

December 28, 1979

## Dilemma For Linowitz

In the autumn of 1977, Sol Linowitz was engaged in mobilizing public support for the agreement for handing over the Panama Canal to Panama.

This writer, on a visit to the US, had the opportunity then of hearing a very impressive public address. Linowitz held his audience with a historical account marshalled in masterly detail, going back 75 years to the origins of the canal — and of the problem. He had certainly made a deep study of the literature.

Mr. Linowitz's present assignment, as US special Middle East envoy, may well affect the prospect for peace in Palestine, it may affect the future, indeed the fate, of the Jewish State; it may bear implications for the security of the Western world. One would consequently expect Mr. Linowitz to apply his undoubtedly unusual capacities to a no less thorough and energetic study of the facts — even if they go back more than 75 years.

Has he done so?

He said last week that if he were a Palestinian he, too, would not be satisfied with the terms of the government's autonomy proposal. This was rather a surprising one-sided statement for him to make. Nevertheless, it is perfectly logical. If he were a Palestinian he would naturally think and feel and behave like a Palestinian. Yiddish wit long ago evolved the appropriate proposition that "if grandma had wheels she'd be a bus". If Mr. Linowitz were a Palestinian he would undoubtedly be an eloquent and sophisticated exponent of the outlook and the mood of dissatisfaction of the Palestinian Arabs.

The reasons for dissatisfaction are not secret. Arab demands have, indeed, been meticulously codified in the "Palestinian Covenant," and during the past decade have been worked over and precisioned. To convey their essential content and the heady flavour of their passion it is enough to recall that the Covenant lays down very simply that the whole of Mandatory Palestine — that is, Palestine on both sides of the Jordan — is the property of the "Palestinian people," and that the Zionist state is to cease to exist.

The intended fate of the Jewish population of Israel is not specified, except that only Jews who were living in Palestine in 1917 would be granted the right to be regarded as Palestinians. These are the official aims of the "Palestine Liberation Organization," and this organization has been recognized as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people by all the Arab nations (as well as by others) and has clearly imposed its will on the Arab population of Judea, Samaria and Gaza.

What possible proposal, then, could "satisfy" Mr. Linowitz, if he were a Palestinian, unless it ensured or brought within immediate sight, the conditions for dissolution of the Jewish state?

\* \* \*

If he were a Palestinian he would know that the purpose of eliminating Israel was not born with the PLO in 1964. It has been the established central national purpose of the Arab nation — that is, the totality of the Arab peoples and states since Israel came into being — a purpose on which they are unanimous whatever other areas of difference may subsist between them. The Arab League states launched war on the nascent Jewish state in 1948 with the proclaimed intention of preventing her birth and of wreaking destruction upon the Jewish population. Having been defeated in that purpose, they tried again in 1967 (after 19 years of economic, diplomatic, psychological and paramilitary warfare, during which their leaders unremittingly threatened, and their teachers and clerics and writers preached and taught, the destruction of an illegitimate and evil Israel). Then, as in 1948, the concerted attempt on Israel's life was made when she was confined within a miniscule area, indefensible except by preemptive action.

Well-meaning friends could then not pretend that the reason for Arab hostility and attacks was Israel's holding Judea, Samaria and Gaza; she did not hold them. The well-worn phrase that "the Palestinian problem is the heart of

the conflict,” has meaning only if the “Palestinian problem” is defined as the inability, so far, of the Arabs to destroy the Jewish state.

That is why the PLO is recognized and given diplomatic cover by the Arab states; that is why it is given training facilities, and why it is armed and financed by the wealthier among them. It is their creature (even if sometimes unpredictably recalcitrant), and all of them are pledged (formally since the Rabat Conference of 1974) to come to its aid in the fulfillment of its objective. None of them has dissociated himself from the political content and the implicit genocidal intent of the Covenant. On the contrary, all, including Egypt, continue to declare the sanctity of their pledge to the PLO.

\* \* \*

If Mr. Linowitz were a Palestinian he would know (though, being a Palestinian, he would not admit) that it was precisely in order to further this purpose that the “Palestinian people” came into existence at all.

When the Palestinian state of Transjordan (later called Jordan) occupied and illegally annexed Judea, Samaria and Gaza, the Arabs in these areas of Western Palestine evinced no sign of a desire for a second Palestinian state; no urgent sense of separate nationhood, which is trotted out nowadays to justify every murderous outrage against Israeli, and indeed other civilians.

The “Palestinian people” came into being as a central element in the campaign to erase Israel. To gain world sympathy and support it would not “do” to present the truth: of 20 states, sprawled over 14 million square kilometres of land and controlling resources of untold wealth, as being pitted against the one tiny Jewish state. Somebody’s brainwave produced the far more effective and persuasive picture of a small, homeless Palestinian people, deprived of its rights and its territory, robbed by a predatory Israel.

Mr. Linowitz may himself even remember that only a while ago, in our own time, the name Palestine was not associated in the public mind with the Arabs — but, as it has been for nearly 4,000 years, with the Jewish nation.

He will no doubt remember, for example, that the Palestine Foundation Fund was not an Arab institution but the central Zionist fund, that Palestine songs were Hebrew not Arabic — that list is endless. Palestinian Arabs actually objected to being called Palestinian. For a long time they insisted on being called Syrians; and in 1947 an Arab trade union leader, Sarni Taha, was assassinated in Haifa when he proposed the establishment of a Palestine (and not an Arab) state.

Mr. Linowitz lived through the Nazi period and he can remember the great truth on which the Nazis based their propaganda: that the greater the lie, the more readily will it be believed. This is what the Arabs have applied in their effort to erase the exclusive national Jewish affinity with the Land of Israel, an affinity unique in the history of the nations.

When the Arabs demand “the restoration of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people” — this means, in fact, the return to a Palestinian people that never existed, of rights it never had. What they are actually asking for is the right of the Arabs, already in possession of three-quarters of Palestine, east of the Jordan, to take over — even if in steps — the rest of the country, and suitably dispose of its Jewish population.

The younger generation of Arabs, brainwashed all their lives, embrace the Palestinian myth innocently. Mr. Linowitz is old enough to have witnessed its birth and development. He would, however, if he were a Palestinian, purvey it without qualms: the Moslem religion expressly permits prevarication in a good cause — like the interests of the Arab people for the greater glory of Islam.

\* \* \*

When Mr. Linowitz announces that he is going to hold discussions with Palestinians, and before doing so he gives them to understand that he is on their side — what can the content of his discussions with them be? A cozy

consultation between people of like mind on the best way of achieving their agreed objective? Has Mr. Linowitz really studied the facts?