

Birthright Denied

**Canadian Complicity
in Palestinian Dispossession**

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صادر عن
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June 1999

“Curiously, Canada represents a case where influence of its organized Jewish community upon the country’s policies is even more palpable than in the U.S. The effect is that, although Canada’s interests in the Middle East are quite secondary, its DEDICATION [editor’s emphasis] to Israel surpasses even that of the U.S.”

Israel Shahak

DEDICATION

TO: Israel Shahak

**A Jewish warrior for the truth and human rights -
a living conscience for humanity,**

AND TO: MARION KAWAS

**A Canadian warrior for Palestine and a living
example of solidarity between the Canadian and
Palestinian peoples.**

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Foreward

Hanna Kawas, a citizen of Canada asks our government to acknowledge, in his passport, a simple fact: that he was born June 2, 1948 in Bethlehem, Palestine. Our government accepts June 2. It accepts 1948. It accepts Bethlehem. But it refuses to acknowledge Palestine.

In the following pages, you can read the correspondence between Hanna Kawas and the Government of Canada on the question of his birthplace.

When I read the letters what struck me most is the resolve of Hanna Kawas to maintain his dignity, to assert his identity—which includes his place of birth—as an integral part of the Palestinian people’s still unresolved claim to national rights. The letters of the Canadian government expose an obtuse tangle of facts and principles. But I was struck much more by the government proposing false names—Bethlehem Jordan, Bethlehem Israel or Bethlehem (nowhere) —to substitute for Bethlehem, Palestine.

Why such proposals?

A full answer would require an analysis of our government’s overt and covert, sustained and consistent support of Zionism over the last 50 years. In Hanna Kawas’ letter to the Canadian government there are references to some of this.

But there also is a short answer. Our government is prepared to humiliate its own citizens who have come here from Palestine—dispossessed of and driven from their homeland—rather than respect their dignity, minimally acknowledge their birthplace, let alone support their right of return.

Yet at the exact moment I am writing this, Canada’s Minister of Foreign Affairs, comes on the radio to tell Canadians he so opposes ethnic cleansing he is sending yet more military to bomb and make war open those NATO accuses of ethnic cleansing. Surely his claim to belief relies on our ignorance of the Canadian government’s uncritical support of the well-documented Zionist cleansing of Palestine.

Or does he expect Canadian to share his government's proclivity for double-speak? The cruelest example of which is Canada's endorsement and enforcement of a policy of sanctions against the civilian population of Iraq in the name of policy of "human security." To promote "human security" our government, every month is helping to kill 6,000 or more Iraqi children under the age of five.

This is not meant to encourage cynicism, for cynicism is self-destructive. To be constructive, we must rescue valued principles and basic facts from their abusive relationship with power.

This is the encouragement inherent in Hanna Kawas' correspondence. He reminds us that basic facts and valued principles are the responsibility of each of us to uphold. And that, even when faced with the abuses of power, we can affirm and maintain our dignity.

Mordecai Briemberg
April 5, 1999

Introduction

I feel that I owe it to my people, the Palestinian people who suffered so many injustices in the past fifty years, to publicize the duplicity and complicity of successive Canadian governments with both the Zionist movement and its manifestation, the state of Israel.

Introduction

Few people know that for the Zionist Movement there are two Balfours, one British and the other Canadian . Much has been written and publicized about the British Balfour and the role of his government in the creation of the state of Israel. However, the role of the Canadian Balfour and his government remain unknown and unpublicized, especially amongst the Palestinian people, the Arab people and supporters of the Palestinian national rights in the West.

I am motivated by this fact and by the fact that I remain without a Canadian passport, due to this long-standing bias in Canadian policy towards Israel. I feel that I owe it to my people, the Palestinian people who suffered so many injustices in the past fifty years, to publicize the duplicity and complicity of successive Canadian governments with both the Zionist movement and its manifestation the state of Israel.

I do understand that the refusal of the Canadian government to put Palestine as the country of my birth on my passport was in no way a personal vendetta against me. It is in fact just part of a longstanding policy to liquidate the national character and identity of the Palestinian people. Since I started the process, I discovered many other Palestinians who faced this same problem, including persons who were born before May 14, 1948. We would like to document these cases of the Canadian government's conspiracy against Palestine and its people, and we encourage people to write us at the CPA mailing address or e-mail us about their ordeals with the Canadian Government.

This booklet will include all the correspondence I have sent to Canadian officials, and their (or their proxy's) responses to me. It will also contain my two letters to the Prime Minister of Canada, Jean Chretien, and the subsequent proxy response to me by the Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister, Lloyd Axworthy.

I would like to point out that I was extremely disappointed, although not surprised, by the responses I received and by the bankruptcy of the officials that represent the Canadian people in Ottawa. Simply put, none of the questions, concerns or documented historic evidence were considered, dealt with or addressed in any way, as is obvious from reading their responses. Further, there was no explanation as to why two passports were previously issued to me carrying Bethlehem, Palestine as my country of birth, except to say it had been a "mistake".

Also I would like to register my outrage at this Canadian government that denies a citizen the right to a passport, strictly for a politically motivated agenda, while at the same time supplies hundreds of Canadian passports to be used for terrorist operations by a “friendly” intelligence service, the Mossad. The recent silent reaction of the Canadian government to fresh reports that the Mossad is still seeking and using Canadian passports is another proof of its complicity.

Since I started this process, there has been no serious support from the “organized” Arab community in Canada, or from Canadian elected representatives, except for Ms. Libby Davies, the East Vancouver MP. I take this opportunity to thank her on behalf of my people for her consistent support of our just cause. Also I thank the many Canadians - Arabs, Jews and otherwise – who helped in publicizing my case and more importantly, who are continuing the support work in this difficult and crucial juncture of history. This, despite the great odds against such solidarity, represented by official Canadian policy, the well-financed and organized Zionist movement, and apologists in the NGO movement and the Arab and the Palestinian community, especially those apologists of the Federal Liberal Party.

Finally, I would like to conclude by saying that although we realized after seeking legal advice that any legal challenge against these Canadian policies would be very expensive (the APEC public hearings is an example), I still think this route remains an option if the financial conditions are met.

I hope that people will judge for themselves, and act on these issues by building viable organizations and promoting our just causes.

Hanna Kawas
Vancouver, February 1999

Inquiring about Canadian policy

June 10, 1997

To: R. Nelson, Manager
Passport Office, Surrey

Re: Kawas, Hanna
File # SU68162

I learned from my wife that yesterday your office refused to put the country of my birth on my Canadian passport.

When I first came to this country 23 years ago, my Canadian visa then indicated that I was born in Bethlehem, Palestine on June 2, 1948. Since I received my Canadian citizenship, all passports issued to me have carried my place of birth as Bethlehem, Palestine, the most recent being passport No. SH712171, issued Aug. 24, 1987.

Before you process my new passport, please let me know if there is now a new policy. When did it come into effect? And if there is such a new policy, why did it come into effect? Please send me all the relevant material on this new policy.

Please go ahead with processing the other two passports that were submitted with my application, those of my wife, ..., and my daughter,.... However, please wait for my further instructions before processing mine. Thank you.

Yours truly,

Hanna Kawas

c.c. M.J. Hutton, CEO, Passport Office, Ottawa
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Palestine Representative to Canada, Ottawa

***CEO of Passport Office
Explains the Policy***



July 23, 1997

Our file / Notre référence
2606-6
Your file / Votre référence

Dear Mr. Kawas:

The Honourable Lloyd Axworthy has asked me to respond to your letter of June 10, 1997, concerning the inscription of your place of birth in a new passport.

