



# JUSTICE FOR JEWS FROM ARAB COUNTRIES

International Rights and Redress Campaign

15 West 16th Street • (6th Floor) • New York, NY 10011 USA

Tel: (917) 606-8262 • Fax: (212) 294-8348

info@JusticeforJews.com • www.JusticeforJews.com



Letter to the Editor

April 15, 2008

*The Economist*

The article entitled “*Let There be Justice for All: America's Israel Lobby Scores Another Questionable Victory*” ( April 10, 2008 print edition) unfortunately does not live up to high journalistic standards to which, no doubt, *The Economist* aspires to.

This article misrepresents the spirit and intent of the US Congressional resolution affirming rights for Jews displaced from Arab countries. The Resolution is not about “*restitution for Jewish refugees*” but rather seeks to establish a fundamental principle: there were two refugee populations created as a result of the longstanding dispute in the Middle East and both have to be addressed in any just and credible Middle East peace process.

Neither the mass violations of human rights, nor the displacement of over 850,000 Jews from some 10 Arab countries have ever been adequately addressed by the international community. Your article perpetuates this historical injustice by inaccurately stating: that: “*...Arab attitudes to them (Jews) soured in the wake of Jewish immigration to Palestine and the later creation of Israel*”.

In fact, Jews have been an indigenous people in the Middle East, North Africa and the Gulf region for more than 2,600 years – fully 1,000 years before the advent of Islam. Centuries before the establishment of the State of Israel, Jews in Arab countries faced persecution – decrees ordering the destruction of synagogues were enacted in Egypt and Syria (1014, 1293, 1301), Iraq (854, 1344) and Yemen (1676); mass murders of Jews took places in Fez (1465); Libya (1785); and in Algiers (1805 – 1830). *The Economist* has now joined others who seek to expunge this narrative from the history of the Middle East. .

The article refers to the work of *Justice for Jews from Arab Countries (JJAC)* and cynically refers to the “*power of the pro-Israel lobby in Washington*”. In fact, unconnected to Israel and certainly not a ‘lobby’, *JJAC* is an international human rights coalition of 77 Jewish communities and organizations in 20 countries.

The bi-partisan support for *Resolution 185* is not the result of any lobby; rather it reflects the overwhelming consensus of the US House of Representatives on the need to restore law and equity to the deliberations on Middle East refugees. Only in this fashion, can we begin to move from truth to justice; then to reconciliation; and then to peace, between and among all peoples and states in the region.

Stanley A. Urman  
Executive Director  
Justice for Jews from Arab Countries