

LA Jews for Peace Policy Statement

Los Angeles, CA. Jan.16, 2023 Contact: info@LAJewsforPeace.org LA Jews

U.S. Must Not Build Embassy on Palestinian Land in Jerusalem

LA Jews for Peace demands that the United States not build a new embassy in Jerusalem on privately owned Palestinian land. Yet that is exactly what it appears the U.S. intends to do according to a Jan. 15, 2023 Op-Ed¹ in the *NY Times* by Rashid Khalidi, whose family are owners of part of the property in question.

The land in question is a 7.7 acre plot known as the Allenby Barracks situated in West Jerusalem near the Green Line that until 1967 separated Israel from the Jordanian controlled West Bank. Part of the land was leased by Khalidi's family to the U.K. during the pre-1948 mandate, the remainder is part of an Islamic Waqf² that is a "philanthropic deed in perpetuity." The land was confiscated by Israel, and in 1989, leased to the U.S. for 100 years at \$1 per year to build an embassy.

Khalidi writes that the claim that the land is privately owned is "unassailable," based on copies of the lease agreements with the U.K.; the State Department has been aware of that since 1999 when Khalidi and other owners provided extensive documentation to Secretary of State Madeleine Albright.

There are larger implications in light of Israel's new government that includes ministers who openly demand Jewish supremacy in Israel and have called for expulsion of Palestinians. **LA Jews for Peace** agrees with Khalidi that:

Building a U.S. embassy in Jerusalem, on this site or any other, constitutes a legal and moral offense. It would solidify Israel's exclusivist claims to the city, ... It would essentially greenlight Israel's relentless eviction of Palestinians from their homes and properties in Jerusalem, entrenching Israel's apartheid-like policies in the city, and further isolating East Jerusalem from other Palestinian areas in the West Bank.

¹ NY Times, Jan. 15, 2023. <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/15/opinion/embassy-jerusalem-israel-palestine.html>

² Times of Israel, Dec. 13, 2016. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/jerusalem-of-trump-where-the-president-elect-might-put-the-us-embassy/>