Prior to 1976, it was Passport Office practice to inscribe the place of birth in a passport as it appeared in an application form. It became apparent, however, that for various reasons, some applicants were showing their place of birth in other than the internationally recognized form. It was therefore considered necessary to ensure that all Canadian passports indicate a place of birth in line with Canadian government policy and accepted international usage. This policy was adopted to eliminate any political connotation from the Canadian passport.

Where the name of the city or country of birth has changed during the course of the applicant's lifetime, the place of birth in the passport may be indicated either as it is currently known or as it was known at the time of the applicant's birth. In the case of Palestine, only applicants born before May 14, 1948, in the formerly mandated territory known as Palestine may have passports issued with Palestine as their place of birth. As you were born after this date, Palestine cannot be entered as your place of birth in your passport.

I understand that when your passport application was submitted to the Surrey Passport Office, our policy on inscribing a place of birth was explained and you were informed that your place of birth may be shown in a new passport as Bethlehem, Jordan or just Bethlehem.

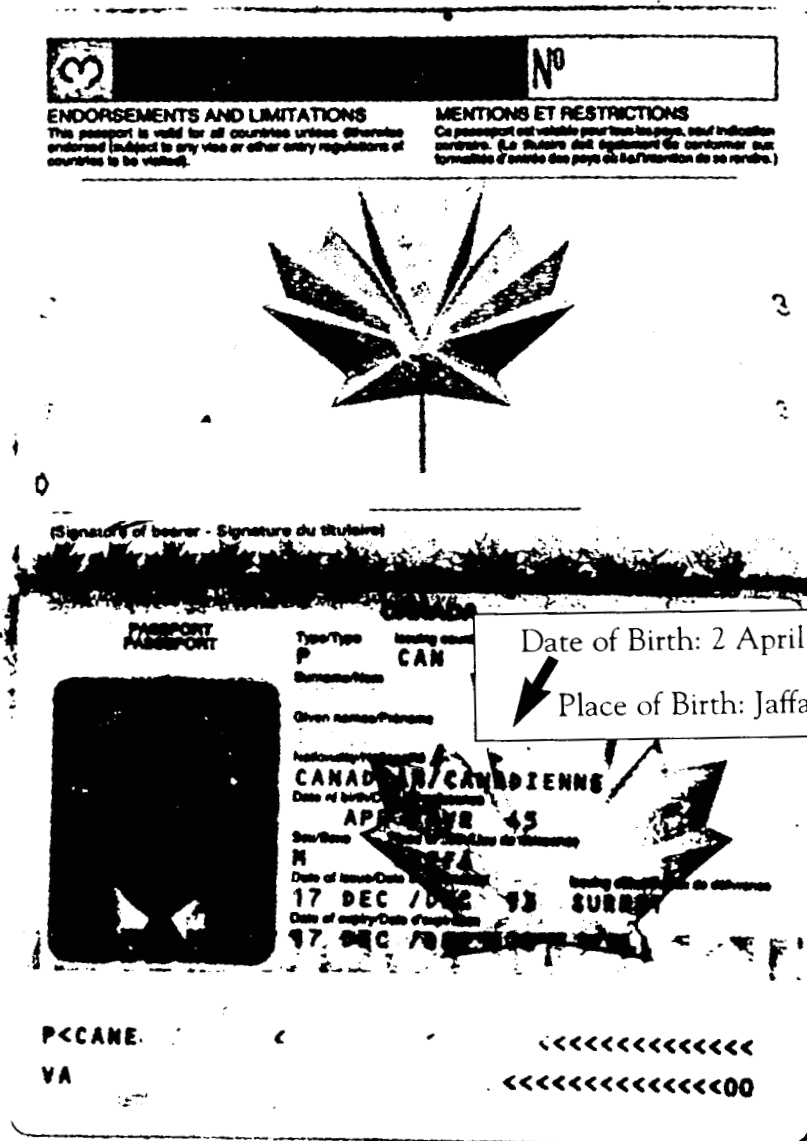
It has also been brought to my attention that on two previous occasions you were issued passports showing your place of birth as Bethlehem, Palestine. While I am unable to comment on the circum-

stances under which these passports were issued, I can only assume that an error occurred and our place of birth policy was incorrectly applied in these cases.

I regret any inconvenience this situation has caused, however, I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

M.J. Hutton
Chief Executive Officer



Another example of a Passport Office 'mistake' in dealing with Palestine. Note place of birth: Jaffa, but no country was indicated. This person was born in 1945, well before the creation of the State of Israel.

Documenting the history of Palestine and the role of Canada

“Zionists were so grateful to Canada and to Mr. Pearson for the part he played in the whole process that they called him ‘the Balfour of Canada.’

Report of the Standing Senate Committee on
Foreign Affairs, page 49

I am proud of my country of origin, Palestine, and of my Christian Arab heritage. My roots in Bethlehem go back thousands of years in history. Bethlehem is not a town that existed in a vacuum, a no-name country. The people of Bethlehem (Moslems and Christians) always maintained their Arabic language, culture and civilization.

Canada helped in wiping Palestine from the map of the world. Now by your refusal to implement your own policies, you are trying to wipe Palestine from our memory.

September 12, 1997

Mr. M.J. Hutton
Chief Executive Officer
Passport Office
Ottawa, K1A 0G3

Dear Mr. Hutton:

Thank you for your letter (file #2606-6) dated July 23/1997, in response to my letter of June 10/1997. Both dealt with the refusal of the Passport Office to put Palestine as the country of my birth on my Canadian passport.

Your response to me merely restated the position of the Passport Office, which recognizes Palestine only as long as it was under the British Mandate. When the British terminated their mandate on May 14/1948, it became anything (Jordan, Israel, no-name), but not Palestine. I think this practice is unfair to the Palestinian people and it perpetuates the injustices committed against them. It is also biased and politically motivated in support of official Israeli propaganda about events in Palestine. This version of events goes against reality, international legality and against publicly declared Canadian foreign policy. In fact, your refusal to put Bethlehem, Palestine as the country of my birth on my passport goes against your own stated policies.

According to a United Nations pamphlet published in New York in 1982: — “In April 1950 a general election was held to choose a new Jordanian Parliament with equal representation from East and West banks. Both houses of parliament meeting in Amman on 24 April 1950 adopted a resolution formally uniting the Hashemite Kingdom of the Jordan and those areas of Arab Palestine where the Arab legion had entered during the war with Israel and which had remained under Jordanian control since the armistice between Israel and Jordan.” (The Legal Status of the West Bank and Gaza, page 7)

The same pamphlet stated that: “The Palestinians have not lost their sovereignty over Palestine merely because the neighbouring Arab States did not accept the partition Plan. They have been deprived of its exercise.” (The Legal Status of the West Bank and Gaza, pages 6 and 7).

The Canadian Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs were even more candid when they wrote in their report: “Jordanian forces had occupied a large portion of Palestine west of the Jordan River including East Jerusalem an area which Jordan proceeded to ANNEX (my emphasis) in 1950. This step was recognized immediately by Britain and later by Pakistan but it did not secure further international support.” (See Report on Canada’s Relations with the Countries of the Middle East and North Africa, published June 1985 by the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs, pages 7,8.)

On the other hand, Canada did not recognize Israel with the termination of the British Mandate on Palestine. According to David J. Bercuson (Canada and the Birth of Israel - A Study in Canadian Foreign Policy, 1985.), the then Secretary of State for External Affairs Lester B. Pearson “therefore proposed and the Cabinet agreed, that quick action be taken. On 24 Dec. 1948, Canada extended de facto recognition to the state of Israel.” (Canada, Department of External Affairs, Vol.1 Jan. 1949, pages 29-30 as cited in Canada and the Birth of Israel, page 221.)

The full de jure recognition came only on May 11/1949 when Canada co-sponsored the U.N. General Assembly resolution to admit Israel as a state to the U.N.: “Pearson told a Toronto Audience five days later that the Canadian vote signified the extension by Canada of full de jure recognition of Israel.” (Cabinet Conclusions, 18 May 1949, as cited by David J. Bercuson, page 228.)

As you see, Mr. Hutton, when I was born in Bethlehem it was not legally part of Jordan and definitely it was not part of Israel. To use May 14/1948 arbitrarily as the end of the country called Palestine is wrong according to both “Canadian government policy and accepted international usage”, to quote you.

You say in your letter that “for various reasons, some applicants were showing their place of birth in other than the internationally recognized form.” You further go on to say that in 1976, “This policy was adopted to eliminate any political connotation from the Canadian passport”. From your letter, I gather that I am considered one of those who are trying to inject a political connotation, simply by using Palestine as my country of birth. Your statements are not only

offensive, but also far from the truth. You can not imagine how many Palestinians deny the country of their birth (although they agonize over it) just to avoid the unnecessary delays, harassment and abuse they face at the borders and airports of western countries. I personally faced this at London's Heathrow and Chicago's O'Hare airport and the Blaine crossing in Washington State at the U.S. border.

As I documented earlier, on the date of my birth June 2/ 1948, Bethlehem, as one of the cities in the West Bank of the Jordan River, was recognized both internationally and by the Canadian Government as being in Palestine. I would also like to draw your attention to the fact that since Christmas of 1995, following the signing of the Taba (Oslo II) Accords in September 1995, Bethlehem has been under the total control of the Palestinian Authority. The Canadian Government recognized the Oslo I and Oslo II Accords... it recognized the Palestinian Authority's rule over area A, over the seven main cities and the Gaza Strip ...it also recognized the Palestinian Passport and admitted people carrying it to Canada.

You stated in your letter that "the place of birth in the passport may be indicated either as it is currently known or as it was known at the time of the applicant's birth." Therefore, according to both of your own criteria, be it usage as of June 2, 1948, or as of June, 1997, when I applied for my new passport, you should be putting Bethlehem, Palestine.

Mr. Hutton —

The Passport Office would have accepted to put the place of my birth as Bethlehem, Israel, even though successive Canadian Governments have never publicly recognized the 1967 Israeli occupation of the West Bank (which includes Bethlehem) as legitimate. Your Office would also have accepted Jordan as the country of my birth, although the West Bank was ANNEXED to Jordan on Apr. 24/ 1950, almost 23 months after my date of birth. A third alternative I was offered was to leave blank the country of my birth, as suggested by the Surrey Passport Office and as mentioned in your letter. All of these options were presented to me, despite the fact that refusing to put Bethlehem, Palestine, clearly goes against your own written policies. May I ask

what is behind all this manoeuvring and what is the political motivation? Who are you protecting, Mr. Hutton — the truth, Israel, or me from my original country?

I am proud of my country of origin, Palestine, and of my Christian Arab heritage. My roots in Bethlehem go back thousands of years in history. Bethlehem is not a town that existed in a vacuum, a no-name country. The people of Bethlehem (Moslems and Christians) always maintained their Arabic language, culture and civilization.

The Canadian Government played a central part in the partition of Palestine and the creation of the State of Israel: “Mr. Justice Ivan Rand...played a central role in formulating the recommendations of its majority report (for the U.N. Partition Plan) ... with Mr. (Lester) Pearson (then Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs) playing an active role in securing its passage. ... Zionists were so grateful to Canada and to Mr. Pearson for the part he played in the whole process that they called him ‘the Balfour of Canada’.” (Report of the Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs, page 49.)

Mr. Hutton —

Canada is directly responsible not only for depriving the Palestinian people of their own identity and passport, but also for all the injustices that resulted from the creation of the state of Israel, including the tragic suffering of the Palestinian refugees. Canada helped in wiping Palestine from the map of the world. Now by your refusal to implement your own policies, you are trying to wipe Palestine from our memory.

Canada should, for the sake of future Canadian generations and for the sake of fairness and justice, take a more evenhanded position on the Palestinian Question. Most official Canadian positions are in favour of Israel and its security, and those positions are closely monitored and implemented. However, when it comes to official positions relating to Palestinian rights of self-determination and statehood, the Canadian Government pays only lip service to these policies and is willing to ignore them.

I hope the Canadian Government will start changing these unfair

practices against the Palestinian people and against Canadians of Palestinian origin. I hope your office will lead the way by accepting to put Palestine as the country of birth for any Canadian Palestinian who wants to identify with his or her Palestinian heritage and origin.

Finally, I expect your office to implement its own guidelines and policies and to put Bethlehem, Palestine as the place of birth in my new Canadian passport.

Waiting to hear from you,

Yours Truly,

Hanna Kawas

...

cc

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy, Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Dr. Baker Abdul Munem. Palestine Representative to Canada

Follow-up letter

November 19, 1997

Mr. M.J. Hutton
C.E.O.
Passport Office
Ottawa K1A 0G3
FAX: 819-953-5856

Re: Your file #2606-6

Dear Mr. Hutton:

Over two months ago, I sent you a letter, dated September 12, 1997, regarding your refusal to put Palestine as the country of birth on my Canadian passport. To date, I have yet to receive your reply.

I would like to travel soon to my hometown, Bethlehem. Therefore, I am hoping you will respond in the near future.

Please feel free to reply to the fax number below, if the postal strike continues.

Thank you. Waiting to hear from you,

Your truly,

Hanna Kawas

...

c.c. Lloyd Axworthy, Minister of Foreign Affairs
Baker Abdul Munem, Palestine Rep. to Canada

*The “well-researched” response of the
Canadian Government*



November 19, 1997

Our file / Notre référence
2606-6
Your file / Votre référence

Dear Mr. Kawas:

Thanks you for your letter of September 12, 1997, concerning the inscription of Palestine as your place of birth in a new passport.

As you know, at present, Canada does not recognize an independent Palestinian state, and our office must adhere to a place-of-birth policy which is consistent with this position. Therefore, I regret we are unable to comply with your request to have your place of birth inscribed as Bethlehem, Palestine. As stated in my previous correspondence, your place of birth may be shown in a new passport as Bethlehem, Jordan or just Bethlehem.

For your reference, I am enclosing information from the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade's web site of December 1996, which explains and supports our position. Should you require further information on Canadian foreign policy regarding Palestine, you may write to:

The Department of Foreign Affairs
and International Trade
Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0G2

or consult their web site at:

<http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/english/geo/africa/keyqu-en.htm>

I trust this further information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

M.J. Hutton
Chief Executive Officer
Enclosures

Canada's Position on Key Issues

From Webpage of the
Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade
December 1996

CANADA'S POSITION ON KEY ISSUES

The main principles government Canadian policy with regard to the Arab-Israeli dispute are:

Security of Israel

Canada supports the security, well-being and rights of Israel as a legitimate, independent state. This has been a fundamental aspect of the policy of successive Canadian governments since the foundation of the State of Israel in 1948.

