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UD RELIGIOUS STUDIES PROFESSOR MEETS YASSER ARAFAT, ENCOURAGED BY PLO LEADER'S SINCERITY, ACCEPTANCE OF ISRAEL

Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) chairman Yasser Arafat is sincere about working for peace in the Middle East and has accepted Israel as a "geo-political reality."

That's the impression Arafat left with Sister Judith G. Martin, S.S.J., an assistant professor of religious studies at the University of Dayton who was among 14 educators who met with Arafat in the Saudi Arabian coastal city of Jeddah in December.

"He is hopeful, and he is sincere," said Martin, who recently returned to Dayton from a two-week study tour of Saudi Arabia sponsored by the National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations. "He is very spontaneous, but not once during our hour-long conversation did he slip and show anger toward Israel. His anger is a prophetic type of anger of one who sees a complex situation growing worse. . . .It's anger toward the stupidity of the failure (of people) to cooperate."

Martin teaches courses on world religions, with an emphasis on Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam. She is active in the Christian-Jewish Dialogue group in Dayton. For media interviews, contact Sister Judith Martin at (513) 229-4321 or 258-2469.

CAN THE U.S. TRUST GORBACHEV? SOVIET HISTORIAN URGES AMERICANS TO DISCARD OUTDATED SUSPICIONS

Can Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev be trusted?

That's the question Americans continue to ask as relations thaw between the Soviet Union and the U.S. Soviet historian Tom Sanders, an assistant professor of history at the University of Dayton, urges Americans to "let go" of their Cold War mentality.

"We need not necessarily fit ourselves for a new national pair of rose-colored glasses for reading the Soviets' intentions, but it is high time we rid ourselves of outdated suspicions," said Sanders, a Dayton resident who lived in Moscow and Lenin-grad in 1981-82 as part of the International Research and Exchanges Board Scholars Program. "Gorbachev has pursued enough policies which correspond to American desires to have earned a certain grudging respect and at least a little benefit of the doubt. He is the political spokesperson of an entire generation of Soviet leaders--people who are university-educated, curious about the wider world and increasingly distant from both the Revolution of 1917 and the 'storm and stress' days of Stalinism. We are judging Gorbachev and his age group by the wrong yardstick."

For media interviews, contact Tom Sanders at 229-3447. Sanders plans to return to Moscow in May as part of a UD International Summer Study Abroad Program.



The University of Dayton

For further information or assistance in scheduling interviews, contact Public Relations and University Communications, 229-3241.