

Lebanon Truce Tentative

Just two days after the southern Lebanese ceasefire, there are indications of its unraveling. Pierre Gemeyal, leader of the right-wing Christian Falange, has warned that unless the 5,000 Palestinians are not immediately removed from the south, fighting will resume.

According to the terms of the truce, the Palestinians are to withdraw from the area on the border with Israel, to be replaced by the newly reconstructed 1,500-man Lebanese army. Already all but a few Israeli troops have completely withdrawn from the battle ares. Observers in southern Lebanon report, however, that the scheduled deployment of the Lebanese army has not yet taken place, and as a result the Palestinians are not leaving.

Further complicating the delicate situation, the left wing of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine declared from Beirut that they will not withdraw their forces from the south, leaving open the threat of continued border tension. This could easily trigger another round of fighting in the Lebanese tinderbox.

The Soviet Union, meanwhile, has harshly condemned the Israelis for threats of invading the oilfields of the Persian Gulf. The government daily, *Izvestia*, Sept. 25 specifically criticized Dayan ally General Meir Amit, who last week called for the destruction of "Arab force," referring to the oilfields. Amit and Dayan covertly set up the 1967 war and are complicit in the latest scheme, pushed by the U.S. monetarists, to crush the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries by attacking its heart, the Persian Gulf.

Arafat: Overtures To Geneva

The following interview with Yasser Arafat, chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization, was released Sept. 24 by ABC-TV News. According to ABC, Arafat told correspondent Barbara Walters in an interview portion released Sept. 22, that the PLO would be "satisfied" with a Palestinian state on the West Bank.

Walters: Mr. Arafat, I would like to ask you what you think of the plan of Moshe Dayan for the West Bank of the Jordan to have a complete internal autonomy and self-government but to have its military security under Israel?

Arafat: Would you accept this situation for yourself?

Walters: I'm not in your position, Mr. Arafat.

Arafat: What, we are both on one team?

Walters: Does That mean that your answer is no?

Arafat: Definitely no.

Walters: What if the West Bank were to be demilitarized or under UN supervision. Could you accept that?

Arafat: No person can start his struggle for what you are asking me to accept.

Please, you have to remember that our people are struggling 60 years. We started our struggle from 1917. Directly after the Balfour Declaration. We have been taken out of our homeland. We are now homeless, stateless refugees.

Walters: Just to make things very clear, your answer is no...that in now way could you accept the plan of Moshe Dayan.

Arafat: For me, I can't look for Moshe Dayan's plans. I have to look for my plans. My people's plans. This is what I am interested for and this is what I am struggling for.

Walters: Mr. Arafat, the United States has talked about a possible Pan Arab delegation at the Geneva conference. How would you feel about such a delegation if the Palestinian representative were not an official member of the PLO?

Arafat: Is this an official invitation from you? If you had this official invitation, I would give you my answer.

Walters: Mr. Arafat, there is a movement among certain nations at the UN to ask the Security Council to pass a

new resolution. It would support Resolution 242, but would also support measures enabling Palestinians to exercise their national rights, stating that they are entitled to a Palestinian national homeland or entity.

Arafat: National homeland and entity?

Walters: Or entity

Arafat: Or entity?

Walters: Yes.

Arafat: Yes.

Walters: If this resolution were passed, would it be acceptable to you?

Arafat: First of all, we are looking for a new resolution which must have in its consideration our rights, our rights to return back to our homeland and our right to establish an independent state. If it is so, this is what we are looking for. I hope that your government, the American government will push forward in this channel.

Walters: Let me make sure that I understand. If this resolution came to the Security Council, a resolution which supports 242 but would also support the provisions you just talked about, a national homeland, Palestinian national rights.

Arafat: Homeland, independent homeland, independent state. Yes, that is what I am looking for.

Walters: You would support this resolution?

Arafat: Definitely.

Walters: Mr. Arafat, in accepting this possible new resolution, which would also include resolution 242 in that, the PLO would implicitly accept the existence of Israel. Now President Carter has said that he would not have dialogues with you unless the PLO found some way to accept the 242 with provisions. Does this mean now that you feel you would be able to have dialogues with the President?

Arafat: But you have to remember that it is very important to look for our national rights. The main item.

Walters: Yes, I understand that.

Arafat: Which has been completely ignored through this last period of years.

