Israel Must Stop Slaughter of Palestinians

It was most moving. I'm referring to the voice of journalist Terry Anderson, one of the hostages held in captivity in Lebanon for more than a year.

The American newsmen made two main points in his recorded message. Firstly, the US administration was not doing enough for the release of himself and others. Secondly, that he was still a captive was indicative of the failure of the US policy in the Middle East.

ATROCITIES

Meanwhile, the killings and destruction of the Iraqi/Iran war go on. The UN resolution for a cease-fire and the slaughter of Palestinians continues in the Israel-occupied Arab lands.

British Minister of State David Mellors put his finger on the pulse of the problem: not only Israeli atrocities but also living conditions for the Arabs. "An affront to civilised values", he said.

Israel's actions are a blatant violation of the principles of international law. Its resort to the barbaric beating of Palestinians was condemned even by the US State Department.

The UN Security Council unanimously passed a resolution condemning the forcible deportation of Arabs from the occupied territories. So savage has been the treatment meted out to the Palestinians that even the United States voted for the resolution.

ALLIANCE

Regrettably, a few days later the US State Department backslid. A spokesman declared that Israel was still a staunch ally of the United States. Thereafter, the US Government changed its position at the United Nations. It voted against two Security Council resolutions, one condemning Israeli attacks against Lebanon.

The US/Israel alliance is of long standing. In November 1981, A Memorandum of Mutual Understanding in the Field of Strategic Co-operation was signed. It provided for joint military exercises, deployment of US weapons in Israel, and a "multilateral force" to protect the Baltic states.

So savage were Israel's actions that even the US was condemned even by the US State Department.

The US cannot hope to win over all the Arabs from the Israeli-occupied Arab lands. That position was reaffirmed at the UN General Assembly in July 1982, when the US voted for the Israeli/Palestinian peace talks.

And King Hussein of Jordan, an ally of the West, was informed by his Israeli counterpart that any further parleys would be pointless.

The USA must stop shirking from giving real leadership. It has a moral duty to support the participation of all parties, including the PLO. The recent Arab Summit in Amman signalled its support. So have the Prime Minister of Austria, the Labour Party of Israel and the Socialist Union.

Such a Conference must serve the interests of all including the Palestinians and Israelis. It must have as its aim: 1) the withdrawal of all Israeli forces from occupied Arab lands in keeping with the UN resolution; 2) the recognition of the borders and security of all Middle East states, including Israel; and 3) the establishment of a Palestinian state on the West Bank/Gaza Strip.

The USA should also be replaced by an UN peace-keeping force.

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