

Middle East Scholars Upset by a List

By COLIN CAMPBELL

An association of Middle East scholars is calling on the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith to disown a list of names implying that some American academics are "pro-Arab propagandists" who "use their anti-Zionism as a guise for their deeply felt anti-Semitism."

The Middle East Studies Association is preparing to publish a resolution calling on the league to disown the document. The list, stamped "confidential," was mailed to several dozen campus Jewish leaders in November 1983 from the Anti-Defamation League's New England office.

The resolution was passed Nov. 30 at the association's annual meeting after the group received complaints that the 16-page document defamed teachers, students and researchers.

Jeffrey Ross, the league's national director of campus affairs in New York, has since informed the Middle East Studies Association that the document was an "unfortunate incident" that would not be repeated.

The document was prepared by an "overly zealous student volunteer" who no longer works for the league, and it contained "sloppy wording," Mr. Ross wrote Dec. 20 to the Middle East association's board of directors, whose secretariat is in Tucson, Ariz. Mr. Ross's letter is to be published with the resolution of protest in the February issue of the association's newsletter.

From Boston, Leonard Zakim, executive director of the Anti-Defamation League's New England office, agreed that the document had been careless. He added that he would not have written a cover letter for it if he had considered the matter thoroughly.

Mr. Zakim introduced his cover letter with a reference to "alarming increases in anti-Semitic incidents and anti-Israel propaganda" and then attached the list.

Groups and Individuals Linked

The document listed Arab, Iranian, Islamic and other organizations, including groups associated with the Palestine Liberation Organization and similar military groups, together with dozens of individuals. Among them were Prof. Michael C. Hudson of Georgetown University; former Senator James Abourezk; Prof. Edward W. Said of Columbia University; Dr. Lawrence O. Michalak, deputy director of the Center for Middle Eastern Studies at the University of California in Berkeley, and former Representative Pete McCloskey.

Mr. Zakim noted in a postscript to his cover letter that "this booklet should be considered confidential" because "it easily could be misconstrued."

In an interview at the Anti-Defamation League's office at 345 E. 46th Street, Mr. Ross emphasized that the league would continue to collect and disseminate information on anti-Semitic and anti-Zionist activities. He

said that he hoped the league would develop more cordial relations with the Middle East Studies Association, but that he wished the association would be more even-handed in condemning threats to academic freedom.

"In the spirit of their resolution," Mr. Ross said, "we would call upon them to condemn several Arab countries whose visa restrictions prevent Jewish scholars from pursuing research in those countries."

Association Has 1,400 Members

The Middle East Studies Association, whose name was not included on the confidential list, has 1,400 members, more than half of them academics, according to the group's executive secretary, Prof. Michael E. Bonine, a geographer at the University of Arizona.

Last November's resolution also called on the American Israel Public Affairs Committee to "disavow and refrain from" soliciting "unbalanced information on students, faculty and other parties on American university campuses through a 'Survey of Political Activism.'"

Two years ago, Professor Bonine said, the committee sent a detailed questionnaire to some Jewish campus leaders that appeared to ask about the activities of individual scholars.

The resolution protested "the creation, storage or dissemination of blacklists, 'enemy lists' or surveys that call for boycotting individuals" or intimidating scholars.

In a letter to the association Dec. 20, Arthur D. Chotin, the committee's deputy executive director and general counsel, took strong exception to the assertion that the group had engaged in such activities.

Mr. Chotin said yesterday from Washington that the survey in question was only a draft and was sent to a small number of Jewish campus leaders for their comments. The draft had elicited a lot of unwanted information on individuals, Mr. Chotin said, and was revised to elicit information on anti-Israeli organizations. This revised survey was used in preparing "The AIPAC College Guide: Exposing the Anti-Israel Campaign on Campus."

The guide discussed such campus organizations as the Muslim Students Association, which Mr. Chotin said has distributed the fraudulent anti-Semitic document, the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion."