

You deserve to know the facts about . . .

Mubarak Awad

Was Israel justified in expelling him?

For the last few months, there have been almost daily stories about Mubarak Awad, an American citizen of Arab-Palestinian heritage. The Israeli government expelled Awad and returned him to his adopted country—the United States. Our government has taken interest in the case and has expressed its concern to Israel about this matter. It's easy to get confused.

What are the facts?

■ Mubarak Awad is an Arab, born in the eastern sector of Jerusalem. In 1969, Awad emigrated to the United States and became an American citizen by naturalization. Israeli law stipulates that a non-citizen resident who lives outside the area for seven years loses his resident status. Availing himself of his U.S. citizenship, Awad started making periodic visits to Israel. During his sojourns as a "tourist" and under the cover of his U.S. citizenship, Awad organized the "Palestine Center for the Study of Non-Violence." That organization promotes general civil rebellion of the Arab population of Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank") and Gaza.

■ Having exhausted the forbearance of the Israeli authorities, the government of Israel decided to expel him and to send him back to the United States, of which he is a citizen.

One basic attribute of sovereignty is that a nation can determine which foreigners may or may not reside in its country. It's a sovereign country's prerogative to expel anybody whom they consider undesirable; and they, of course, have to be the judges as to who is and who is not undesirable. The United States routinely refuses entry into the country to those whose political activities we think of as being contrary to our interests. Until recently, we even barred those whose sexual orientation did not conform to the norm. And we routinely expel those who are here illegally, or who are engaged in activities that are contrary to the interests of our country.

■ How then can the Israeli government possibly be faulted for expelling Awad?

They would have been quite within their rights not to allow him to enter the country in the first place. But they allowed him to stay and expelled him ultimately only after he emerged as one of the top leaders of the current Arab uprising against Israeli authority.

It is clear that Israel was totally within its rights to expel Mubarak Awad, a rabble-rouser who used the cover of his U.S. citizenship to foment revolution in Israel and in the territories administered by Israel. Israel would have been fully justified in expelling him summarily. But they gave him every legal opportunity to have the expulsion order rescinded. Awad's assumed role as a latter-day Gandhi or Martin Luther King is a sham. Disregarding all other aspects of this case, his true personality is revealed in his cynical misuse of his American citizenship.

■ Those who are determined to bestow the mantle of martyrdom on Mubarak Awad call him an "apostle of non-violence" and compare him to Gandhi and Martin Luther King. But the reality is quite different. Dr. King deeply loved America and tried to strengthen it through his campaign of non-violence. By explicitly supporting the terrorist PLO, by declaring violence to be a legitimate means of advancing Palestinian political goals, by viewing non-violence as a tactical complement to violence in the Palestinian uprising, and by subscribing to the PLO's concept of "armed struggle" and to the ultimate liquidation of Israel, he revealed himself as what he really is: a revolutionary to whom "non-violence" is only one of many revolutionary weapons.

■ As Americans we must be particularly concerned about Awad's misuse of his American citizenship. In becoming an American citizen, he took an oath to forswear all foreign allegiances and to reside permanently in the United States. He clearly broke his oath on at least those two counts. Before the Israeli Supreme Court, he declared that he had used his "American citizenship and passport solely for bureaucratic reasons of convenience, without attaching any importance and weight whatsoever," and that he "viewed Jerusalem as his place of residence, always." He made statements to the same effect on the MacNeil/Lehrer Report of Tuesday, June 14. Mubarak Awad treated the priceless gift of American citizenship with disdain and cynically used it for his political purposes and his foreign entanglements. How fortunate for Awad that we Americans are such good-natured, forgiving and patient people! Any other country would at the very least have stripped him of the citizenship that he had acquired by swearing falsely and with the obligations of which he never intended to comply.

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