Support for a Comprehensive Peace Settlement

Canada firmly supports the Israel-PLO Peace Agreement signed on September 13, 1993. The Agreement should become a comprehensive agreement based on UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, including the right of all countries in the region to live within secure and recognized boundaries and the requirement for Israeli withdrawal from territories occupied in 1967. Canada also firmly supports the Jordan-Israel Peace Treaty, signed on October 26, 1994.

Occupied Territories

Canada does not recognize permanent Israeli control over the territories occupied in 1967 (the Golan Heights, the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip) and opposes all unilateral actions intended to predetermine the outcome of negotiations, including the establishment of settlements in the territories and unilateral moves to annex East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights. Canada considers such actions to be contrary to international law and unproductive to the peace process.

Rights of Palestinians

Canada recognizes the legitimate rights of the Palestinians must be realized, including the right to self-determination to be exercised through peace negotiations.

The Palesting Liberation Organization

Canada recognizes the PLO as the principal representative of the Palestinian people. Because Canada has never enforced a ban on all contacts, Canadian officials have met with PLO representatives on various occasions. Previous restrictions on the level of Canadian contact with the PLO were lifted on March 30, 1989.

Palestinian Autonomy

Canada fully supports the Israel-PLO Declaration of Principles signed in September 1993. Canada does not recognize the establishment of an indepen-

dent Palestinian state, as announced in Algiers in November 1988. Canada's position, however, does not exclude the creation of a Palestinian state if that were decided by the parties through negotiations.

Support for fair-minded Peace Initiatives

Canada firmly supports constructive peace initiatives, such as the Camp David Accords of 1978-79, the Reagan initiative of September 1982, and the Madrid bilateral negotiations launched in October 1991 by the United States and the former Soviet Union. Canada has also supported the Fez Declaration of the 1982 Arab Summit, calling for Security Council guarantees for all states of the region, including Israel, the decision of the Palestine National Council to accept Security Council Resolution 242 as a basis for peace negotiations, and the mutual recognition announced by Israel and the PLO.

Status of Jerusalem

Canada believes that the status of Jerusalem can be resolved only as part of a general settlement of the Arab-Israeli dispute and opposes Israel's unilateral annexation of East Jerusalem.

Progress through Diplomatic Support and Practical Contributions

Canada is a strong advocate of moderation and of diplomatic support for those who take risks for peace. Canada has emphasized the importance of practical contributions such as participation in peacekeeping forces, support for human rights and the establishment of development assistance programs in the region.

United Nations Resolutions

Canada opposes all attempts to prejudge the outcome of negotiations by one-sided resolutions in international fora. Successive Canadian governments have been concerned that the polemical nature of many resolutions diverts UN agencies from pursuing their mandates. Canada has strongly opposed any move to suspend or expel Israel from the United Nations or its specialized agencies. However, when UN resolutions, such as the applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention to the occupied Territories, have identified Israeli actions as unjust, Canada has supported them along with virtually all its Western allies.

© *Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade*
December, 1996

A critique of Canadian complicity with Israel

Fifty years ago, on November 27, 1947, Canada played a major role in shoving a 'one sided resolution' down the throats of the indigenous people of Palestine without blinking an eye. Why all the concern now about the one-sided resolution, or does it depend on the 'one side' you are with? Is the Palestinian and Arab 'side' less human and worthy than the other?

Most official Canadian positions are in favour of Israel and its security, and those positions are closely monitored and implemented. However, when it comes to official positions relating to Palestinian rights of self-determination and statehood, the Canadian Government pays only lip service to these policies and is willing to ignore them.

As a Palestinian refugee, I do not think Canada should even be on the committee, let alone chair it, because Canada is not impartial and has its own hidden agenda.

الجمعية الفلسطينية الكندية Canada Palestine Association

P.O. Box 3255, Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6B 3X9

January 3, 1998

Honourable Lloyd Axworthy
Dept. of Foreign Affairs
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0G2

Dear Mr. Axworthy:

I was saddened and disappointed by the response of the Passport Office to my letter of Sep. 12/1997. The response, dated Nov. 19/1997, was faxed to me on Nov. 27/1997 (copy enclosed).

The letter, signed by Mr. M. J. Hutton, insists that my place of birth should be "Bethlehem, Jordan or just Bethlehem" on my new Canadian passport (he no longer offered Bethlehem, Israel as an alternative). Insisting on this position is unfair, misinformed, irresponsible and discriminatory. Mr. Hutton's letter ignores all the points and facts I raised in my letter and argues only one irrelevant point that "Canada does not recognize an independent Palestinian state, and our office must adhere to a place-of-birth policy which is consistent with this position."

First of all, I did not raise the issue of recognition of (nor the existence of) a Palestinian state in my letter, and I do not expect the Canadian Government to recognize such a state in the foreseeable future. Second, Palestine, as a country and a people, exists regardless of official Canadian recognition of a Palestinian state; otherwise, what are "the legitimate rights of the Palestinians .. including the right to self-determination..", to quote from "Canada's Position on Key Issues", Dept. of Foreign Affairs. Third, I thought logic and reason were the two criteria of Canadian foreign policy makers. If you recognize the Oslo 1 and Oslo 2 accords .. and you recognize the

PALESTINIAN Authority and the PALESTINIAN passports.. If you recognize the P.L.O.(PALESTINE Liberation Organization) as the principal representative of the PALESTINIAN people ..Then it is safe to assume that you recognize a PALESTINIAN nation and a PALESTINIAN people, after all the people were named after their country.

Although Mr. Hutton's letter was lacking in details and rational reasoning, he was gracious enough to admit that this is the best he could do to help me and that if I "require further information on Canadian foreign policy regarding PALESTINE (my emphasis)" that I may write to your department. He also sent me two position papers entitled "Canada and Peace in the Middle East" and "Canada's Position on Key Issues", claiming that this information from the Department of Foreign Affairs "explains and supports" the position of the Passport Office.

In fact if these position papers support anything, they support what I said in my letter to Mr. Hutton, that — "Most official Canadian positions are in favour of Israel and its security, and those positions are closely monitored and implemented. However when it comes to official positions relating to Palestinian rights of self-determination and statehood, the Canadian government pays only lip service to these policies and is willing to ignore them." Following is but a few examples, which prove this point of view.

1. The security of Israel was the no. 1 point in "Canada's Position on Key Issues", referring to it as "a fundamental aspect of the policy of successive Canadian governments since the foundation of the state of Israel in 1948". It is absurd and ridiculous to be concerned for the security of one of the strongest military powers on earth (stronger than Canada, by the way), while not one word is mentioned about the SECURITY of the indigenous people of Palestine who have been forcibly uprooted and lost everything in 1948, including their homeland, their properties, their identity and their security as individuals and as a nation. It was no accident that Israel waged most wars in the region and won them all. The Chicago Tribune reported on Nov. 19/ 1994 that "Israel has seven nuclear installations and as many as 200 nuclear weapons, according to an analysis of satellite photos by Jane's Intelligence Review".

Dr. Israel Shahak, a Holocaust survivor, a respected human rights advocate and a vanguard in defending Palestinian human rights wrote in his latest book (*Open Secrets: Israeli Nuclear and Foreign Policies*, Pluto Press 1997, page 45.) that “Israel clearly prepares itself to seek overtly a hegemony over the entire Middle East which it has always sought covertly, without hesitating to use for the purpose all means available, including nuclear ones”. It is black humour to make the security of Israel “a fundamental aspect” of Canadian foreign policy, a humour that the Palestinian and other Middle Eastern peoples are paying dearly for.

2. The same position paper states — “Canada recognizes that the legitimate rights of the Palestinians must be realized, including the right to self determination **TO BE EXERCISED THROUGH PEACE NEGOTIATIONS** (my emphasis).” And what happens if the peace negotiations reach an impasse, similar to the situation now? What if Israel (as it did for the past fifty years) does not agree to recognize the Palestinian right to self-determination? Then what is the use of such a conditional Canadian position? It only gives Israel a veto power over a right that is sacred and internationally recognized — the right to self-determination. The same conditional double talk is found in the following statement — “Canada does not recognize the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, as announced in Algiers in November 1988. Canada’s position, however, does not exclude the creation of a Palestinian state **IF THAT WERE DECIDED BY THE PARTIES THROUGH NEGOTIATIONS**(my emphasis)”. To put it more simply, if Israel agrees, then Canada agrees. On the one hand, Canada does not recognize a Palestinian state, while at the same time, the very foundation of Canadian foreign policy is conditional on the recognition of the Israeli state and its security! Is this fair, even-handed, balanced or neutral? Or none of the above? The paper also states that Canada supports “the mutual recognition announced by Israel and the PLO.” Aside from recognizing Israel’s existence as a state, a people and a country, what does the recognition of the PLO practically mean if you do not recognize Palestine as a people, a country nor as a state? We see again that Canada’s only concern is for Israel and its well being.

3. A further example from “Canada’s Position on Key Issues” is — “Canada opposes all attempts to prejudge the outcome of negotiations

by one sided resolutions in international fora...”. Obviously, this position is directed at protecting Israel from implementing U.N. resolutions, which Israel has consistently ignored and made a mockery of since its creation on May 15, 1948. Canada’s abstention on U.N. resolution No. ES-10/2 adopted on April 25/1997, condemning Israeli settlement policy, is another example of this biased position; clearly this Canadian “moderation” did not stop Israeli settlement policies nor alter their de-facto annexation of the West Bank, including Jerusalem. Also, it did not stop Israeli Intelligence from using Canadian passports (hopefully without the knowledge of Canada) to carry out yet again terrorist operations against the Palestinian people and their political leaders. Shalom Hayom, the newsletter for Jews for A Just Peace, published in Vancouver, wrote in its editorial of issue No. 15, Nov. 1997 - “When the recent use of forged Canadian passports by the Israeli Mossad resulted in a bungled attempt at assassination in Jordan, only Greg Felton of the Vancouver Courier (Oct. 12) had the wit to urge Canada’s Foreign Minister, Lloyd Axworthy, to call on the international community to impose comprehensive economic sanctions on Israel until it lives up to its pledge to withdraw from all occupied lands including East Jerusalem.’ Pie in the sky, no doubt, there is little incentive, in the existing political climate, for Axworthy to pay heed to Felton...”. The hypocrisy and the double standard of Canadian foreign policy is recognized not only in the Middle East but also by some Canadians, Jews and non Jews alike. Fifty years ago on Nov. 29/1947, Canada played a major role in shoving a “one-sided resolution” down the throats of the indigenous people of Palestine without blinking an eye. Why all the concern now about the “one-sided resolutions”, or does it depend on the “one side” you are with? Is the Palestinian and Arab “side” less human and worthy than the other?

Dear Mr. Axworthy:

I take this opportunity to thank you for your letter dated June 19/1997, responding to my letters of Feb. 21/1997 and May 14/1997 to the Prime Minister, about my concerns on Canadian foreign policy. I feel that none of these concerns were addressed specifically nor satisfactorily and I believe that the stand of the Passport Office is just another example of the bias in Canada’s foreign policy in favour of Israeli positions. It was reported by AFP on Dec.9/97 that -

“The European Union is taking a close look at products bearing the ‘Made in Israel’ label, determined to prevent the Jewish state from getting tariff breaks on goods made by Palestinians or in Jewish settlements.” The EU has a free trade agreement with Israel similar to Canada’s, so why does Canada not take the same position if it is really interested in a “just, lasting and comprehensive peace” to quote from your letter to me? Is Canada capable of taking such a balanced position?

Dear Mr. Axworthy:

I hope your recent visit to the Palestinian occupied territories gave you a new perspective with a more humanitarian touch which recognizes the desperate and unjust situation of the Palestinians. I further hope it gave you new insights that the Canadian abstentions on U.N. resolutions condemning Israel are wrong, and are “not helpful at this critical juncture of the Middle East Peace Process” (to quote Ambassador Robert R. Fowler when he abstained). In fact, they only encourage Israel to continue with settlement building on occupied Palestinian lands and in its transfer (ethnic cleansing) policy against the Palestinian people, especially the citizens of Jerusalem.

Mr. Minister:

During the last Canadian election campaign, the Canada Palestine Association and the Voice of Palestine(both of Vancouver) sent a questionnaire to the five major parties. Senator Dan Hays answered on behalf of the Liberal Party of Canada on May 27/1997. He wrote in the answer to a question on the Palestinian refugees: “As chair of the Refugee Working Group(RWG), Canada plays an important role in seeking agreement on means to ensure Palestinians are successfully RESETTLED (my emphasis) in the context of an Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement.” Once again this position shows that Canada adopts the Israeli agenda. This statement is against the mandate of the RWG, against the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and against numerous U.N. resolutions relating to Palestinian refugees, starting with U.N. General Assembly Resolution 194 (111) of December 11, 1948. These resolutions give the Palestinian people the right to RETURN, not the right to RESETTLE. As a Palestinian

refugee, I do not think Canada should even be on the committee, let alone chair it, because Canada is not impartial and has its own hidden agenda. That is why Mr. Andrew Robinson, the chair of the RWG, did not keep his appointment for an interview with the Voice of Palestine of Vancouver last December, after he was faxed the questions for the interview.

Dr. Israel Shahak wrote in his most recent book (*Open Secrets*, 1997) about the bias of Canadian policy towards Israel. He stated “Curiously, Canada represents a case where influence of its organized Jewish community upon the country’s policies is even more palpable than in the US. The effect is that, although Canada’s interests in the Middle East are quite secondary, its DEDICATION (my emphasis) to Israel surpasses even that of the US” (pg. 125). And since this is the case, why should Canadian foreign policy earn “the respect of all parties in the region for its fair-mindedness and constructive approach.” (your letter, June 19/97)? Why should Canada gain any respect at all from the Palestinian and other Middle Eastern peoples, including fair-minded Israelis?

Dear minister:

I am still at a loss to understand why, when past Canadian governments agreed to put Bethlehem, Palestine as my place of birth on all my previous Canadian passports, this government, your government, now refuses to do so. Is it because I became more vocal in criticizing Canadian positions on the Middle East? Or is it because I wrote the two letters I mentioned to the Prime Minister of Canada a short while before applying for my new passport? Or is it part of the Oslo “peace accord” dividends that the Palestinian people were promised, even though all they have received so far are more closures, more unemployment, worse economic hardships and diminished recognition?

Dear Mr. Axworthy:

I believe that I have been denied my right to my original homeland; this DENIAL goes against the Canadian Charter of Rights, which does not allow for discrimination on the basis of place of origin. For this reason, I will seek legal advice.

