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# THEY DARE

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# TO

People and Institutions  
Confront Israel's Lobby

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**9**  
WEEKS A  
WASHINGTON  
POST  
BEST SELLER

# SPEAK OUT

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## BY PAUL FINDLEY

A United States Congressman for twenty-two years

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PERDANA  
LEADERSHIP  
FOUNDATION  
YAYASAN  
KEPIMPINAN  
PERDANA



# They Dare to Speak Out

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PEOPLE AND INSTITUTIONS  
CONFRONT ISRAEL'S LOBBY

*by Paul Findley*

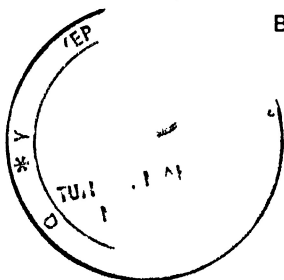
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*To our grandsons  
Andrew and Cameron—  
may they always be able  
to speak without fear*

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# Preface to New Edition

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This book sounds an alarm: Israel, through the deep and pervasive power of its lobby, threatens deeply-cherished American values—especially free speech, academic freedom and our commitment to human rights.

The response since publication 14 months ago is substantial and, often, touching. Despite informal but effective attempts to curtail its sale, *They Dare to Speak Out* became a best seller—nine weeks, for example, on *The Washington Post* top 10.

Thanks in great measure to the enthusiasm of readers themselves, over 52,000 copies of the first edition have been sold. Scores of people have made bulk purchases for distribution to their friends, business associates and public libraries. Others have persuaded stores to stock it, despite initial responses that were frequently negative and often false and hostile, such as, “it’s out of print,” “not carried by our normal wholesale sources,” “very controversial.” Two months after publication, a clerk at a major bookstore in Springfield, Illinois, informed a customer, incorrectly, that it had not yet been printed, declaring, “There’s a problem about it with the authorities. Someone said the government wants to review it before publication.”

In Pittsburgh a reluctant merchant agreed to display it when a group of women threatened to picket his store. In California several citizens carried supplies from store to store, asking each to accept a few books on consignment. In Portland, Oregon, a retired accountant, in his frequent speeches to service clubs, urged members to buy a copy and promised a full refund if its text failed to make readers “fighting mad.”

In another heartening response, more than 600 readers have taken the trouble to locate me by telephone or mail, most of them seeking guidance on how they can help correct the damage being done by Israel’s lobby.

Against this promising tide, alarming happenings give new urgency to the warning expressed in this book. Recent revelations make it painfully evident that Israel, long regarded as one of our country’s most devoted allies, is guilty of disloyalty to American ideals and to America itself. Its government spies on the United States, lies to our highest officials, corrupts our political process and undercuts our national security interests to suit its own purposes.

Congress and the administration seem oblivious to this disloyalty, as our military, economic and political aid to Israel continues at ever-increasing levels. Richard B. Straus, former staff member at the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, registered lobby for Israeli interests in Washington, writes that “only Israel’s interests are considered” when Middle East issues come up in the State

Department. With no dissenting votes, Congress has approved an unprecedented \$4.5 billion in grant aid to Israel for the current year.

Lobby pressures caused new damage in our relations with Arab states. In May 1986, in a historic rebuff, both the House and Senate by large margins (356-62 and 73-22) voted against the president's proposed sale of \$354 million in arms to Saudi Arabia—the first time in history that Congress rejected a presidential proposal to sell arms to a foreign country.

Despite public disavowals, Israel and its lobby laid a heavy hand on the Senate, where the key vote on overriding a presidential veto would occur. Speaking in support of the sale and deploring Israel's opposition, retiring Senator Barry Goldwater declared, "I hope that this is the last time that we are subjected to the intense pressure, money and threats of another country." When the roll was called, heavy arm-twisting by President Reagan produced 34 votes in the 100-member Senate chamber, enough to sustain the presidential veto by only one vote.

Lobby pressures also hurt relations with Jordan. In October 1985 President Reagan publicly recommended the sale of \$1.5 billion in arms to Jordan, only to see 74 senators quickly sponsor a resolution in opposition. Sensing certain defeat in Congress, President Reagan reneged on his promise to Jordan's King Hussein by cancelling the entire sale. Afterwards, Hussein sadly observed that "30 years of a very close association" had come to an end.

This anti-Arab lobbying cost the United States much more than prestige and goodwill. It wiped out thousands of jobs in United States industry. Saudi Arabia took \$4.5 billion and Jordan \$1.5 billion in arms business to Britain. The London *Economist* estimates that the year's lobby-caused losses to the United States economy could go as high as \$20 billion.

Donald McHenry, United States ambassador to the United Nations during the administration of Jimmy Carter, declares: "Because of the [Israeli] lobby's influence, our government is unable to pursue its own national interests in the Middle East."

### *Spreading the Net*

Pro-Israel forces exerted pressure in a variety of ways.

Hostility from Baltimore's Jewish community helped Charles McC. Mathias decide to retire after a distinguished career in the Senate.

The American Jewish Committee pressured Washington's WETA and New York's WNET into cancelling a network program called "Flashpoint" because it included, along with two pro-Israel films, one sympathetic to Palestinians. Despite heavy pressures, other PBS stations rejected the demand and showed the film.

Arab-Americans suffered the sting, sometimes fatal, of terrorism. Within 48 hours of the brutal slaying in October 1985 of Leon Klinghoffer by Palestinian terrorists in the Mediterranean, a U.S. citizen of Palestinian ancestry was murdered. Alex Odeh, local director for the American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC), suffered fatal injuries when a bomb exploded as he entered his Santa Ana, California, office. The night before, interviewed over a Los Angeles televi-

sion station, he had described PLO leader Yasser Arafat as a man ready to make peace.

