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Dear Ben,

Several times in recent weeks Post reporters have repeated the government's interpretation, that Arafat had recognized the State of Israel. This is not true, and I hope you will have someone take the time to establish the truth for you. It will not be difficult.

When Arafat was under administration <sup>and</sup> other pressures to state that he did recognize the State of Israel and its right to live within secure borders, he first mumbled what satisfied nobody. He then was pressured again. What he then evolved was on TV and this is how you can determine for yourself what he actually said.

It was quite simple: instead of "State" he said "people".

Recognizing the "people" of Israel is entirely different than recognizing the "State." He did not recognize the State of Israel.

But apparently the administration was so anxious to be able to pretend that he did recognize the State it just said that he had.

He did not and he did not dare. He knows only too well what would happen ~~if~~ if he did. Not that his recognition is binding on the PLO. Its top body had then only recently met in North Africa and had specifically refused to issue the binding statement the administration wanted.

With the exception of Sadat, who did not survive it, no Arab <sup>ruler</sup> state has ever recognized the right of the State of Israel to exist and all have persisted in a state of war with it. And without them Arafat and the PLO are both lost and broke.

The situation there is now perhaps more fraught with danger than at any time since the state was established. The potential for another holocaust does exist. Persistence in reporting the administration's official mythology as fact can help the world, not just the Jews in Israel, suffer another holocaust.

I've followed the situation there with considerable interest for years. Knowing what happened to Arab rulers who even talked to Israelis - which is how Hussein got to be King of Jordan - and what happened to Arabs, including of the PLO, who talked to Israelis in Europe, I paid close attention to what Arafat really said. I was stunned when nobody in the media picked up the truth and instead adopted the administration's - and Arafat's - line.

I hope you will be interested enough to have a reporter examine the tapes that all networks and perhaps the Post's own stations have and be satisfied that when called <sup>upon</sup> to recognize the right of the State of Israel to live in peace within secure borders Arafat refused to do this and made instead the meaningless substitution.

Best wishes,



Harold Weisberg