

فلسطين الحرة free palestine

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THIS IS THE YEAR OF THE PALESTINIAN OPTION

'THIS IS the year of the Palestinian option,' PLO leader Yasser Arafat declared to the 301-member meeting of the Palestine National Council. 'The most important achievement is the fact that Palestine has been placed again on the political map, and what one returns to the political map will inevitably be returned to the geographical map.'

Setting the sights high for the Palestinian congress, which convened in Damascus, the Syrian capital, during mid-April, the PLO leader saw the eight-day conference unite the ranks of the Palestinian movement behind his leadership, as well as provide the green light for the PLO to push ahead with its efforts to bring the European Community into the arena with a European initiative which the PLO hopes will coincide with the formula for the 'Palestinian option'.

The Council met as Israeli forces pounded Palestinian refugee communities in the Lebanon and urged their surrogate Phalangist forces into a new offensive. In doing so the Zionists had clearly intended to drive the PNC towards rejecting Mr Arafat's commitment to a diplomatic and political initiative to resolve the 33 years old Palestine question.

Both Mr Arafat and the 301 member council stood firm in the face of the Israeli provocations, with the Palestinian movement emerging more united than at any time in its existence. Moreover, this unity within the framework of the PLO places Yasser Arafat in an even stronger position both within the movement, and in the on-going dialogue with politicians in the European capitals.

The PNC last met two years ago, and since then Mr Arafat has successfully taken the Palestinian question into the EEC parliaments, in a bid to bring the European Community into the peace process, with a new formula to counter the US sponsored Camp David accords which, ignoring Palestinian rights, reached a peace-treaty between the Zionists and Anwar Sadat, the Egyptian ruler.

With the rapid build-up of American forces in the region, the hard-line policy adopted by the newly elected Reagan administration which is committed to backing Israeli military strikes into Lebanon, and the prevarication of the EEC on declaring the content of its so-called European initiative, the PNC debate on Mr Arafat's strategy was heated.

However, Mr Arafat held the

middle ground between the right-wing conservatives and the radical and Marxist members which are incorporated into this Palestinian 'parliament'. The range of debate was seen merely to underline the Palestinian commitment to a democratic political system when the Palestinian state is established.

Majid Abu Sharar, a member of the Central Committee of Arafat's Al Fatah group, commented afterwards that the political resolution adopted by the PNC affirmed, 'it is the duty of the PLO to bolster its political and diplomatic moves with regard to Western Europe. The Council recognised, he said, that 'Western Europe is a political force which has weight and bearing on the making of international decisions.'

However, even Mr Arafat and Abu Sharar, along with Mr Farouk Qaddoumi, head of the PLO's Political Department, had to tell the PNC that so far 'there is no European initiative'. Mr Arafat confessed that Europe's only actions to date seemed limited to an endless series of questions rather than the formulation and presentation of a solution.

Since the PNC last met, Palestinians inside the Israeli occupied territories have become increasingly militant and more outspoken in support of the PLO. This again, like the

SCORES OF people were killed or wounded in the Lebanese port of Sidon when Israeli backed forces launched an Easter Sunday attack on the city. The assault came only days after Israeli officials admitted that military aid, including advisors, was being given to Phalangist forces in northern Lebanon.

Of the Easter Sunday massacre by the Israeli forces, *The Times* reported: 'Bodies lay beside the gutters in the main street for almost an hour afterwards, and along one road a man was seen, screaming as he ran, carrying the severed torso of a dark-haired youth.'

Emergency services were rushed to the city. *The Times* report added, 'They found terrible scenes awaiting them. Four men buying sandwiches had been caught by the blast from an exploding oven, and were welded together by the heat. Arms and legs lay outside the Abu Jellal café.'

The attack was launched by the

Liberation of Palestine is the goal as ranks unite



This is the darkness before the dawn. Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat tells the PNC meeting in Damascus.

de facto recognition of the PLO in Europe, has given a moral boost to the PLO. Some £75 million sterling has been channelled into the occupied territories for development by the joint PLO-Jordanian committee which administers an Arab financed fund. Uncertain over King Hussein's

possible willingness to step from the shadows and attempt to re-assert Jordanian authority over the West Bank, many radical members called for a complete break with Jordan, but again Arafat's line of continued dialogue and co-operation with Jordan prevailed.

The PNC agreed to boost aid going into the occupied territories, and interestingly referred to aid for Galilee (which is predominantly Arab populated) and the Negev — both areas within pre-1967 Israel, where the Arabs have increasingly expressed support for the PLO.