The previous month two policemen were injured dismantling a bomb at the door to the ADC's Boston office, and a month later the ADC national office in Washington sustained \$500,000 fire damage under suspicious circumstances.

Elsewhere, a Milwaukee grocer of Palestinian background was murdered. No money or merchandise was missing. In separate incidents in Philadelphia, the editor of an Arab-American newspaper in Philadelphia was seriously beaten, and Ismail Farouqi, renowned Palestinian-born Islamic scholar, and his author wife, Lois, were stabbed to death in their home. Officials ruled out burglary.

### *Paid Spy for Israel Pleads Guilty*

The penetration of the United States government and the theft of its secrets by an Israeli espionage network became headline news in June 1986 when Jonathan Jay Pollard, an employee of the Department of the Navy, pleaded guilty to being a paid spy for Israel. Pollard's wife, who had tried unsuccessfully to destroy a suitcase full of stolen documents, pleaded guilty to a lesser charge.

Pollard said he had received \$45,000 and expected more than \$300,000 over 10 years for delivering classified documents to Israel. He was also provided with an Israeli passport under a false name. Three others, all Israeli officials, were implicated and, in a curious perversion of justice, the Israeli government subsequently promoted all three despite the disclosures. Pollard's plea spared Israel the embarrassment of a public trial, which would have opened details of an extensive spy ring operating in the United States and Israel's connections with recent shipments of arms to Iran. John Davitt, a 30-year veteran of the Justice Department and former head of its internal security section, rates Israel's espionage in the United States "more active than any one but the (Soviet) KGB."

The Federal Bureau of Investigation lists more than a dozen other episodes in which U.S. officials illegally transferred classified information to Israel, but Pollard is the only one ever prosecuted. His arrest likely resulted when career officers became fed up with Justice Department's practice of letting thieves for Israel go unpunished.

### *The U.S.-Israel Connection to Khomeini*

The unfolding crisis over clandestine U.S.-Israel arms sales to Iran, a controversy which today rocks the Reagan administration, had its origin in Israel's military shipments to Tehran which began when the Ayatollah Khomeini took power in 1979 and continued even during the 444 agonizing days that the Khomeini regime held U.S. embassy personnel hostage ( Pierre Salinger on ABC Nightline August 20, 1981).

Long before the U.S. secretly sold arms to Iran as a way to secure the release of its citizens held hostage in Lebanon by supporters of Khomeini, Israel asked Pollard to supply secret U.S. studies of foreign missile systems

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“that might be available for sale to Iran.” In April 1986, at the same time that the secret U.S.-Israel connection to Khomeini began, Abraham Bar-Am, a retired Israeli general authorized by Israel as an arms dealer, and several Israeli accomplices, were charged with conspiring to sell \$2.5 billion in U.S.-made weapons to Iran.

The new partnership with the United States serves Israel’s interests for two reasons: it legitimizes Israel’s longstanding traffic in arms to Tehran, sales the U.S. had previously deplored; and, more importantly, it drives a new wedge between the U.S. and moderate Arab states—all of whom fear that Khomeini-like revolutions may occur locally if Iran, using weapons supplied by Israel and the United States, succeeds in toppling the government of Saddam Hussein in Iraq.

### *Bombing Arabs*

The United States became an active ally in Israel’s military attacks against Arabs and adopted a dangerous new doctrine in military policy in April 1986 when U.S. fighter planes bombed five targets in Libya.

Reagan ordered the April 14 attack, he announced, because of “irrefutable evidence” of Libyan responsibility for terrorist attacks in West Berlin and elsewhere but later shifted to Syria blame for these same attacks.

With the announcement, the United States embraced for the first time a doctrine which declares that a military assault against a foreign country constitutes a proper act of national defense against individual acts of terrorism elsewhere. This type of action, although a violation of international law, has long been employed by Israel in its “retaliatory” attacks on Lebanon, Syria, Tunisia and Iraq.

### *The Rocky Road of a Best Seller*

The people who have joined me in the preparation and promotion of this book are united in a simple but urgent goal: we hope that this volume will help alert the American people to the dangers posed by our government’s phenomenal attachment to Israel.

The road to publication, predictably, has had bumps aplenty. Finding a publisher, for example, required a search of two years. While praising the manuscript as worthy of publication, two major houses—Random House and William Morrow and Company—explained candidly that it dealt with “too sensitive” a topic. Bruce Lee of William Morrow said his firm concluded it “would cause trouble in the house and outside” and decided against “taking the heat.” With over 20 rejections, in July 1984, Lawrence Hill and Company, a small but respected publisher, agreed to take the gamble.

Most of the people who helped me assemble material insist on anonymity. Several occupy positions of prominence in the federal government, and, while all are enthusiastic about the text and convinced the book meets a longstanding need, they recognize the Israeli lobby’s potential for damage to personal careers.

Others providing yeoman support: Robert W. Wichser, close friend and for 14 years director of my Congressional staff who, tragically, perished in flood waters in December 1985; Donald Neff, journalist and author of *Warriors for Jerusalem*; George Weller, Pulitzer prize foreign correspondent; former Senator James G. Abourezk; and James M. Ennes, Jr., author of *Assault on the Liberty*. Sangamon State University provided a grant, funded by the American Middle East Peace Research Institute, which covered most of the expenses I encountered in the preparation of the text.

The book is eliciting substantial media interest. Reviews in major publications now exceed 30. I have appeared on over 70 television and radio programs, including NBC's Today Show, PBS' Late Night America, CBS' Charlie Rose Show. These opportunities continue and are welcome.