Walters: Well, I understand that it is very important to you. Given these circumstances do you feel then that there could be a dialogue between you and Mr. Carter?

Arafat: That depends on him, not on me.

Walters:

question of this independent national homeland. If there were to be a national homeland for the Palestinians on the West Bank of the Jordan and the Gaza, would the PLO agree to its being linked to Jordan if that's what the people in the area decided?

Arafat: All the Palestinians and the leadership of the PLO.

Walters: Suppose they decided that they wanted to have a homeland linked to Jordan. They took a vote and they decided, would you agree to this?

Arafat: I have mentioned it and it is recorded that I am ready by the name of the Palestinians to make a special link, special relation with Jordan, if they accept, but after the independence.

Walters: You will allow self determination?

Arafat: Yes.

Walters: Could you accept an independent Palestinian state in which for example King Hussein and not you became the leader of that nation if that is what the people wanted?

Arafat: King Hussein?

Walters: Yes.

Arafat: Why?

Walters: Suppose in this self determining...?

Arafat: Is he Palestinian? We are speaking about Palestinians. Do you accept Canada, the President of Canada to be your President?

Walters: That's how you feel about King Hussein in relation to the Palestinians?

Arafat: He is our neighbor and he is not Palestinian and we are speaking about Palestinians and self determination. Why are you mixing the cards?

Walters: I am trying to understand. Then what kind of possible entity or homeland linked to Jordan could you foresee?

Arafat: I think we can discuss it later. If we have these talks and dialogue with the Jordanians later, we can find a way and we can find not only the way, we can find even some details but first of all give me this independent state and I will solve these problems... all the small details, even with the Americans.

Walters: Then let me ask you about this. Would an independent Palestinian home basically on the West Bank of the Jordan and the Gaza solve the problem once you have it, will conflict in the Middle East be basically solved?

Arafat: I prefer to answer in Arabic because I think it is very important. "This will solve the principal problems of the Palestinian people and it will be able to secure a kind of settlement and security in the Middle East for a long time."

Walters: Since we are speaking so frankly...

Arafat: Yes?

Walters: The PLO has always said that the state of Israel must be dismantled and a secular state of Arabs, Jews, Christians would take its place. What happens to this idea if the Palestinians achieve a separate national independent homeland?

Arafat: Through our secular state we were trying to offer a civilized solution but your government was against it. Then we came back to our National Congress and said that America and others didn't accept this solution, so we declared that we accept an independent state in any part of Israel — in any part of Palestine which we liberate or from which the Israelis will withdraw. You see? But during this time, we were offering the civilized solution... which you don't accept. Okay.

What's the meaning to accept the United Nations resolution? What did they mean to accept our presence in the United Nations as observers. What is the meaning of all of this?

Walters: I assume that it means that you...

Arafat: We are taking into serious consideration the international legalities.

Walters: And you are following as much as you can what the United Nations agrees to and states in its resolution?

Arafat: International legality.

Walters: There are many people who feel that the Palestinians have a right to their national state yet they nevertheless deplore the means to that end. Understanding that violence has been a tool towards the recognition of your rights, can you at this stage of history and with your recognition as the leader of the Palestinians give assurances that the PLO will use other means to achieve its end?

Arafat: I am a freedom fighter. I am like your Washington, George Washington. I am for my people like George Washington. I am struggling for the future of my people. At least to let them have their human rights. I am against terrorism. I don't accept any way of terrorism in the past, in the present or the future.

Walters: Perhaps we should understand what the definition of terrorism or violence is. When you say that you are like our George Washington, what kind of acts of revolution do you mean?

Arafat: Those who have been used by George Washington to liberate the United States of America.

Walters: Mr. Begin is said to deeply mistrust...

Arafat: Mr. Begin...

Walters: Yes. To so deeply mistrust any...

Arafat: But for me he is not Mr. Begin. He is a terrorist. Begin. I can't forget his involvement with the massacres against my people.

Walters: But may I not ask you a question using his name?

Arafat: Yes...but give give him his accurate title.

Walters: O.K. I will call him Mr. Begin because that is my...

Arafat: From you, that is your point of view.

Walters: Mr. Begin is said to so deeply mistrust any kind of Palestinian state for he believes that its first act would be to bring in Soviet artillery and tanks which could without warning easily devastate all of Israel's major population centers. How do you answer that kind of statement on his part?