And finally, because I am not the first nor the last Palestinian who was denied their identity, I would like to conclude my letter with a fitting and poignant verse from a poem for the Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darweesh:

“All the hearts of the people are my I.D. card, you could take away my passport.”

I await your response, and hope you will have the vision to instruct the Passport Office to put Palestine as my country of birth on my new passport, since I proved beyond the shadow of a doubt in my previous letter (Sept. 12/97) that Palestine is what it was called on June 2, 1948. Please forgive me for going public with my concerns, but only open debate, challenging my community to be more organized and vocal, and informing the Canadian public will change and redirect Canadian policy. The Palestinian people do not want nor expect charity from the Canadian people, they however do want and expect fairness and support for their just cause.

Sincerely yours,

Hanna Kawas,
Chairperson, Canada Palestine Association,
Host, Voice of Palestine,
Vice-President, Canadian Arab Media Association.

cc:

Jean Chretien, Prime Minister of Canada
Yasser Arafat, President of Palestine
M.J.Hutton, Passport Office C.E.O.
Dr. Baker Abdel Munem, Palestine Representative in Canada
Libby Davies, MP, Vancouver East
John Reynolds, MP, West Vancouver-Sunshine Coast
Svend Robinson, MP, Burnaby
Jews for Just Peace, Vancouver
Canadian Arab Federation and Member Organizations
All members of Canadian Arab Media Association
Arab League Office

The take it or leave it policy

Logic and reason is not part of the Canadian foreign policy



February 19, 1998

Our file / Notre référence
2606-6
Your file / Votre référence

Dear Mr. Kawas:

The Honourable Lloyd Axworthy has asked me to respond to your letter of January 3, 1998, concerning the inscription of your place of birth in a new passport.

While you may not agree with the position of the Passport Office in regard to the manner of inscribing your place of birth in your passport, or with the official position of the Canadian government as outlined in the documentation previously forwarded to you, our decision has not changed. Therefore, the options outlined in our previous correspondence remain.

I trust this information clarifies my previous correspondence.

Yours sincerely,

M.J. Hutton
Chief Executive Officer

***I will not betray my country nor my
people.....Keep your passport***

I believe I have been treated unfairly because of my identification with the just cause of my people and for trying to keep the memory of my usurped country alive. Therefore, I cannot in good conscience accept my Canadian passport without the inscription of Palestine as the country of my birth.

For me to accept your denial of my right of association with my people and my original country would be an act of betrayal to both: a betrayal of the people who suffered the dual injustice of exile and occupation, and a betrayal of the homeland that suffered eradication from the map.

Unless the injustices and crimes against my people (which Canada is party to) are recognized and rectified, there can be neither peace nor healing in Palestine/Israel or in the entire Middle East.

الجمعية الفلسطينية الكندية Canada Palestine Association

P.O. Box 3255, Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6B 3X9

June 10, 1998

Mr. M. J. Hutton
Chief Executive Officer
Passport Office

Dear Mr. Hutton:

Thank you for your letter dated Feb. 19/1998 (File # 2606-6) in response to my letter to Mr. Lloyd Axworthy.

I feel that none of my concerns have been addressed and none of the questions I raised have been answered, especially the question relating to my country of birth. There was no explanation as to why the Canadian government does not recognize Palestine as a country, not now nor when I was born, inspite of the historic documentation I quoted in my letter dated Sep.12/1997.

I believe I have been treated unfairly because of my identification with the just cause of my people and for trying to keep the memory of my usurped country alive. Therefore, I cannot in good conscience accept my Canadian passport without the inscription of Palestine as the country of my birth. Please instruct the Surrey passport office to return my passport application and the relevant fee submitted.

Dear Mr. Hutton:

I would like to share with you the reasons why I am refusing my passport, even though no valid reason was offered to me as to why the Canadian government is denying me the right to identify with my country of origin.

Fifty years ago last month, a grave injustice befell my people, the majority of whom were forced out of their homeland ... their land and

private properties were stolen and confiscated ... 418 towns and villages were demolished and erased from the map of the world. The Canadian government, represented by the Prime Minister, saw fit to celebrate the 50th anniversary of this infamous human tragedy. “May you go from strength to strength”, Mr. Chretien told the celebration in Toronto, sending the wrong message to the Israeli extremists and assuring them that Canada approves of even more injustice against the Palestinians.

The Palestinian people ... those in exile, those under occupation, those who still carry their deeds to their properties, those who still carry the keys to their demolished or usurped homes and those to whom the deeds and keys have been passed on to them by their parents and grand- parents:— All of us commemorated this 50th anniversary by declaring “our resounding presence in time and place, despite all attempts to uproot us from the land which has borne our name from the beginning of time...Slated for national obliteration and severance from the land, we have affirmed our identity and ties to our homeland, snatching our reality from the jaws of oblivion” (The Palestinian People’s Appeal on the 50th anniversary of the Nakba, read by Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish on May 14/1998).

For me to accept your denial of my right of association with my people and my original country would be an act of betrayal to both: a betrayal of the people who suffered the dual injustice of exile and occupation, and a betrayal of the homeland that suffered eradication from the map. It is also a betrayal of the memory of the victims of the Zionist project, the memory of the destroyed towns and villages, and the memory of the usurped homes and lands.

Dear Mr. Hutton:

Unless the injustices and crimes against my people (which Canada is party to) are recognized and rectified, there can be neither peace nor healing in Palestine/Israel or in the entire Middle East.

Finally, I thank you for your consideration and patience.

Yours truly,

Hanna Kawas,
Chairperson, Canada Palestine Association,
Host, Voice of Palestine,
Vice-President, Canadian Arab Media Association.
Exec. Member, Canada Palestine Health Research
Foundation

cc:

Jean Chretien, Prime Minister of Canada
Yasser Arafat, President of Palestine
Lloyd Axworthy, Minister of Foreign Affairs,
Canada
Dr. Baker Abdel Munem, Palestine Representative
in Canada
Libby Davies, MP, Vancouver East
John Reynolds, MP, West Vancouver-Sunshine Coast
Svend Robinson, MP, Burnaby
Jews for Just Peace, Vancouver
Canadian Arab Federation and Member Organizations
Canada Palestine Health Research Foundation
All members of Canadian Arab Media Association
Arab League Office

*The refund of my passport fee
Was the only answer.*



Public Works and Government
Services Canada

Travaux publics et Services
gouvernementaux Canada

BATCH/LOT-2470 DAO/BCM-0000
FOREIGN AFF. & INT'L TRADE CAN. - # AFF ETRANGERES ET COMM I 005

07949072

2201-7949072

04-SEP/SEPT-1998 Sub No - Telson N°

Particulars - Détails

Particulars - Détails	Amount - Montant
REFUND SUI5006 INFO MLMEMARD	
SUI5006 KAWAS (48-06-02) PASSPORT REFUND	60.00
BATCH/LOT-2470(0776) REQ-5006613	60.00
TOTAL	

SEE REVERSE

AU VERSO

Appendix

Letters ...responses ...and documents

- A letter to the Prime Minister about Canadian investment in Israeli settlements
- The response from the PM office
- Follow up letter to the PM
- Response from the PM office
- A letter to the PM about Canadian vote at UN in favor of Israeli policy
- A response from the Minister of Foreign Affairs
- Explanation of the Canadian Vote
- Liberal Party of Canada positions on Palestinian and Arab Issues

الجمعية الفلسطينية الكندية Canada Palestine Association

P.O. Box 3255, Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6B 3X9

February 21, 1997

Rt. Hon. Jean Chretien
Prime Ministers Office
Parliament Bldgs.
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A2
FAX: 613-941-6900

Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

On February 17, 1997, Associated Press reported that, according to Israel Radio, Canada's Reichman Family and the Australian millionaire Joseph Gutnik have bought 34 acres of land next to the controversial "Har Homa" site on the occupied Palestinian West Bank near East Jerusalem and Bethlehem.*

Israel Radio added that if the Israeli government does not approve the 6500 unit "Har Homa" project soon, the donors themselves (Reichman and Gutnik) will take steps to lay the infrastructure for a new settlement.

David Bar-Ilan, Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu's top aide, said the government would not get involved in the donor's plan and would allow such a move.

Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian President, said on February 15, 1997, that building Jewish settlements around East Jerusalem would sabotage the chances of a permanent peace agreement.

The Israeli group Peace Now also said on February 17 that "Har Homa could be the government's second tunnel", referring to the violence that erupted last September after the Israeli government opened the tunnel close to the Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem.

Mr. Prime Minister —

Despite the peace process, the uprooting of the Palestinian people continues and the violation of their human and national rights goes on. Just look at the recent evictions of the Jahalin bedouin tribe from their land and the demolition of Palestinian homes near Hebron. The theft and confiscation of Palestinian land to make way for new settlements is against all international laws and an act of piracy which should be condemned by all peace-loving people.

Canada's foreign policy has always considered the building of Jewish settlements in the occupied Palestinian West Bank to be illegal and an obstacle to peace. Therefore, any Canadian involvement in building settlements jeopardizes the image and role of Canada in the Arab Middle East and threatens diplomatic and economic ties to the region.

I urge you to instruct the Minister of Justice to immediately investigate if any Canadian tax laws, especially those regarding tax exemptions, and/or any Canadian national security laws, have been violated by the Reichman Family.

Yours truly,

Hanna Kawas
Chairperson, Canada Palestine Assoc.
Host, Voice of Palestine

c.c. Minister of Foreign Affairs
Minister of Justice and Attorney-General
Yasser Arafat, President of Palestine
Dr. Baker Abdul Munem, Palestine Rep. to Canada
North American Coordinating Committee for NGOs on The
Question of Palestine

** Bethlehem is my hometown but I am still not allowed to go back there to live in spite of the peace process. The same applies to the great majority of the Palestinian people in diaspora.*



March 6, 1997

Ms. Hanna Kawas,
Chairperson,
Canada Palestine Association,
P.O. Box 3255,
Vancouver, British Columbia.
V6B 3X9

Dear Ms. Kawas:

On behalf of the Prime Minister, I would like to acknowledge receipt of your letter of February 21 regarding the Reichman family's business investment in Israel.

Please be assured that the points you raised on behalf of the Canada Palestine Association have been carefully reviewed. I note that you have already directed a copy of your letter to the Honourable Lloyd Axworthy, Minister of Foreign Affairs. I am sure the Minister will appreciate having your concerns brought to his attention and will give them every consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Stokes
Manager of Correspondence

الجمعية الفلسطينية الكندية
Canada Palestine Association

P.O. Box 3255, Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6B 3X9

April 25, 1997

Rt. Hon. Jean Chretien
Office of the Prime Minister
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A2

Dear Sir:

Thank you for acknowledging receipt of my letter, dated February 21, 1997, regarding the illegal "Har Homa" settlement in Jerusalem, and the involvement of the Reichman family in such activity.

However, to date, I have received no reply to our concerns from either yourself or Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lloyd Axworthy, who was sent a copy of our letter. We regard the issue of Israeli settlement building on occupied Palestinian land to be of utmost importance and may well serve to destroy what was left of the Oslo peace process. We would like to know what is the position of our government on this issue, and further, on the question of whether the Reichman family has obtained tax benefits or broken any laws in their support of this illegal land grab.

Thank you, and we look forward to your reply.

Yours truly,

Hanna Kawas (Mr.)
Chairperson, Canada Palestine Association

May 15, 1997

Ms. Hanna Kawas,
Chairperson,
Canada Palestine Association,
P.O. Box 3255,
Vancouver, British Columbia,
V6B 3X9

Dear Ms. Kawas,

On behalf of the Right Honourable Jean Chrétien, I would like to acknowledge receipt of your correspondence of April 25, in which you enquired about the response to your previous letter of February 21, 1997.

Officials at the Department of Foreign Affairs assure me that you may expect a reply to your original letter in the near future. I have taken the liberty of forwarding a copy of our latest exchange of correspondence on this issue to the Honourable Lloyd Axworthy, Minister of Foreign Affairs, so that he may also be made aware of the concerns expressed in your letter. I am certain that the Minister will appreciate your continued interest in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Sondra Wiseman
Special Assistant
Correspondence

الجمعية الفلسطينية الكندية Canada Palestine Association

P.O. Box 3255, Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6B 3X9

May 14, 1997

Rt. Hon. Jean Chretien
Office of the Prime Minister
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A2
FAX: 613-941-6900

Dear Sir:

We in the Canada Palestine Association view the Canadian abstention on U.N. General Assembly Resolution No. ES-10/2, adopted April 25, 1997, as the true position of Canadian foreign policy. This policy supports Israeli occupation of Palestinian and Arab land and accordingly supports Israeli aggression against the human and national rights of the Palestinian and Arab people.

Mr. Prime Minister, we are not convinced by the reasoning of the Canadian representative to the U.N. We think it is all just excuses so Israel will not be isolated internationally.

- Giving tax deductions for monies that go to Canada Park, which is built on the rubble of three Palestinian towns (Yalu, Beit Nuba and Imwas), in the occupied West Bank
- Not investigating if the Reichman Family is receiving tax breaks to buy land in the occupied Palestinian territories
- Allowing the purchase of Israeli Bonds with Canadian RRSP monies
- Passing the Free Trade Agreement last year between Canada and Israel.

These are but a few examples of Canadian complicity with Israel's brutal occupation.

We think this country should be impartial in the Arab-Israeli conflict, both in words and deeds. We also think Canada should condemn, and work to end, the 30 years of Israeli occupation. Dare we suggest — the same way it worked to end Iraqi occupation of Kuwait; or when it comes to Israel, does the Canadian government have a double standard?

Yours truly

Hanna Kawas (Mr.)
Chairperson
Canada Palestine Association

Jun 19 1997

Dear Mr. Kawas:

The Prime Minister has forwarded to me a copy of your letter of February 21, 1997, concerning the construction of an Israeli settlement on Har Homa (Abu Ghneim), and that of May 14 pertaining to the situation of Palestinians in Israel and Canada's vote in a United Nations resolution on Israeli actions in East Jerusalem.

Your comments have been noted. Canada believes that the Middle East peace process is the only way forward to ending decades of violence in the region. We are actively engaged in encouraging Palestinians and Israel to negotiate a just, lasting and comprehensive peace.

The Government of Canada, through our representation at the United Nations and our Embassy in Tel Aviv, has conveyed to the Government of Israel our concerns with its decision to build a settlement on Abu Ghneim. Canada does not recognize permanent Israeli control over the territories occupied in 1967 and opposes all unilateral actions intended to predetermine the outcome of peace negotiations, including the establishment of settlements in the territories and the annexing of East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights. We consider such actions to be contrary to international law and unhelpful to the peace process.