Again, despite some vocal criticism, the PNC agreed to continue its dialogue with radical and progressive Israeli-Jewish groups, providing they recognise the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people.

To boost Arafat's position, the PNC agreed to the return of the radical Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine to the PLO Executive Committee, and observer status for two smaller radical groups. Additionally, the PNC is to be expanded, with representation from the occupied territories rising from 122 to 180.

□ Further PNC reports appear on page 5, and an editorial comment on page 11.

Report by Louis Eaks

Israeli backed Easter holocaust in Sidon

militias of renegade Lebanese army forces under the command of Sa'ad Haddad. Due to Israeli support, which includes arms, advisers and training, Haddad provides a surrogate Israeli force in southern Lebanon, constantly blocking the return of the Lebanese authorities to southern Lebanon, and launching military attacks on Palestinian refugee camps and United Nations positions in the south.

On 14th April, Israeli confirmed for the first time that Israeli military aid is being extended to Phalangist forces in north Lebanon. The confirmation came against the background of reports that Lt Gen Rafael Eitan, the

Israeli Chief of Staff, visited the Phalangist HQ in Jouniya in northern Lebanon two weeks earlier.

The Zionists' confirmation of involvement in northern Lebanon came only one week after *Free Palestine* in London issued a statement, based on reliable sources in Lebanon, that Israeli military advisers and experts in psychological warfare were present in the city of Zahle, and playing a crucial role in supporting the Phalangist militias in their early April confrontation with Arab peace-keeping forces.

Free Palestine disclosed that Israeli advisors were playing a key role in advising on the presentation

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

The news that never was

IN OCCUPIED Palestine it is not simply opinions which are suppressed by the Zionist occupation authorities; news itself is often subjected to total censorship. Robert Friedman, an American journalist reports on the limitations faced by Arab editors as the Israelis attempt to keep news out of the papers. See report on page 7.

The world can judge

MIKE WALLACE of CBS news provides a penetrating report on the plight of the Palestinian Arabs who have lived as second class citizens under Zionist rule since 1948. 'Equal rights are not debatable,' one Zionist settler remarks, while another declares of the Palestinian Arabs: 'They don't belong here in the first place.' See report on page 8.

Golan under occupation

IN 1967, Zionist forces marched into the towns and villages of the Syrian Golan. 142,000 Syrian citizens have been forced into exile as the Israelis prepare for permanent occupation. Dr Alan George looks at this enforced exodus of Arabs, and assesses Israel's motives in the area. See report on page 9.

Action in Britain

THE NATIONAL Union of Journalists at its annual conference condemned Zionist censorship. Details of this, and other UK activities supporting the Palestinian cause, see reports on page 12.

of Phalangist reports for the western and international news media, and in conducting the psychological propaganda war within Lebanon itself.

In the wake of the Easter Sunday holocaust in Sidon, the Lebanese Prime Minister, Shafiq al-Wazzan, speaking on Beirut radio, described the shelling as barbaric, and said it was time to put an end to the crimes of Israel and its agents.

The Lebanese Health Minister, Nazih al-Bizri, who represents Sidon, called for international condemnation of Israel.

□ News and analysis of Israel's war in Lebanon appears on page 4.

HURD REBUTTS ISRAELI EMBASSY PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN

A PROPAGANDA campaign being conducted by the Israeli Embassy in London to undermine the British government's efforts to secure a Middle East settlement based on the rights of the Palestinians and recognition of the PLO, has been mentioned in the British Parliament by Mr Douglas Hurd, Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs.

Mr Hurd, who has special responsibilities for the Middle East, referred to the Israeli Embassy's campaign during a 15th April debate on the proposed meeting between British Foreign Secretary Lord Carrington and PLO Chairman, Mr Yasser Arafat.

In response to an intervention by the pro-Zionist Conservative MP Timothy Sainsbury, in which he cited a statement from 'the official spokesman of the PLO' declaring the PLO's refusal to recognise Israel, Mr Hurd retorted, 'I have seen this quotation, circulated by the Israeli embassy.'

The Minister of State defended the Government's position, declaring that the PLO would need to be associated with negotiations for a settlement in the Middle East. He argued that all parties to the conflict would need to make considerable shifts in their public attitudes.

Palestinian woman shot in 'Day of the Land' protests

A WOMAN inhabitant of the Jordanian refugee camp on the Israeli occupied West Bank was injured by an army officer during demonstrations marking the 'Day of the Land' on 30th March. According to the Zionist Hebrew language daily *Ha'aretz*, 'He fired into the air and one of his shots hit the woman as she sat inside her home.'