Several television and radio network stations, however, refused to air paid advertising for the book. Cable News Network proved to be the exception when its chief executive officer, Ted Turner, overruled subordinates and authorized the broadcast of 19 television spots during January 1986. As soon as the series began CNN received heavy protests from regular advertisers, but Turner braved the storm and let the series run without change.

The episode yielded over \$8,000 in free advertising for pro-Israel interests, however, when—as recompense—CNN provided without charge a series of eight equal-time spots to the Anti-Defamation League.

“Where do we go from here?” readers ask. One answer is to extend this book's audience. Considering the appalling lack of awareness that still exists concerning the damage being done, the 52,000 first edition books already sold must be considered only a beginning. With that in mind, the publisher has prepared this new edition which can be purchased from book stores, the publisher or by calling during weekdays this toll-free number: 1-800-368-5788.

Readers wishing to be up-to-date on Israel and its lobbying should read: *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, Box 53062, Washington, DC 20009 and *Israeli Foreign Affairs*, 5825 Telegraph Ave., No. 34, Oakland, CA 94609, both monthlies; *Middle East International*, Box 53365, Temple Heights Station, Washington, DC 20009, a fortnightly; *The American Arab Affairs*, Suite 411, 1730 M Street NW, Washington, DC 20036 and *The Journal of Palestine Studies*, Georgetown Station, P O Box 25301, Washington DC 20007, both quarterlies.

Paul Findley  
1040 West College Avenue  
Jacksonville, IL 62650  
January 1, 1987



# Introduction

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## *A Middle West Congressman Meets the Middle East*

“How did a Congressman from the corn-hog heartland of America get entangled in Middle East politics?” people ask. Like most rural Congressmen, I had no ethnic constituencies who lobbied me on their foreign interests. As expected, I joined the Agriculture Committee and worked mainly on issues like farming, budget and welfare reform.

Newly appointed in 1972 to the subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East, I had represented the Springfield, Illinois, area for 12 years without attracting much attention at home or abroad.

Eight short years later, my involvement in Middle East politics would bring me infamy among many U.S. Jews, notoriety in Israel and applause throughout the Arab world. By 1980, in urban centers of pro-Israel activism—far from the local Jews in central Illinois who knew and trusted me, I found myself in the most expensive Congressional campaign in state history. Thanks to a flow of hostile dollars from both coasts and nearby Chicago, I became “the number one enemy of Israel” and my re-election campaign the principal target of Israel’s lobby.

Prodded by a professor at Illinois College, I had already begun to doubt the wisdom of United States policy in the Middle East when I first joined the subcommittee. For the most part, I kept these doubts private, but not because I feared the political consequences. In fact, I naively assumed I could question our policy anywhere without getting into trouble. I did not realize how deeply the roots of Israeli interests had penetrated U.S. institutions.

Congressmen generally heard only the Israeli case. Arab American lobbies, fledgling forces even today, were nonexistent. Arab embassies, which even today hire public relations experts only with reluctance, then showed little interest in lobbying. Even if a Congress-

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man had wanted to hear the Arab viewpoint, he would have had difficulty finding an Arab spokesman to explain it.

My personal involvement with Middle East politics started with a constituent problem that had no direct connection with the Arab-Israeli conflict. It began in the spring of 1973 when a letter arrived from Mrs. Evans Franklin, a constituent who wrote neighborhood news for a rural weekly newspaper I once edited. In this letter, she pleaded for my help in securing the release of her son, Ed, from a faraway prison. He had been convicted of espionage and sentenced to five years' solitary imprisonment in Aden, the capital of the Marxist People's Democratic Republic of (South) Yemen. After reading her plea, I had to consult a map. I knew only that Aden once had been a major British base.

Had it not been for a series of cancelled airline flights, his mother told me, Franklin would never have set foot in Aden. Returning from Ethiopia to his teaching post in Kuwait, he was rerouted through Aden and then delayed again by the cancellation of his departing flight. His luck worsened. A camera buff and unaware of local restrictions, he photographed a prohibited area. The Adenese were still nervous about blonde-haired visitors, remembering the commando raid the British had conducted shortly after they left Aden six years earlier. When Franklin snapped the pictures, he was immediately arrested, kept in an interrogation center for months, and finally brought to trial, convicted and sentenced. My efforts to secure his release proceeded for the most part without aid from the State Department. Our government had had no relations, diplomatic or otherwise, with Aden since a 1969 coup moved the regime dramatically to the left. This meant the State Department could do nothing directly. I asked a friend in the Egyptian embassy in Washington to help. Franklin's parents, people of modest means living in a rural crossroads village, sent a request to Salim Rubyai Ali, South Yemen's president, seeking executive clemency. I sent a similar request. Our government asked the British to intervene through their embassy in Aden. There was no response to any of these initiatives.

In December 1973 I visited Abdallah Ashtal, Aden's ambassador to the United Nations in New York, to ask if I could go personally to Aden and make a plea for Franklin's release. Ashtal, a short, handsome, youthful diplomat who was taking evening graduate courses at New York University, promised a prompt answer. A message came back two weeks later that I would be welcome.

If I decided to go, I would have to travel alone. I would be the first Congressman—House or Senate—to visit Aden since the Republic was established in 1967 and the first United States official to visit there since diplomatic relations were severed in the wake of the coup two years later. Although this was an exciting prospect, it also caused me

some foreboding. Moreover, I had no authority as an envoy. South Yemen, sometimes called the Cuba of the Arab world, was regarded by our State Department as the most radical of the Arab states. A State Department friend did nothing to relieve my concern when he told me that Aden's foreign minister got his job "because he killed more opponents than any other candidate."

