

HOW MC CLOSKEY WAS "USED"

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While these conceivably include UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, they also embrace General Assembly resolutions calling for a Palestinian state without prior recognition of Israel. Arafat told the visiting Congressmen, according to reports, that the PLO cannot accept Resolution 242 as it stands because it refers to the Palestinian issue as a refugee problem and says nothing of Palestinian self-determination and aspirations for a homeland. The American position since 1974 has been the U.S. will neither recognize or have any contact with the PLO unless it recognizes Israel's right to exist and accepts resolutions 242 and 338.

To allay fears of Israel that U.S. policy may shift off this policy formulated by former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and embraced by successive administrations, the State Department reiterated its position. "The United States will not recognize nor negotiate with the PLO until the PLO accepts UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and Israel's right to exist. We have indicated that this must be done in a clear and unequivocal way. The statement by Mr. Arafat does not meet these conditions," the State Department spokesman, Dean Fischer, declared.

Fischer said that the PLO must meet the conditions in a clear manner. "It should not be buried in rhetoric in a way which could be denied later," he said. However, according to Fischer, "If our conditions are met...we would be willing to talk to the PLO." He would not say in what form these conditions should take, observing that "We will know it when we see it." At the same time he left open the possibility that the PLO could accept Resolutions 242 and 338 in a statement that included UN resolutions as long as it was clear that they accepted the two key resolutions that are part of the American conditions.

The Congressional group which met Arafat included, in addition to McCloskey, Rep. Nick Rahall (D. W. Va.); Mary Rose Oaker (D. Ohio); David Bonier (D. Mich.); and Mervyn Dymally (D. Calif.). A sixth member of the touring party, Rep. Elliot Levitas (D. Ga.), refused to go to the PLO headquarters. He said later that the document signed by Arafat carefully avoided a commitment to Israel's right to exist, and that McCloskey has been "used" by Arafat.

In Jerusalem, the reaction to Arafat's re-

ported document was heaped upon with scorn. In addition to Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir who called it "an exercise in deceit," Foreign Ministry spokesman Avi Razner denounced the document as a "public relations gimmick" and warned the PLO that "all the deceit and declarations given for the benefit of public opinion will not help them." He declared that the PLO must leave Lebanon.

After touring Lebanon, the Congressional delegation met with Premier Menachem Begin and Shamir, who tried to convince the American Congressmen why they objected to the Arafat document. The McCloskey delegation met with the two officials separately. After a meeting with Shamir for two hours, they reported that it was "a very friendly meeting" but "heated at times" and that Shamir did most of the talking. He said that Israel is still seeking a diplomatic settlement to the situation in West Beirut and was giving the U.S. more time to work out a negotiated settlement.

Begin also met with another American who visited Lebanon, Sen. Paul Tsongas (D. Mass.), a member of the Foreign Relations Committee. It was reportedly a stormy encounter between the Premier and Tsongas over Israel's attitude toward the PLO and its actions in Lebanon. Tsongas described the 90 minute meeting as "distressing." According to his version of it, Tsongas asked the Premier what Israel's reaction would be if Arafat went beyond his commitment to McCloskey and unequivocally accepted Resolutions 242 and 338. He said Begin's reply was that Israel would not negotiate with Arafat under any conditions, "never."

"Given that and given the bombing that is going on, it is very difficult to understand how the pieces are going to be brought together," the Senator told reporters. He said he had urged Begin not to order Israeli army into West Beirut, although he agreed that the PLO had to leave. He said Begin's response was that the army would do what it has to do.

ARGOV TO RETURN TO ISRAEL

LONDON (WNS) -- Shlomo Argov, Israel's Ambassador to Britain, will soon be flown back to Israel to continue recovery from the assassination attempt on him. The National Hospital for Nervous Diseases said Argov had only a one in ten chance of surviving the brain damage suffered when an Arab terrorists shot him June 3.

For the first six weeks in the hospital, the 53-year-old envoy was unconscious and linked to a breathing machine. He is now speaking, eating and drinking normally and occasionally sits up in bed, an Israeli official said.

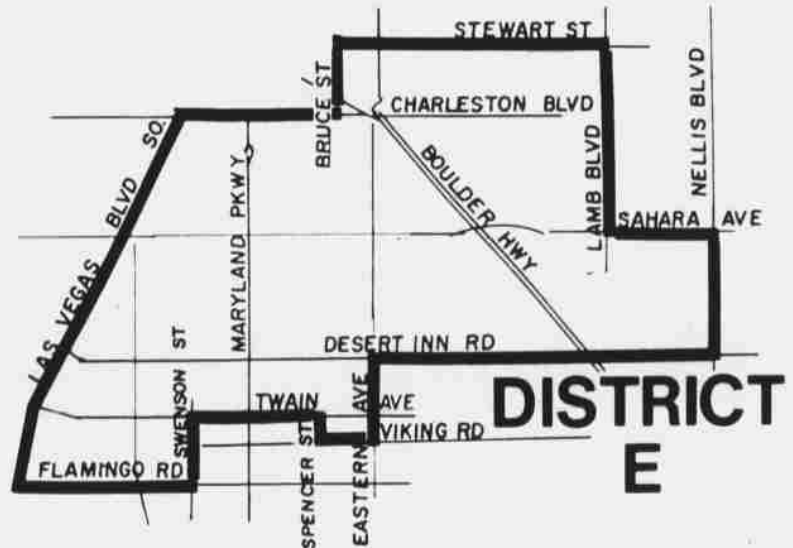
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