Earlier on 3rd March, a 12 years old Palestinian shepherd boy, Mohamed Ahmed Bashir of Sakheen village in Galilee, was also wounded when, according to the Zionist daily *Jerusalem Post*, 'soldiers tried to chase him out of the area by shooting into the air'.

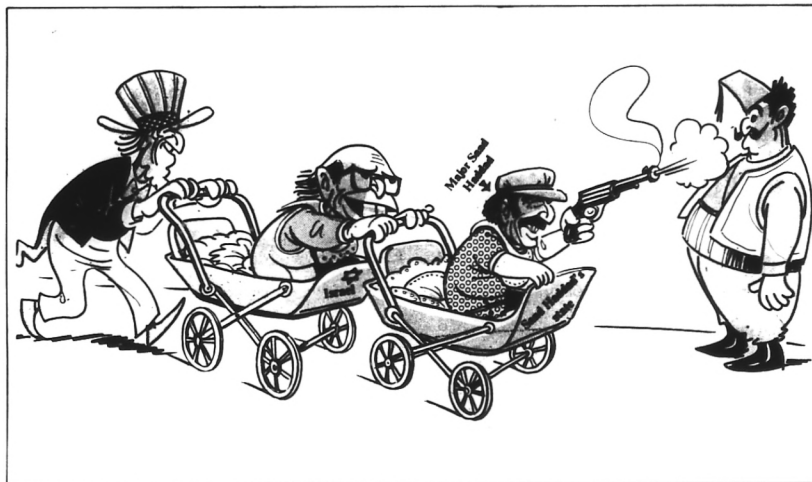
Marking the 'Day of the Land', about 4,000 Palestinians assembled at Nazareth's high school for a rally. Six people were reportedly arrested near the site of the meeting after they parked their cars nearby.

Earlier in the morning, about 500 people marched to a graveyard between the villages of Arabeh and Sakheed, where they placed wreaths on the graves of those killed during an earlier 'Day of Land'.

West Bankers staged tree planting ceremonies on plots of land which the Israeli military government intends to confiscate for new Zionist settlements. Such planting ceremonies were held in Umm Tzafah, Jebel Tawil near el-Bireh, in Tarmyeh, where the outlook settlement of Govrin is to be built, and in Shuyukh near Kiriath Arba.

According to *Ha'aretz* reports, 'The military government prevented the planting of trees wherever it was attempted. In Hebron the military government detained the drivers and passengers of all cars in which saplings were found and kept them in the courtyard of its headquarters for several hours'.

The *Ha'aretz* report continued, 'The worst incident, however, occurred in Kufri Shuyukh. Villagers



from there, most of them women, had gone to the recently divided up fields and planted saplings on them. Soldiers dug up the saplings and the villagers then tried to plant them elsewhere, but were surrounded by the soldiers and prevented from leaving the land until 5pm. The people of Shuyukh claim that an 80 years old man and several women were beaten by the soldiers.'

The paper added: 'A number of youngsters who took part in the Shuyukh initiative were arrested. In Bethlehem and Nablus, the military

government prevented a business shut-down, and forced merchants to open their shutters. In Jenin, the military government prevented a busload of students on their way to a meeting in Nazareth from crossing the Green Line (the border between Israel and the 1967 occupied territories — FP). An army look-out post was stoned in Nablus, and an army patrol was stoned inside the Dehaisha refugee camp south of Bethlehem. Pupils who hoisted a Palestinian flag in Ramallah were arrested for interrogation.'

Restrictions remain on East Jerusalem editors

THREE PALESTINIAN editors remain under 'town arrest', which effectively prohibits them from visiting their newspaper offices, following a rejection of petitions against the restraining orders by the Israeli High Court on 14th April. The editors' movements have been restricted for

the past eight months, and the orders have recently been extended.

Akram Hania of *As Shaab* newspaper, Bashir Baghouti of *Ataliyeh* and Mamoun El Said of *Al Fajr* newspaper, are accused of being members of the National Guidance Committee, a group of West Bank political leaders formed to protect Palestinian rights in the territories under Israeli military occupation.

The editors are not allowed to travel to the Jerusalem offices of their papers, and are restricted in their movements to their towns of El Bireh and Ramallah.

Lawyer Felicia Langer told the court that the restrictions were an attempt by the military regime to lessen the influence of the papers which had a combined readership of 16,000 in the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

Vatican talks for PLO leader anger Zionists

ZIONIST GROUPS have protested to the Vatican over the 18th March meeting between Mr Farouk Qaddoumi, Head of the PLO's Political Department, and Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Agostino Casaroli.

The meeting was part of the PLO's efforts to rally European support for a political initiative to resolve the Palestine question. