

ble period of 1994, and \$304 million in 1993, the same was not true for Jordan or the Palestinian Authority. Jordan has increased its export earnings as well as tourism revenue, but none of this has been felt as beneficial by the average citizen, who has experienced inflation and lower living standards.

It has been in Jordan, in fact, that the opposition to the peace process has gained most ground. Up until the Amman conference, it might have been said, that the opposition to peace with Israel, or to “normalization,” though widespread, was essentially ideological in nature. It was led by political forces, like the Islamists, the Arab nationalists, and Hamas, who rejected the peace treaty on essentially dogmatic grounds. Their political rhetoric would not permit an arrangement with “the Zionist entity.” Following the Amman conference, however, the bone of contention between government and opposition became the economy and economic policy. It came to a dramatic head, when on Dec. 9, 1995, Laith Shubeilat, a former member of Parliament, was arrested on charges of *lèse majesté*, and undermining the national economy and currency. Regarding the latter, curious charge, Shubeilat had evidently rubbed salt into the wound, in public statements which challenged the government’s acquiescence to IMF and World Bank dictates, as part of the peace arrangements. A severe crackdown on Jordan’s professional associations and on the press, which had echoed such criticisms, signaled a dangerous escalation of tensions in the country toward outright confrontation. The entire conflict was being fueled as well from abroad, specifically from London, which was orchestrating psychological warfare campaigns against Jordan, accusing its leadership of plotting against Iraq, while fomenting a myriad of crises in Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Qatar, and so forth.

Although it was certainly not the intention of the prosecution, the arrest of Shubeilat has brought the entire issue of the “economic justice” of the peace process into the foreground. If a public figure is jailed because he has questioned the wisdom of the policies of the IMF, policies which have produced misery, famine, and devastation in literally every country in which they have been successfully imposed, then that means the question must be raised: Who is right? The IMF or those who reject the IMF? The massive support being expressed for Shubeilat inside Jordan as well as abroad, particularly from IMF victim nations, demonstrates the passion with which this issue—IMF free-market liberal economics and its consequences on the real economy—is becoming the enemy image of forces seeking development.

It is tragic that the economic policy fight should take on such forms, threatening the freedom and well-being of a public figure and the freedom of the press. That fight should be fought, and openly. For, to solve the urgent problems facing the Middle East in its quest for peace, it is more than ever necessary now to thrash out differences over the crucial issue of which economic policy is correct. Only through such a policy debate, can the means be found to provide justice for the Palestinian refugees.

Toward the return of the refugees of 1948

by Hon. Salih Shaawateh

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Each stage in history has its distinct ideological, political, and economic elements, which become embedded in peoples who witness a period of special historical shift.

This is what was registered in the historical records following the surrender of Nazi Germany. We saw East Germany being forced, politically and militarily, into the socialist camp headed by the former Soviet Union, while West Germany came to be subjected to military occupation by the Western allies, and was denied the right to build any military force. These developments coincided with implementation of the Marshall Plan for economic reconstruction of Western Europe, in addition to the creation of the NATO alliance in 1945.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1992, East and West Germany were reunited, and “Germany” regained its integrity after a period in which West Germany had become an industrial power from the 1960s and joined the Group of Seven.

Looking into the Arab world, we observe a different phenomenon. The Arab regimes remained ideologically and physically intact, despite all the defeats many of the leading Arab powers suffered. For example, the defeat in the 1967 war did not cause the collapse of Gamal Abdel Nasser’s regime, which had lost that war and with it Sinai and the Gaza Strip, which had been administered by that Egyptian regime since 1948. This could provide an explanation for the emergence of extremist movements in opposition to these (Arab) regimes in the Mideast region, since these movements believed that they were a better alternative to these regimes, and that their political programs could replace the ideologies of the regimes defeated in the ’67 war.

I do not wish to go into the details of this otherwise very important issue, since it is not the subject matter of this article. However, I referred briefly to the impacts which major historical changes can have on the nations of the region. This leads to the question: What is the future of those Palestinians who became refugees in other Arab countries since 1948? The fact is that many young people who belong to the second generation of the ’48 refugees have been asking me, and others on all different levels, this highly political question.

The peaceful, democratic struggle

I want to start by expressing my deepest concern about the fact that the international powers that are opposed to peace and stability in the region might try to create extremist movements, through recruiting the most frustrated among the '48 refugees. In appreciation of the trust and confidence the electorate has granted me, I present for discussion a political idea which is deeply bound up with those of international legitimacy, human rights, and democracy, so that it could become a framework for political activity for all the Palestinian refugees. I stress here that this idea is related "only" to the refugees of 1948, and therefore does not address those Palestinians living in the self-rule area. My feeling is that the Palestinian refugees who migrated to other Arab countries should demand the implementation of the United Nations' resolutions, particularly Resolution 181 of 1947 on the division of Palestine, and demand their right to participate in self-determination and to return to their land and properties as was expressed by U.N. Resolution 194 of January 1948.¹

Many calls have been pronounced here and there demanding the establishment of some movement or organization to crystallize and lead this political tendency. In Jordan, where democracy exists, we need not circulate these ideas secretly. They must be popularized under democracy, especially because they are based on international legitimacy. We realize that democratic practice is the key to the success of any movement which wants to mobilize the '48 refugees behind a political program aiming at guaranteeing their return to their homeland. This will mean that any such movement must declare from the outset that it will not resort to terrorist activities during its struggle for the people; both its slogan and goal must be: "the return to the land occupied in 1948 through the implementation of international resolutions, and by means of peaceful struggle supported by the Arab, Islamic and international peace-loving forces."

The dynamic basis for every terrorist movement is the state of frustration which the intellectual part of the masses

fall into, especially those sectors of it opposed to the authorities, the oppressed or impoverished strata of the people who are deprived of expressing their aspirations freely and democratically. From such an environment, the extremist groups in Egypt emerged. Their first victim was President Anwar Sadat, who made the first peace accord with Israel. He was the victim of the frustration which resulted from the agreement itself. Today, we are deeply concerned about the rising level of frustration among the '48 refugees. There has been no indication that the "Oslo 1" agreement, the Washington agreement, or the "Oslo 2" agreements referred to the issue of the return of these refugees to their land. I consider it to be my duty to make known the bitter and painful preoccupations of those refugees, particularly those living in Jordan.

No power on Earth can force any Palestinian to step back from demanding his unalienable national right to return to the home from which he/she was driven by force in 1948, especially as these rights were all recognized by U.N. resolution. However, what is most important now is what the Democratic Movement for the 1948 Refugees should commit itself to: It should resort only to democratic and peaceful methods in expressing its aspirations, and organizing the masses; it should also start with outlining its goals and political tendencies, that is, demanding the implementation of the U.N.'s resolutions, especially Resolution 181 on the division of Palestine and Resolution 194.

Notes

1. U.N. Resolution 194, in its 11th provision, "*Resolves* that the refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbors should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of their choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or in equity, should be made good by the Governments or authorities responsible. *Instructs* the Conciliation Commission to facilitate the repatriation, resettlement and economic and social rehabilitation of the refugees and the payment of compensation . . ." (editors' note).

TABLE 1

Disposition of Palestinian refugees by selected locations*

Country or territory	Total number of refugee camps	Percentage living in camps	Population living in camps	Population not living in camps	Country or territory total
Jordan	10	19.5%	244,026	949,513	1,193,539
West Bank	20	25.6%	129,727	374,343	504,070
Gaza	8	53.1%	350,620	292,980	643,600
Lebanon	12	50.3%	175,426	162,864	338,290
Syria	10	24.4%	91,476	235,812	327,288
Totals	60	31.7%	991,275	2,015,512	3,006,787

* Not including Palestinians living in Iraq, Egypt, Germany, Australia, Canada, or the United States.