Palestinian refugees have been provided with jobs and permanent housing by each of the Arab states since 1958, (c) how much financial assistance each of the Arab states gives to the Palestinian refugees and what this is as a percentage of their gross national product, (d) how many Palestinian refugee families have been provided with permanent housing by Israel since 1967 and (e) how the infant mortality rate in Gaza has altered since 1967 and what information he has about the rate in the Palestinian camps in other countries.

Mr. Mellor: (a) In 1950 just over 800,000 Palestinian refugees were registered with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA); in October 1987 the total was approximately 2,218,000. Figures for 1958 are not available.

(b) This information could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

(c) Contributions to UNRWA are set out in the report of the Commissioner-General, a copy of which has been placed in the Library of the House.

(d) UNRWA estimate that around 5,000 Palestinian families have moved from refugee camps in Gaza to Israeli Government-sponsored housing projects. Housing construction costs are met by the families concerned.

(e) UNRWA's health programmes have helped to reduce the infant mortality rate in Palestinian refugee camps over the past decade; the rate remains higher in Gaza than elsewhere.

712 *ASSASSINATIONS IN CYPRUS*

Mr George Galloway

★ 1

That this House condemns the terrorist attacks on Commonwealth soil in Cyprus on three Palestinian political leaders and on the Palestinian-chartered ship of return; notes the overwhelming suspicion of Israeli Mossad involvement in these outrages; demands an end to Israeli gun law; and supports the call for an international conference for peace and justice in the Middle East.

4332

Notices of Motions:18th February 1988

No. 97

712 *ASSASSINATIONS IN CYPRUS*

Mr George Galloway
Mr Ernie Ross
Mr William McKelvey
Mr John McAllion
Mr Robert Parry

★ 5

That this House condemns the terrorist attacks on Commonwealth soil in Cyprus on three Palestinian political leaders and on the Palestinian-chartered ship of return; notes the overwhelming suspicion of Israeli Mossad involvement in these outrages; demands an end to Israeli gun law; and supports the call for an international conference for peace and justice in the Middle East.



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שגרירות ישראל
לונדון

5696

ג. ב. 101

5696

ד' באדר חשמ"ח
23 בפברואר 1988
סימוכין: 2501

אל: ארופה 2

מאת: הציר-יועץ, לונדון

הנדון: דיוני הפרלמנט: שונות

לוטה עותקים משאלות וחשובות שהועלו בדיוני הפרלמנט וביח
הלורדים ב- 15-16/2 בנושאים הבאים:

א. דרום אפריקה

ב. המפרץ

ג. פעולת הטרור בגרמניה

בברכה,
יורם שני.

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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)

HOUSE OF LORDS

OFFICIAL REPORT

Written Answers

SOUTH AFRICA: OIL SUPPLIES EMBARGO

Lord Molloy asked Her Majesty's Government:

What discussions they have held with the government of South Africa concerning the provision of information to the United Nations inquiry on the embargo on oil supplies to South Africa.

Lord Glenarthur: None.

Lord Molloy asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether the United Nations team investigating violations of the United Nations embargo on oil exports to South Africa has been provided with all the information it requested; and if not, why the assistance was not forthcoming.

Lord Glenarthur: The Intergovernmental Group to Monitor the Supply and Shipping of Oil and Petroleum Products to South Africa was established by a General Assembly resolution (41/35F) against which we voted (in company with the United States, France, Federal Republic of Germany and Israel), and which is not binding. We have therefore not responded to requests from the group for information on alleged violations of the comprehensive oil embargo envisaged in that resolution. Our own guidelines, which exclude the export of United Kingdom continental shelf crude oil to South Africa, remain in force and are effective.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES

(HANSARD)

Written Answers to Questions

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Persian Gulf

Mr. Hill: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what further developments or action, in application of paragraph 3 of article VIII of the modified Brussels treaty, in geographical areas outside NATO will follow from the concerted action of Western European Union member countries on the Gulf crisis that started in summer 1987; and if he will make a statement.

Mr. Mellor: The action taken by Western European Union member countries in the Gulf is a good example of the practical benefits which appropriate use of the organisation can bring to our security. Further such use of WEU should be considered whenever the right opportunity occurs.

Mr. Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what is the policy of Her Majesty's Government in regard to the visit and search of unarmed merchant ships in international waters in the Persian Gulf.

Mr. Mellor: Under article 51 of the United Nations charter, a state actively engaged in armed conflict, such as Iran, is entitled in exercise of its inherent right of self-defence to stop and search a foreign merchant ship on the high seas if there is reasonable ground for suspecting that the ship is taking arms to the other side for use in the conflict. This is an exceptional right: if the suspicions prove to be unfounded and if the ship has not committed acts calculated to give rise to suspicion, then the ship's owners have a good claim for compensation for loss caused by the delay.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
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(HANSARD)

Written Answers to Questions

DEFENCE

La Belle Discotheque

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will call for a report from the General Officer Commanding British Sector West Berlin on the progress of the investigations, carried out by the West Berlin police into the bomb outrage at La Belle discotheque.

Mr. Freeman: No.