

The Question of Return from the Point of View of the Palestinian Refugee.

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Objectives :

The goal of this study is to identify the Palestine refugees' attitude regarding return . To this effect, we'll briefly look at the Six international attempts that tried to find a solution to the question of Palestinian refugees, which started with calling for the return of the refugees and ended with making it marginal .

The opinion of the refugees will be displayed through the opinions of the elderly and the youth both at Al-Fari'a and Balata Camps. The sample included 144 parents, and interviews with old and young leaders representing different parties.

Following are the Six international attempts which called for the return of the Palestinian refugees.

1. The first was the 194 resolution,1948,which called for *allowing the refugees to return and live peacefully with their neighbors*. But because the resolution didn't have an executive power, it remained a recommendation.
. In 1949, the 302 resolution came to establish the U.N.R.W.A. . The agency's attempts to find a political solution ended at the beginning of the 1950 s . Its main concern became financial aid, rehabilitation and assimilation of the refugees in host countries. The agency

hasn't tried to deal with the political aspect of the Palestinian refugees question following the example of the High commissariate which considers the political and financial aspects of the refugees question

3. The 242 resolution,1967 called for a peaceful and just solution,while the 338,1973 resolution called for implementation. Both resolutions were vague in content.
4. The Camp David conference 1979,which called for the establishment of a Palestinian entity, didn't tough upon the qusetion of refugees.
5. The Madrid conference,1991. called for peace, based on 242 and 338 resolutions, and for peace for land principle. According to Hani Al-hasan, the confrence converted the refugees issue into an international topic through obtaining financial support to creat job opportunities for refugees , relevant to what the multilaterd committee has attempted to do.
6. Finally, according to the Oslo accord,1993,the refugees haven't benifited from the multilateral committee. Moreove, the definition of the refugee hasn't been agreed upon despite the second meeting of the concerned parties.

All indications point to the fact that Isreal tries to ignore the refugees issue, and to change it to an economic problem that is the world's responsibility, rather than Israel's.

Refugees opinion of return.

International attempts to find a political solution lack seriousness, and the return issue has been ignored..

Therefore, the Palestinian refugees opinion of return will be demonstrated through a case study in Balata and Al-Faria' Camps . For this purpose, a sample of 144 parents, was selected, and 270 persons of various political parties were interviewed.

First : the opinions of old people in the two Camps show that:

A. 37.2% showed that the right to return is the scientific solution.

49.7% showed that establishing a Palestinian State is the pragmatic solution.

86.9% showed that the solution is political .

13.1% showed that the solution is economic .

8.9% of th 13.1% , see that it can be embodied through compensation ,

3.6% ,through improving the camps conditions, and 0.6% through on naturalization.

This proves the failure of the economic orientation in solving the refugees problem adopted by U.N.R.W.A.

B. Despite the fact that half of the elderly (49.6) call for the right of all refugees to return, so that their problem can be practically solved, this percentage is in general less than what is expected .

C. The question remains: why only 4% called for return?

The answer might be due to the influence of external factors, since 68% believe that the Israeli abstinacy and the American aids to it are the reason.

These facts raise another query : does Calson 1988, hold that life in camps leads to dependency on the inhabitants' part?

It can be concluded that the reason for resorting to external factors might be attributed to the fact that 98% of the refugees have offered sacrifices and provided the P.L.O with fighters . This shows that there is a pressing need for conducting pscycological and social researches in order to arrive at the truth objectively.

Second: The camps youth's opinion of return.

A. The youth's opinion is no different from that of the elderly's.

88.2% approve the political solution

43.8% approve establishing a state .

11.8% approve the economic solution ; of them

(5.6% improving the camps conditions, 5.6% compensations).

B. Other facts

51.8% showed willingness in conditional acknowledgment of the state of Israel, 21.7%. called for return and only 7.9% called for compensations.

The only explanation for the relatively small percentage of youth calling for return can be ascribed to the P.L.O moderate position. On the other land, half of the elderly called for return, unless establishing a Palestinian state is considered as a periodic requirement followed by return.

Third : Opinions of Elderly and Youth leaders.

A. According to their interviews, the leaders of both groups in Far'a camp showed that some support the right to return, while some adopted peace. Those who insisted on the right to return saw no other alternative . On the other extreme, some conceived of no hope to return, and accepted compensations despite the bitterness of such a view, which is due to bad economic and political conditions. Halfway between these two views , there are some who accepted to

give Israel part of their properties, provided that they are allowed to return and restore the rest of their properties, Still, others require compensations for their usurped

properties and sufferings, and some required improving their economic conditions as an initial step followed by return.

B. Opinions of leaders of both groups in Balata Camp.

All of them refused the principle of compensations, though some required compensations for their sufferings and properties. The right to return has been placed next to improving the economic and living conditions in camps.

Therefore, the right to return is given priority, where improving living conditions in camps is considered a secondary requirement as a result of the external factors which hinder the refugee's return. This might be due to the refugee's conviction that the case needs so long time that improving the economic conditions in camps becomes necessary .

The right to return is however, an inevitable aim .

The study has shown that the number of those calling for return is less than what is expected either due to political despair , or to the refugee's awareness that international powers will not support this right of return .