

Dallas' Mideast observers warn of conflict ahead THE DALLAS MORNING NEWS September 14, 1993, Tuesday, HOME FINAL EDITION

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HEADLINE: Dallas' Mideast observers warn of conflict ahead

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BODY:

The one thing they agreed on is that, for now, Monday's Middle East peace accord is likely to create more conflict than it ends.

Some Palestinian leaders in Dallas denounced the pact as a sellout. American Jewish leaders labeled those unhappy with the accord as extremists who will accept nothing short of Israel's destruction.

And so - hours after Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat, chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization, shook hands on the South Lawn of the White House - it became obvious that no single agreement would erase the enmities driving the century-old conflict.

"We are at the first chapter of a 30-chapter book, but at least we've opened the cover of the book," said Mark Briskman, regional director of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith. "This is fantastic, it's a major breakthrough."

Nihad Awad, spokesman for the Dallas-based Islamic Association for Palestine in North America, was not so enthusiastic.

"I doubt that peace is included in the terms of this agreement," he said.

"Many of us would like to be happy, but in reality all that's happened is two people shook hands, they signed an agreement that ignores most of the rights of the Palestinians, does not give any guarantees, does not recognize them as people, does not recognize their right to exist, their right to have statehood. . . .

"We've been oppressed, we've been suffering, we've been resisting and it's all for nothing."

Mr. Briskman offered a dire prediction that, especially in the short term, Monday's accord will breed more terrorism than peace.

"We're going to see an upsurge in violence in the short run," he said. ". . . You're going to have these radical elements trying anything to derail these negotiations."

Mr. Awad agreed, saying, "The intifada - the uprising - is there for a

very good reason. . . . If there is no occupation, there will be no uprising. If there is no oppression, there will be no resistance."

The declaration of principles on interim Palestinian self-government calls for withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Gaza Strip and the West Bank city of Jericho, to be replaced by Palestinian authority.

But the pact also has faced fierce attack as some Israelis accuse their leaders of selling out their security, and some Arabs accuse the PLO of abandoning its principles.

The accord does not address some of the stickiest obstacles to peace, including issues of Palestinian statehood, control of Jerusalem, and the status of Jewish settlers in the occupied territories.

If Israel really wanted peace, Mr. Awad said, it would have been willing to sign a detailed agreement that spells out terms of sovereignty and compensation for Palestinians.

He questioned Israel's sincerity in promising to withdraw troops. He also criticized provisions that allow Palestinians to administer their own affairs in some areas, saying that "truly, the PLO is asked to do the Israelis' dirty work."

Mr. Awad predicted that Mr. Arafat, whose popularity has been eroding among Palestinians, would soon be ousted.

"Arafat - he's insulting his people that he claims to represent," Mr. Awad said. "They really succeeded in having Arafat take off his pants."

By driving a wedge between Palestinian factions, Mr. Awad said, the Israelis have cooked up a "recipe for civil war."

Mr. Briskman said that, as he sees it, Monday's pact was a first step toward working out the question of whether Palestinians will achieve sovereignty. He said he doubted that Israeli leaders would allow Palestinians a completely independent state, but he held out hope for some creative compromise.

The next year or two will be critical in determining whether Palestinians are willing to coexist peacefully, Mr. Briskman said.

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