Arafat: He is worried about the so-called Soviet Palestinian missiles come into a Palestinian state. But what about his missiles which are brought from America and are planted in the Canal and Golan Heights and can reach Cairo and Damascus. Before

looking for the others, he has to look for himself.

At least you know that these seven days we have been shelled through this previous seven days with heavy artilleries, with heavy rockets, Israeli American rockets and with also napalm, phantom napalm. Heavy rockets and also the heaviest artilleries in the whole area. It is artilleries 175 millimeters. It is American artilleries I am sorry to say it. Your guns, your artilleries, are shelling my people, are shelling the Lebanese, the poor Lebanese villages.

Walters: How would you compare the fighting now to fighting in the past?

Arafat: More serious.

Walters: More serious?

Arafat: It is threatening the whole peace or the whole plan of peace in the area.

Walters: Do you think it could spread as far as Beirut again so that there would be fighting there?

Arafat: No. It is something definitely between us and the Israeli forces. Although they have this mask of what's called isolationist forces, but actually we are facing the Israeli forces.

Walters: Do you think it could lead to a large general war in the Middle East?

Arafat: Maybe.

Walters: I want to go back to the possibility of the independent state in the West Bank. It's been said that such a state could not sustain itself economically. How could this state sustain itself? It's not a very rich area there.

Arafat: You are still worried about that for us?

Walters: I want you to be able to answer this. It has been an argument and I wanted you to have the opportunity to answer it.

Arafat: You have to put in your consideration that the Palestinians have the highest ratio of education in this area, including Israel, you know that? We are about, less than 4 million in population. We have 24 thousand engineers, as an example. We have now in the universities about one hundred and twelve thousand and so on to give you an idea about us. Besides if you are looking for your homeland, for your country, you haven't any choice if your homeland is poor or rich. A homeland is a homeland, to be poor, to be rich.

Walters: Mr. Arafat, it has been rumored that you might be visiting the United States perhaps even to support the resolution that we talked of earlier. Might you be coming to this country?

Arafat: For this purpose I haven't any plan to go there, but if you can deliver me an invitation from your government, I will accept it.

Walters: Mr. Arafat, if this state, this independent state should come about, there are people like yourself who were born in land that is now Israel or Occupied Palestine as it is sometimes called by your people...

Arafat: Not sometimes, every time.

Walters: There are Palestinians in Lebanon, there are Palestinians in Syria. Do you think these people would be satisfied to move their homes to the West Bank?

Arafat: We are not looking for the moon. We are living these realities. Definitely. Not a person can have all

his aims, but at least a part of his aims... and I am struggling to give this part of the aims of my people... at least to change this, their miserable case, to have their passport, to have their own flag and to have their own nationality.

Walters: Mr. Arafat, would you allow Jews to settle on the West Bank?

Arafat: Certainly. Not only they settle there, they could be members of our Cabinet.

Walters: Thank you Mr. Arafat.

Guiringaud: PLO Is Crucial To Peace

The following are portions of an address by French Foreign Minister Louis de Guiringaud to the Sept. 28 session of the United Nations General Assembly.

We are unfortunately still far from a Mideast settlement. The desire for peace I had noted during my visits to the region several months ago has so far not been enough to commit the parties to the path of negotiation. Entrenchment of positions may compromise the efforts under way, gravely affecting the stability of the states and the very future of the peoples of the Middle East. And yet, the principles which must shape any settlement are not only known but are now accepted by the international community.

The first principle is the evacuation by Israel of the territories occupied in 1967. Peace cannot in fact be founded on conquest, on the occupation of territories or on a *fait accompli*.

The recognition of the rights of the Palestinians to a homeland is the second fundamental principle. To refuse to grant a people which is displaced or under occupation the right to a homeland where it can fully express its national identity would be to ignore the fact that nothing lasting can be founded on irredentism, which would doom to failure all attempts at a settlement.

The presence of the Palestine Liberation Organization in our meeting halls underscores the degree to which this crucial aspect of the conflict is now recognized, as does our conviction that it is essential for the Palestinians to be associated with the negotiations which will decide their fate. It is time that the Palestinian people are granted the opportunity to live in a system and under conditions of their own choosing; it is time this opportunity is included in the terms for a global solution.

