



Jewish Community Relations Council

of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin, Sonoma, Alameda, and Contra Costa Counties
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Media Announcement

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

U.S. House Passes *first ever* Resolution on Jewish Refugees from Arab Countries

San Francisco — House Resolution 185 was adopted today at 10 AM PST. This Resolution recognizes, for the first time, the rights of Jews, Christians, and other minorities who became refugees as a result of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The Resolution asks the President to ensure that in all international forums, when the issue of "Middle East refugees" is discussed, US representatives will ensure that any explicit reference to Palestinian refugees is matched by a similar explicit reference to Jewish and other refugees.

We believe this Resolution will produce a more balanced and accurate historical account, and ultimately, a more just resolution to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

This bi-partisan effort was spearheaded in the House of Representatives by Rep. Jerrold Nadler (D-NY) along with Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL); Rep. Michael Ferguson (R-NJ); and Rep. Joseph Crowley (D-NY). We are indebted to the late Rep. Tom Lantos (D-CA), Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, who was a strong supporter of the Resolution.

With the passage of this Resolution, Rep. Nadler stated, "*We believe that as a member of the Quartet, and in light of the U.S. central and indispensable role in promoting Middle East 'just peace', the U.S. must reaffirm that it embraces a just and comprehensive approach to the issue of Middle East refugees.*"

"Discussions of Middle Eastern refugees invariably focus exclusively—and shortsightedly—on the plight of those of Palestinian descent," said Rep. Ros-Lehtinen. *"Far fewer people are aware of the injustice faced by Jewish refugees from Arab lands and Iran. Many Jews saw their communities, which had existed vibrantly for centuries systematically dismantled. They lost their resources, their homes, and their heritage sites, fleeing in the face of persecution, pogroms, revolutions and brutal dictatorships."*

The Jewish Community Relations Council is the central public affairs arm of the organized Jewish community, representing more than 80 synagogues and Jewish organizations in the Bay Area on public affairs issues.

Rep. Mike Ferguson said that there was very strong bi-partisan support for this issue which recognizes, *“the plight of hundreds of thousands of Jewish refugees who were displaced from countries in the Middle East, Northern Africa and all around the Persian Gulf.”* Congressmen Ferguson acknowledged that the U.N. has never recognized Jewish refugees, and that this *“is completely unacceptable and long over due, and this is one of the things this Resolution seeks to address.”*

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