Troubling questions came to mind. How would I be received? I discussed the trip with Alfred L. Atherton, Jr., assistant secretary of state for Near East and South Asia affairs. I asked him, "If they lock me up, what will you do first?" He smiled and said, "Look for another Congressman to come get you out!"

Still, I was probably the only person able to help. Franklin's mother told me, "I doubt if Ed can survive five years in a Yemen jail." My wife, Lucille, expressed deep concern over the prospects of the trip but agreed that I had little choice but to go.

I also thought the trip might be an opportunity to open the door to better relations with a vital but little-known part of the world. With the imminent reopening of the Suez Canal, better relations with Aden could be important to United States interests in the Indian Ocean. After all, Aden, along with French-held Djibouti, was a guardian of a world-famous and vitally important strait, the gateway to the Suez Canal. If the Soviets, already present with aid missions and military advisers, succeeded in dominating the Aden government, they could effectively control the canal from the south. It was obvious that, beyond the release of Franklin, the United States needed good relations.

I decided that I must go. The trip was set for late March 1974.

From Middle East scholars, I learned that Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, who was soon to begin shuttle negotiations between Israel and Egypt, was held in high esteem in Aden. I asked him for a letter that I could take with me which would be as explicit as possible about United States-Aden relations. A personal letter arrived three days before I left. In it, Kissinger said he welcomed my "humanitarian mission" to Aden and added: "Should the occasion arise, you may wish to inform those officials whom you meet of our continuing commitment to work for an equitable and lasting Middle East peace and of our desire to strengthen our ties with the Arab world."

The letter was addressed to me, not to the Aden government. It was a diplomatic "feeler." I hoped it would convince any officials I met that the United States wanted to establish normal relations.

A good traveler always brings gifts. At the suggestion of an Egyptian friend, I secured scholarships from three colleges in Illinois to present to South Yemeni students. I also located and had specially bound two Arabic language translations of Carl Sandburg's biography

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of Lincoln, *The Prairie Years*. In addition, I also carried two small busts of Lincoln—my most celebrated constituent—hoping he would be known even in Aden.

I left Washington early enough to visit Syria before heading south to Aden. Syria had not had normal diplomatic relations with the United States since the 1967 war with Israel, and despite its growing importance, no member of the House of Representatives had visited there for five years. To my surprise, President Hafez Assad of Syria agreed to receive me without advance appointment. Perhaps he was intrigued with the presence of a United States Congressman who said he had an open mind about Middle East issues.

Assad received me in the spacious second-floor reception room of his offices. A tall, thickset man with a prominent forehead and a warm, quiet manner, Assad made his points forcefully but without a hint of hostility. While sipping small cups of rich Syrian coffee, he voiced his pain over United States support of Israel's actions: "We are bitter about the guns and ammunition you provide to Israel, and why not? But bitterness is not hostility. In fact, we have very warm feelings about the American people. Despite the war, the Syrian people like Americans and have for years."

While sympathizing, I took the initiative, urging him to restore full diplomatic relations and to take a page from the public relations book of the Israelis. I suggested that he come to the United States and take his case directly to the American people over television.

Assad responded, "Perhaps we have made some mistakes. We should have better public relations. I agree with what you say and recommend, but I don't know when I can come to the United States."

As I rose to leave, Assad said, "You have my mandate to invite members of your Congress to visit Syria as soon as possible. They will be most welcome. We want those who are critical as well as those who are friends to come."

While I later extended Assad's invitation personally to many of my colleagues and, in a detailed official report, to all of them, few accepted. The first Congressional group did not arrive until 1978, four years later.

After my interview with Assad, I was driven late at night from Damascus to Beirut for the flight to Aden. As our car approached the Syria-Lebanon border, I could hear the sound of Israel's shelling of Lebanon's Mt. Hermon, a sobering reminder that seven years after the 1967 war the fighting still continued.

In 1974, Beirut was still the "Paris of the Middle East," a western-like city with a lively night life and bustling commerce. A new Holiday Inn had just opened near the harbor. Every street seemed to boast two

international banks, at least three bookstores and a dozen restaurants. A year later the Holiday Inn became a battleground between Phalangist militia, backed by Israel, and the Lebanese left coalition, including Palestinians, helped by various Arab governments and by Moscow. Its walls were ripped open by shells, its rooftop pavilion littered with the bodies of fallen snipers. The vicious civil war, which began in 1975, had turned Beirut into a city of rubble.

But even in 1974, the Palestinians in the refugee camps did not share the prosperity of the city. I passed the hovels of Sabra and Shatila, where, nine years later, the massacre of hundreds of Palestinian civilians would shock the world. My embassy escort said, "These miserable camps haven't improved in 20 years."

I also passed the Tel Zaatar refugee camp, whose wretched inhabitants would soon suffer a fate even more cruel. A year later that camp was besieged for 45 days by rightist "Christian" militias, armed and advised by Israel's Labor government. Fifteen thousand Palestinians died, many of them after the camp surrendered. Virtually every adult male survivor was executed. That slaughter was little noted by the world press. Hardly anyone, save the Palestinians, remembers it.

At that time, the spring of 1974, I had no premonition of the tragedies to follow. I boarded the Aden-bound plane at Beirut with just one person's tragedy on my mind—that of Ed Franklin.