I also want to repeat that recognition of the existence of all the states in the region, including Israel, within secure, recognized and guaranteed boundaries, is another mandatory requirement of any settlement. After so many cruel wars, a genuine peace, implying normal relations, has to be found for this region so that the resources and talents of all sides can finally be employed to promote development and prosperity.

Gromyko: Geneva With Israel And PLO

The following are portions of Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko's address to the Sept. 27 session of the United Nations General Assembly.

Acting in conformity with the decisions of the Twenty-fifth Congress of the CPSU our country continues actively to press for the elimination of the remaining hotbeds of war. Of course, the most dangerous of these is the one in the Middle East. Why is there no durable peace in that region? Simply because the principal causes of the conflict have not been removed. Israeli troops have not been withdrawn from the Arab lands seized in 1967. The right of the Arab people of Palestine, including its right to self-determination and the creation of a State of its own, has not been guaranteed so far. All this means that the independent existence and security of all the peoples and States of that region have not been ensured.

Serious apprehensions are aroused by the words and deeds of the leadership of Israel. They are well known. A great deal of inflammable material has been accumulated in the Middle East, and in the event of another outbreak of hostilities no one would be able to predict its outcome.

For its part the Soviet Union will go on doing all in its power to bring about such settlement in the Middle East as would establish a durable peace there without infringing on the legitimate rights and interests of any people or any State of the region.

From this high rostrum our country declares once again: we have been and remain advocates of the right cause of the Arabs whose lands have been unlawfully taken away and are still retained by the force of arms. Those lands must unconditionally be returned to the Arab peoples.

But if there is any need to reiterate once again that Israel has a right to exist as an independent and sovereign State in the Middle East, then, on behalf of the Soviet leadership I will say again that we have adhered and will continue to adhere to precisely that line. So why shouldn't Israel take advantage of the opportunity that presents itself and agree to a genuinely just settlement in the Middle East? This would, after all, be in its own national interests too.

The Soviet union is in favor of an early reconvening of the Geneva Peace Conference with the participation on an equal footing of all the parties concerned, including representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Forlani: Israel Must Recognize PLO

A Sept. 28 United Nations press release on that day's National Assembly Session reported the following:

Arnaldo Forlani, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Italy, said there was urgent need to reactivate effective peace

negotiations on the Middle East within the framework of the Geneva Conference. The Arab side would have to be ready to accept the right of Israel to live in peace within secure and recognized frontiers while Israel must recognize the national rights of the Palestinian people.

State Department Rift On PLO?

The following are excerpts from an interview with a former State Department official revealing the division of opinion in Washington on the current Middle East situation.

Q: Who in Washington could be described as pro-Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)?

A: There are two major elements in Washington that are pro-PLO. The first is the foreign affairs bureaucracy, and the second is the oil industry. The oil interests have a direct interest in seeing that the appcart in the Middle East is not overturned. The State Department people — they have studied the situation as professionals for 30 years and have evolved the idea quite firmly that only Israeli-Palestinian agreement can work with the PLO.

Q: Whom in the State Department are you referring to? Surely, (former Secretary of State) Kissinger did not support this viewpoint.

A: Harold Saunders is the key man. He started out under Lyndon Johnson and is now the head of the State Department's Intelligence and Research Division. Saunders' statement to Congress a year or two ago affirming that the Palestinians are at the core of any future Middle East settlement made it very clear which way he was leaning.

I think that his coming out like that was not done without Kissinger's approval, whatever disagreements did exist. As for Kissinger himself, it is possible to be sympathetic to the aspirations of the Palestinians without being pro-PLO, and I think that what Kissinger feels, since he has never given up hope of restoring King Hussein back on the West Bank. Kissinger, you know, gave the Israelis the assurance that the U.S. would not recognize the PLO.

Q: What about Secretary of State Vance?

A: Vance is a little more flexible than the previous position. I had a feeling that this is because Kissinger was personally committed to Israel, on the PLO question in particular. I think that Saunders, Vance, and Atherton are betting that the mainstream PLO around Arafat will become more responsible and will concentrate on domestic affairs rather than subvert anybody. They think that the PLO will move toward recognition of Israel, and they are moving cautiously in that direction.

The PLO are not terrorists. It is a loose organization of many parties. They only become terrorists because they are ignored by us. If they establish a state, then they of course will get help from everyone they can — the Saudis, the U.S., the Soviets."