

AT IT AGAIN

The ho-hum of the week was that the United Nations General Assembly voted for sanctions on Israel. For the fourth time in three years, that august body passed a resolution calling on the Security Council to cut off trade with Israel unless Israel withdraws to its pre-1967 war borders. Of course, the Security Council will do no such thing; at least the U.S. would veto such an action.

The anti-Israel offensive in the General Assembly has become so routine that many high-ranking representatives don't even bother to come to the debates or votes. They send their third secretaries. Indeed, this particular drive seems to be losing a bit of steam.

The vote was 98 for the anti-Israel resolution, 16 against and 32 abstaining. This was the lowest vote this resolution has received since it was first introduced in 1978. Last time around, in July, 31 nations voted against or abstained from this resolution; this week 48 nations did so. Eight of the nine Common Market countries voted against; France, that constant tower of moral strength, abstained.

Because of the erosion, one Western European delegate called the vote "a definite setback for the P.L.O." It is taken by some as another sign of the decline of the P.L.O. Against the background of internecine warfare among the Arab nations which have supported it, there has been increasing divisiveness and fragmentation among the various parts of the P.L.O. Arafat is struggling to maintain control.

That is why it is particularly weak-minded of Senator Charles Percy to support the P.L.O. and Arafat at this time. Of course, Percy does so with the proviso that the P.L.O. accept Israel's existence, and on the grounds that Arafat is a relative moderate. Percy has believed that since 1975 when he took his notorious trip to the

Earl Raab
"At It Again"
page 2

Middle East. But Arafat is a moderate only in the sense that a tiger is more moderate when its stomach is full than when its stomach is empty -- but in 24 hours, watch out! Arafat is clever enough to tell gullible Percies that he would be satisfied with a political state next to Israel; and to try to urge his colleagues that it will be easier to wipe out Israel once they have such a state.

It is particularly disturbing when representatives of the political party which is reputedly most explicitly anti-Soviet and hard-headed in its approach to foreign affairs, do not understand the significance of the P.L.O. This week's resolution in the General Assembly, for example, was jointly pushed by the P.L.O. and the Soviet Union. The anti-Israel offensive is just one wing of an anti-American offensive.

In a message to the annual conference of the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization, reported by the Associated Press in Beirut on October 30, 1980, the moderate Arafat wrote: "The United States is openly exploiting the situation created by the Gulf war and aims to hit both sides and create a power vacuum so it can take over ... The United States, by setting up a belt of military bases in the Middle East, aims at imposing its mastery and robbing the region of its wealth."

In short, Arafat and the P.L.O. are not just anti-Israel, they are fundamentally anti-American, whatever their different shades of strategy. Some citizens ought to write Percy at the Senate Building in Washington, and ask him how he squares his attitude with that recent statement by Arafat.

There has been formed in New York a Committee for U.N. Integrity, comprising a wide range of artists, academics and scientists, including such people as Simone de Beauvoir, Father Robert Drinan, Benjamin Hooks of the NAACP, Sophia Loren, Lane Kirkland of the AFL/CIO, and about 35 Nobel laureates. It has just issued a statement

Earl Raab
"At It Again"
page 3

attacking the United Nations for tolerating "the assaults orchestrated by the Soviet and Arab blocs in their campaign to isolate and discredit Israel. The U.N. condemns the historic Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty and exalts P.L.O. terrorists ... The manipulation of the world forum has reached beyond the halls of the General Assembly and has politicized -- and thereby crippled -- many of the United Nations' specialized agencies ... We cannot remain silent while forces which incite hatred and foment war betray our hopes for world peace and progress."

A number of prominent citizens in San Francisco, the home of the U.N., are being asked by a local committee, in conjunction with the JCRC, to support the above statement. It is time for the voice to grow.

(Syndicated by the San Francisco Jewish Bulletin)