### *Mission in Aden*

In Aden, to my surprise and pleasure, I was met by a delegation of five youthful officials, three of them cabinet ministers. Mine was the only gray hair in sight that night. The group had stayed up until 2 A.M. to meet the plane. "Welcome. We have your quarters ready," said the government's chief of protocol. Good news! This meant, I felt, that I would not be stuck off in a hotel room. My quarters turned out to be a rambling old building which years ago, in imperial days, was the residence of the British air commander. A tree-shaded terrace—a rarity in Aden—looked over the great harbor, a strategic prize ever since white men first rounded the Cape of Good Hope in the sixteenth century. Blackbirds chattered overhead.

I received permission to visit Franklin at 7:15 that first night. I found him under guard in an apartment on the second floor of a small modern building. When I entered, he was standing by a couch in the livingroom. We had never seen each other before.

"I presume you are Congressman Findley."

Despite the emotion of the occasion, I smiled, sensing how Dr. Livingston must have felt years before in Africa.

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After 16 months of confinement, Franklin was thin, almost gaunt. His trousers were several sizes too big, his blonde hair was neatly combed, his face cleanly shaved and he was surprisingly well tanned. He looked much older than his 34 years.

We were able to talk alone. I said, "You're thin, but you look well." He answered, "I'm very glad you came, and I feel pretty well. Much better now that you're here. A few days ago when I used a mirror for the first time in months, I was shocked at how I look." He said he had got the tan from daily exercise in the prison yard, adding that he had been transferred to the flat two days before, obviously because authorities did not want me to see the prison.

"Here is a box of food items your family asked me to deliver." When I said that, his face, which until then had displayed no emotion, fell. "I guess this means I am not going home with you."

I said, "I don't know."

Franklin changed the subject. "I had to leave my Bible at the prison. I hated to, because I like to read it every day."

I said, "Many people have been praying for you."

He responded, "Yes, I knew at once, even before I got word in letters from home. I could feel it."

Franklin told me he had not been physically abused but said the food was terrible and some of the rules bothered him. "I am not allowed to have a pen and paper. I like to write. I once wrote poetry on a sack, but then my pencil was discovered and taken from me. I don't know why." Still, he seemed to hold no grudge against his captors. "I like the Arab world. Maybe someday when the American embassy is reopened, I could even get a job here."

I assured him: "I'll do my very best to secure your release, or at least shorten your term. That's why I'm here, and I'll try to see you again before I leave. I'll also try to get approval for you to have pencil and paper."

On the way back to my quarters, I passed on Franklin's request for writing materials to my escort officer, who answered simply, "I will report your request." I spent Friday, a Moslem day of worship, touring the nearby desolate countryside. The main tourist attraction is an ancient, massive stone well built to store the area's scarce rainfall. That evening the British consul, a compassionate man who had occasionally delivered reading material to Franklin, joined me for dinner. The British long ago understood the importance of maintaining diplomatic relations even with hostile regimes and, shortly after their stormy departure from Aden, they had established an embassy there.

Saturday morning Foreign Minister M. J. Motie came to my quarters for a long discussion of United States-Yemen relations. The plight

of the Palestinians under Israeli occupation was at the top of his agenda, Franklin at the top of mine. He charged, "The United States is helping Saudi Arabia foment subversion along Yemen's borders." I told him I was troubled by this charge, was unaware of such activity and I hoped to help improve relations. Motie responded, "While the past is not good, the present looks better, but we need a substantial sign of friendship. For example, we need aid in buying wheat."

After the discussion, I spent a long and fruitless afternoon trying to fill a shopping list my family had sent with me. The bazaar had little but cheap Japanese radios and a few trinkets. It had even fewer shoppers. I returned to the guest house, finding, to my astonishment, an assortment of gifts, each neatly wrapped—among them a jambia, the traditional curved Yemeni dagger, and a large ceremonial pipe. The gifts were accompanied by a card: "With the compliments of the president."

Were these gifts merely sweeteners to take the place of Franklin on my homeward journey? Or were they a harbinger of success? I dared not believe the latter. I had received no hint that the government would even shorten Franklin's sentence, but, at least, it acceded to his request for paper and pencil.

My second visit with Franklin was more relaxed than the first. He accepted the pencils and paper I brought him with the comment, "I hope I won't need them except for tonight." I responded that I had no reason to hope he would be able to leave with me, but, strictly on my own hunch, felt that he would be released soon.

I met with President Ali the night before my scheduled departure inside the heavily guarded compound where the president both lived and had his offices. I was ushered into a long reception hall adorned with blue flowered carpeting and gold drapes down three sides. The fourth side opened into a large courtyard. Two rows of ceiling fans whirred overhead. In the center of this large hall was a lonely group of gold-upholstered sofas and chairs.

By the time I reached the circle of furniture, President Ali, the foreign minister of Aden and an interpreter were walking through the same door I had entered. I needed no introduction. I had seen Ali's picture many places around Aden, but frankly it did him little justice. He was a tall, well-built man of 40. His black hair had a touch of gray. His skin was dark, his bearing dignified. He was soft-spoken, and two gold teeth glistened when he smiled.

After exchanging greetings, I thanked him for his hospitality and for the gifts. Then I launched into my own presentation of gifts: first, the Lincoln book and bust, then the scholarships.

What he was waiting for, of course, was the letter from Kissinger

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which would indicate the weight the United States gave my mission. When I handed it to him, I tried to broaden its importance.

"Perhaps your excellency will permit me to explain," I said. This letter presents formally the desire of the U.S. to re-establish diplomatic relations. This is important. Our government needs these relations in order to understand Aden's policies and problems. The president of the United States and the secretary of state are limited in foreign policy. They can do only whatever the Congress will support, so it is also important for Congressmen to gain a better understanding of Aden's situation and of the Arab world in general."

Ali responded: "Aden is the shining example of the Republic. Other areas of our country are quite different. The people are much poorer." I gulped. I had seen only Aden, Ali's "shining example" which struck me as very poor, so I could only guess at conditions elsewhere.

While I took notes, Ali told me that the anti-poverty efforts of his government were handicapped by "subversion" from neighboring states. He said, bluntly, "The belief is held by the people of our country that all suffering, all damage caused by subversives, is really the work of the United States government. All military equipment we capture is United States equipment." Some of it, he said, was outside this building for me to examine.

I interjected that this information was not known in the United States, underscoring the need for diplomatic relations, so this sort of injury would stop. He nodded. "I favor relations with the United States, but they must relate to grievances now seen by my people." He added, "Aden does not wish to be isolated from the United States."

Ali thanked me for the gifts, indicating the interview was over. I sensed this was my long-awaited opportunity, my chance to launch into an appeal for Franklin.

It was not needed. Ali interrupted by saying simply, "Regarding the prisoner, as soon as I heard of your interest in him, I saw to it that he received preferential treatment. I have carefully considered your request and your desire that he be released. I have decided to grant your request. When you want him, you may have him."

I could scarcely believe what I had heard. "When you want him, you may have him." I was so overcome with joy I half-stumbled leaving the room. Franklin was free. In fact, he was waiting at my quarters when I returned. We were on the plane at 6 o'clock the next morning, headed for Beirut, New York and then St. Louis—where a joyous family welcomed Franklin home.

I am convinced the main reason for Franklin's release was the decision by the government to probe ever so cautiously for better relations with the United States. Caution was necessary, because there

were those in both nations who did not wish to see relations improved. Ali was the least Marxist of a three-man ruling junta. In the State Department, even some “Arabists,” still resentful over the Yemeni expulsion of the United States presence years before, rejected Aden as nothing but a “training ground for PLO terrorists.” Others, such as Kissinger, felt differently. Ed Franklin had provided the opportunity to begin the probing.

But the United States government fiddled, hedged and delayed three years. Jimmy Carter replaced Gerald R. Ford in the White House, and Cyrus Vance became secretary of state. Our government turned down Aden’s request to buy wheat on credit, then refused to consider a bid to buy three used airliners. The United States kept putting off even preliminary talks. At a second meeting with me in September 1977—this time in New York where he addressed the United Nations—Ali restated his desire for renewed relations with the United States and suggested that I report our discussion to Secretary of State Cyrus Vance. I did so, and after my report, Vance and Foreign Minister Motie of South Yemen agreed to exploratory talks. To me, this appeared like a momentous breakthrough. The talks were to begin in Aden in just a few weeks, shortly after New Year’s Day. Sadly, procrastination took over.

No precise date for the meetings had been set when I returned to the Middle East with a number of other Congressmen in January 1978. I altered my own itinerary long enough for a side trip to Aden. Before I left the group, we met with Secretary of State Vance, whose travels happened to cross ours, and with Saudi Arabia’s Crown Prince Fahd—a large, impressive man who spoke eloquent English and was to become the Saudi monarch. Fahd spoke approvingly of my efforts in Aden and asked me to tell officials in Aden that Saudi Arabia was ready to resume sending them economic aid.

### *“It’s a Good Omen”*

When I arrived, the scene in Aden had improved. South Yemen had already exchanged ambassadors with its former arch-enemy, Saudi Arabia—even though the two nations still had disputes over territory. Aden had also just agreed to diplomatic relations with Jordan. The local radio station no longer harangued American and Saudi “imperialists.” This time my wife, Lucille, accompanied me. We were assigned to the same guest house I had used before, where the principal change was the presence of a well-stocked refrigerator.

President Ali received us in the same spacious hall, along with an honor guard. Although he avoided comment on Saudi Arabia’s offer of aid, Ali spoke of Crown Prince Fahd with great warmth.

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Then he added, "We are looking forward to the expected arrival of the diplomatic delegation from the United States before the end of the month." I am sure my face fell. I knew the delegation was not coming that month. In fact, the mission had been delayed indefinitely. A few days before, Vance had told me the bad news but had not explained why. When I expressed the hope that Ali had been notified of the delay, Vance had replied, "We will take care of it." But, unfortunately, no one did.

Ali was left waiting, day by day, for a group that did not arrive. I did not feel free to tell him of the change, so I listened and tried to look hopeful. I knew the delay would strengthen his critics who opposed reconciliation with the United States.

I changed the subject: "Some of our strategists say you have let the Soviets establish a naval base here. Do you have a comment?"

He strongly protested: "That is not true. We do not allow the Soviets, or any foreign nation, to have a military base in our territory. But we do cooperate with the Soviets because they help us." Ali concluded our discussion by giving me a message to take to Washington:

Please extend my warm greetings to President Carter. Kindly inform him that we are eager to maintain smooth and friendly relations between Democratic Yemen and the United States. We recognize that President Carter is concerned about maintaining friendly relations with all countries. We feel that is a positive policy. We believe our relations should be further strengthened.

As we parted, I gave Ali a pottery vase our daughter, Diane, had made for him. He said, "That's very nice. Please thank your daughter. I admire it." Then he stepped to the door to admire something else, rain, which is a rarity in Aden.

"It's a good omen," he said.

I left Aden more convinced than ever that diplomatic relations would help the United States and our friends in the region. The United States and Saudi Arabia had a common interest in minimizing the Soviet presence in South Yemen. We needed a diplomatic mission there. Back in Washington, I missed no opportunity to press this recommendation on Secretary Vance and on the White House staff.

At the White House a month later I was able to make a personal appeal to President Jimmy Carter. Carter said he was "surprised and pleased" by Ali's message.