We will continue to stress this view to the Israeli authorities and encourage them to reverse their plans for building the Har Homa settlement. At the same time, Canada will encourage both sides to refrain from actions which could undermine confidence in the peace process.

Our voting record in the United Nations reflects longstanding principles of Canadian foreign policy. I am enclosing for your information an explanation of Canada's vote as delivered to the United Nations General Assembly by our Ambassador to the United Nations, Mr. Robert R. Fowler, and an outline of the principles of Canadian Middle East policy.

Your concern about alleged support by Canadians for the construction of Israeli settlements such as Har Homa relates to the issue of tax

exemption for charitable activities. The principle that an activity will not be considered charitable if it substantially contravenes public policy is long established and has been fully adopted in Canadian law. This principle applies to all areas of government policy, including foreign policy.

As I have stated, Canada's longstanding policy is that Israeli settlement activity in the Occupied Territories is unhelpful to the Middle East peace process and contrary to international law. Accordingly, if a charitable organization is found to be operating contrary to established Canadian foreign policy, Revenue Canada is obliged to take appropriate action, including a review of the organization's registered status. This policy applies equally to all charitable organizations operating in Canada.

Regarding the Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement, I believe it strengthens our presence in the Middle East and underscores our belief in the peace process. Prosperity helps lead to stability, and our commitment to the peace process includes a willingness to enhance our trading relations with other countries in the Middle East and Northern Africa. In particular we have offered to enter into an economic arrangement with the West Bank and Gaza. Canadian and Palestinian officials worked closely to organize seminars on the benefits of the Agreement for Palestinian exporters.

Although the Middle East is one of the most difficult areas for international diplomacy, Canadian foreign policy has earned the respect of all parties in the region for its fair-mindedness and constructive approach. May I assure you that the Government of Canada continues to watch closely the situation in the Middle East and will avail itself of any opportunity to be of assistance in restoring a climate conducive to peace negotiations.

Thank you for taking the time to share your views with the government.

Sincerely,

Lloyd Axworthy
Enclosures: 2

EXPLANATION OF VOTE

General Assembly - 10th Emergency Special Session

“Illegal Israeli actions in occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory”

Delivered by Ambassador Robert R. Fowler

April 25, 1997

Mr. President,

Canada abstained on the resolution entitled “Illegal Israeli actions in occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory.” It is Canada’s view that the resolution is not helpful at this critical juncture of the Middle East Peace Process.

Canada is a strong supporter and an active participant in the search for a durable and lasting peace in the Middle East. We are thus deeply concerned by the current impasse in the negotiating process. It is our view that only through direct dialogue and negotiation can the parties achieve a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the region. We oppose any unilateral actions that would prejudge the outcome of these negotiations.

We urge Israel to stop settlement activity in East Jerusalem and elsewhere in the Occupied Territories. In Canada’s view the construction of an Israeli settlement at Har Homa/Jabal Abu Ghneim is a violation of international law and harmful to the peace process.

We believe it is incumbent on the parties to honour and fully implement their existing agreements. This commitment must include a determined effort on the part of the Palestinian leadership to combat terrorism.

Thank you, Mr. President.



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Ottawa ON K1P 6M8
☎: (613) 237-0740 ■: (613) 235-7208

Parti libéral du Canada
81, rue Metcalfe, bureau 400
Ottawa ON K1P 6M8
☎: (613) 237-0740 ■: (613) 235-7208

May 27, 1997

Hanna Kawas
Chairperson
Canada Palestine Association
P.O. Box 3255
Vancouver, British Columbia

Dear Mr. Kawas:

Thank you for your active interest in Canada's foreign policy. The current difficulties in the Middle East are of grave concern to the Liberal government. We have clearly and repeatedly stated our opposition to unilateral actions, such as the building of new settlements in occupied territories that are not helpful to the peace process. Our government, through our respected contributions to the peace process such as our chairing of the Refugee Working Group, is doing what we can to help rebuild the confidence necessary to allow the peace process to restart.

1. Trade agreements

Our government does not believe that we should hold existing agreements hostage to the restart of the peace process. This is especially true of existing agreements that are intended in part to support the economic prospects of Palestinians living in Israel and in the Territories. In our negotiations with Israel, we insisted on ensuring the benefits and provisions of any Agreement were extended to the Palestinians. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Trade made a special trip to the region in 1996 to discuss the issue with senior ministers of the Palestinian Authority to ensure that they felt comfortable with the arrangements.

2. Charitable donations

The Liberal government does not support charitable status for Canadian organizations involved in activities contrary to stated public policy. For example, activities by organizations which can be shown to be supporting settlement activity deemed illegal will not receive charitable status.

3. Economic sanctions

Recent history has clearly demonstrated that economic sanctions are not effective in changing national policies unless they comprehensively and globally supported. In rare exceptions, such as South Africa or Iraq, general international consensus did exist in favour of economic sanctions. In each case, provision was made to ensure humanitarian assistance could continue to flow.

4. Iraq

Successive Canadian governments have supported the international consensus, reflected in UN Security Council resolutions, to ensure Iraq will not be capable of threatening its neighbours through such means as the use of weapons of mass destructions. However, we also have supported the need for humanitarian assistance to the Iraqi people. This is now being provided through the UN-sponsored arrangement allowing Iraq to sell oil and use the proceeds to acquire and provide food and other humanitarian assistance to its people.

5. Refugees

As chair of the Refugee Working Group, Canada plays an important role in seeking agreement on means to ensure Palestinians are successfully resettled in the context of an Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement. In that capacity, and through our contributions to the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), we are also providing direct assistance now to Palestinian refugees.

The Liberal government has recently announced new regulations—the Humanitarian Designated Classes—to allow Canada to better respond to people in refugee-like situations who need permanent resettlement. This will give Canada flexible administrative tools to permanently resettle a broader range of people in need of protection. These new regulations recognize that those in most need do not always meet the strict definition of “refugee” contained in the UN Convention and in Canada’s Immigration Act and Regulations. People in “refugee-like” situations - such as those personally affected by civil war or human rights abuses - are also in need of Canada’s generosity.

6. Tolerance

The Liberal government has introduced a wide range of measures to support equality and respect diversity. These measures have involved redressing injustice while taking steps to build tolerance, foster respect,

and promote a more inclusive society. Our government brought into effect the Canadian Race Relations Foundations Act, which the Conservative government had chosen not to do. The Liberal government established the foundation and endowed it with \$24 million. The purpose of the foundation is to develop and share information to promote better race relations in Canada.

In 1996 we marked the 25th anniversary of Canada's multiculturalism policy by reviewing the program and redesigning it to be more responsive to the needs of today's and tomorrow's communities. These changes do not alter the core objectives of this program, which is still to strengthen our society by promoting social justice for Canadians of all racial and cultural backgrounds.

On behalf of our leader, the Right Honourable Jean Chretien, thank you for writing to share issues of concern to your membership.

Sincerely yours,

Senator Dan Hays

All the hearts of the people are my ID card, you could take away my passport.

Palestinian poet: Mahmoud Darwish

كل قلوب الناس جنسيتي

فلتسقطوا عني جواز السفر

الشاعر الفلسطيني محمود درويش

For your feed-back or help in support work, please contact:

Canada Palestine Association
930-12th St., New Westminster, B.C. V3M 4K6

www.cpavancouver.org

info@cpavancouver.org

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