"His words are surprisingly warm," he observed. "We've been hoping to improve our situation there." I urgently argued that there should be no further delays: "Another cancellation would be baffling to President Ali, to say the least."

Carter thanked me, and, as Vance had earlier, told me he would “take care of the matter.”

Carter was true to his word. Five months after my last meeting with Ali, a team of State Department officials arranged to visit Aden on June 26, 1978, for “exploratory talks” to discuss in a “non-committal way” the resumption of diplomatic negotiations. Ali was to meet them on the day of their arrival.

It was too late. Aden’s Marxist hardliners decided to act. Concerned by Ali’s probing for improved relations with the United States and Saudi Arabia, radicals seized fighter planes, strafed the presidential quarters, took control of the government, and on the day the U.S. delegation was scheduled to arrive, arrested Ali. He was executed by a firing squad. Ambassador Ashtal called from New York to tell me the delegation would still be welcome, but the mission was scrubbed. The group, after traveling as far as Sa’ana, capital of North Yemen, returned to Washington. Distressed over the execution of Ali, I asked Ashtal for an explanation. He told me, “It’s an internal matter of no concern to the outside world.”

Still, Ali’s fate concerned me deeply. And still does. I have often wondered whether my goodwill and his merciful act toward Ed Franklin contributed to his downfall.

My journeys to Aden had broader personal importance than my ultimately unsuccessful efforts to re-establish diplomatic relations. After years on Capitol Hill, I had heard for the first time the Arab perspective, particularly on the plight of the Palestinians. I began to read about the Middle East, to talk with experts and to begin to understand the region. Gradually, Arabs emerged as human beings.

The word of my experiences got around, and soon my office became a stopping place for people going to and from the Middle East—scholars, business people, clerics, government officials. It was unusual for anyone in Congress to visit Arab countries and take an interest in their problems. I began to speak out in Congress. I argued from what I considered to be a U.S. viewpoint—neither pro-Israel nor pro-Arab. I said that our unwillingness to talk directly to the political leadership of the Palestinians, like our reluctance to talk to President Ali in Yemen, handicapped our search for peace. Diplomatic communication with other parties, however alien, however small, is a convenience to our government. It does not need to be viewed as an endorsement. Thus, I asked, why not talk directly to PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, the acknowledged political voice of the Palestinians? One reason, I discovered, was that Henry Kissinger, who had provided help on my long road to Aden, had, yielding to an Israeli request, agreed not to com-

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municate formally with the PLO until they recognized the right of Israel to exist—a tough demand, especially in light of Israel's flat refusal to accept a new Palestinian state as its neighbor!

I decided to communicate with Arafat to help break the ice. I had first met the PLO leader in January 1978 during that Congressional mission to the Middle East when I saw Ali for the last time. Joining me were several colleagues, Democrats Leo Ryan of California, who was later to die in the violence at Jonestown, Guyana, and Helen Meyner of New Jersey. A Republican Congressman also attended, but, fearful that the news would cause him problems with Israeli activists in his district, asked me not to mention his presence. Before the meeting, I had many of the same misgivings that I felt before going to Aden four years earlier. I was wary, because meeting Arafat crossed the chalkline which Kissinger, at Israel's demand, had drawn.

### *"I Stand Behind the Words"*

When I crossed the line, to my surprise I discovered that Arafat, who received us in a heavily guarded second-floor apartment, was not a wild-eyed, gun-waving fanatic. He spoke softly and listened attentively. He met us bare-headed—he was nearly bald. This took us by surprise, because in public he was always attired in the Palestinian headdress or military cap. To questions about PLO terrorism, he repeated his usual litany, but coming from the depth of his experience it seemed somewhat more forceful: "I am a freedom fighter. We are fighting for justice for our people, the four million Palestinians dispossessed and scattered by three decades of war."

Later that year, I had a second and more productive meeting with Arafat. This time I was alone. We met in the same apartment as before. With him were Abu Hassan, his security leader who was soon to die in a car-bombing in Beirut, and Mahmoud Labadi, his public affairs officer, who later deserted Arafat and joined Syrian-supported hardliners. Such was the ferment in that tortured group. I wanted Arafat to clarify the terms under which the PLO would live at peace with Israel. Was he ready to recognize Israel? In a four-hour discussion late into the night, he provided the answer. Working carefully word by word, and phrase by phrase, he fashioned a statement and authorized me to report it publicly.

I wrote the words and read them back several times so he could ponder their full meaning. When it was done I asked Arafat if he would sign his name on the paper bearing the words. He answered, "No, I prefer not to sign my name, but I stand behind the words. You may quote me."

**The declaration Arafat gave me follows:**

The PLO will accept an independent Palestinian state consisting of the West Bank and Gaza, with a connecting corridor, and in that circumstance will renounce any and all violent means to enlarge the territory of that state. I would reserve the right of course to use non-violent, that is to say diplomatic and democratic means, to bring about the eventual unification of all of Palestine. We will give de facto recognition to the State of Israel. We would live at peace with all our neighbors.—Damascus, November 30, 1978.

I was elated—perhaps too much so. Arafat's pledge contrasted sharply with the harsh rhetoric of earlier Palestinian public statements which called, in effect, for the elimination of the state of Israel. It was not, of course, everything Israel or the United States would want, but it was an encouraging start. If true, it belied the image of the fanatic who believed only in violence. During the long interview we covered many points, and, determined to protect my credibility, I asked Arafat to identify statements he did not wish to make public. The carefully-drafted pledge was not one of these. He wanted the world to know, and, clearly, he expected a positive response from President Carter. To use one of the PLO leader's favorite expressions, he had "played a card" in authorizing me to transmit this statement. It was a step beyond anything his organization had officially proclaimed.

Tragically, it brought no reaction from the U.S. government. I later learned that Secretary of State Vance privately recommended that the administration "take note" of it, though no public announcement was made. In subsequent public interviews, Arafat—always a nimble actor—sidestepped questions about the pledge.

Nevertheless, Carter's newly-appointed special ambassador to the Middle East, Robert Strauss, a prominent Democrat who had previously been chairman of the Democratic National Committee, was intrigued with my communication with Arafat and became a frequent visitor to my office. I often thought that bringing Arafat and Strauss together would be important to the peace process.

The fact that Strauss is Jewish would have helped thousands of Jews in Israel to put aside their government's hard line. But Strauss, despite his unique intimate relationship with Carter and his demonstrated ability to negotiate complicated problems on both the international and domestic scene, never received full presidential backing on the Middle East. Late in his diplomatic mission, just before he was shifted to the chairmanship of Carter's ill-fated campaign for reelection, Strauss told me, "If I had had my way, I would have been talking directly to Arafat months ago."

I found myself being drawn deeper and deeper into Middle East

politics. Early one Sunday morning in August 1979, Assistant Secretary of State Harold Saunders called me in Illinois to ask for my help. At Arafat's behest, Kuwait was demanding consideration of a United Nations resolution sympathetic to the Palestinians. The United States, because of Israel's objections, would not support this resolution but did not want to go on record against it. The vote was scheduled for the following Tuesday. Given more time, Saunders hoped to find a formula which would satisfy both the Arab states and the United States. Mindful of President Carter's rule against even informal talks with the PLO, he carefully avoided directly asking that I call Arafat. Nevertheless, I knew Saunders well enough to grasp the purpose of his call. He hoped I could persuade Arafat to cancel the scheduled vote.

My call to Arafat's office in Beirut went through instantly, unusual for the chaotic Beirut exchange. I urged Arafat to delay the U.N. confrontation, arguing that this would cost him nothing while winning him the gratitude of the United States. Two hours later Arafat sent word to Kuwait causing the vote to be postponed. This spared the U.S. an embarrassing public spat with Arab friends. That same weekend, Carter's ambassador to the United Nations, Andrew Young, acted less cautiously than Saunders and met on the same issue with Zuhdi Terzi, the PLO observer at the United Nations. So firm was Carter's edict against talking with the PLO that this incident led to Young's resignation.

I was soon on the phone again with the State Department. This time my help, through Arafat, was needed in getting the U.S. hostages out of our embassy in Tehran. In our 1978 meeting, the PLO leader had told me of his close relationship with the revolutionaries in Iran, and I saw this crisis as an opportunity for Arafat to help in a humanitarian cause and perhaps open the door for peaceful negotiations on a broader scale. This time Arafat was away from headquarters, but I had a long talk with his deputy, Mahmoud Labadi, whom I had met during my second interview with Arafat.

He reminded me that Arafat had taken my advice on the United Nations confrontation but, in Labadi's words, "got nothing in return." He was right. No compromise resolution was ever accepted, and Arafat got little thanks. Labadi told me he disagreed with me regarding the situation in Iran but would report my arguments and recommendation carefully to his leader. Once more Arafat cooperated. He sent an envoy to Khomeini, and, according to Saunders, that envoy successfully arranged the release of the first eleven hostages.

For this, the Carter Administration thanked Arafat privately—very privately. Publicly, Carter spokesmen did nothing to discourage the unfounded speculation that the PLO had actually conspired with

Iran to seize the hostages. CBS's Marvin Kalb reported darkly that "someone" had been heard speaking Arabic (Iranians speak Farsi, a different language altogether) inside the embassy compound. This somehow seemed to mean that the PLO was responsible. Yet the reverse was true. Just before he left office, Secretary of State Vance told me that he was in "almost daily" communication with Arafat and his staff enlisting PLO help during the protracted Iranian hostage ordeal, but he never said so in public.

On several occasions during off-the-record meetings at the White House, I pleaded with the president to acknowledge publicly the moderate cooperative course chosen by Arafat and warned that failure to do so would strengthen more radical forces. Carter listened but never followed my advice. I learned later that Vice President Walter Mondale, more than any other personality in the Administration, had argued persuasively against any public statements which acknowledged PLO cooperation.

Mahmoud Labadi never forgave Arafat for this cooperation. Three years later he deserted the PLO leader and joined the rebels laying siege to Arafat in Tripoli. In explaining his defection, Labadi denounced Arafat by denouncing the aid Carter had ignored, "He [Arafat] gave far too many concessions to the U.S. and to the Israelis and he got nothing back. We think that we should step up armed resistance against the Israeli occupation." Labadi and his defecting comrades turned their weapons against Arafat, predicting—wrongly—that military measures could deliver for the Palestinian people what the PLO chief's diplomacy apparently could not.

Throughout 1979 and 1980, while deploring Palestinian violence, I also did my utmost to get the Carter Administration to pressure Israel to halt its repeated military attacks on Lebanon. Israel had begun periodic heavy bombing of villages and even areas in Beirut. The bombings were killing innocent civilians. Also, the planes and bombs were supplied by the United States. Finally Secretary of State Vance took an unusual step. He issued a formal written report to Congress stating that Israel "may have violated" the United States law which declared that United States-supplied weapons could be used only in self-defense. While the Administration did not take the next logical step of suspending military aid to Israel because the law was violated, the "may have violated" announcement made a point. It was one of those rare occasions when a United States administration has publicly rebuked Israel.

Behind the scenes, Carter was tougher—but not for very long. He sent a diplomat to Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin's office during the summer of 1980 with a warning that U.S. aid to Israel would be

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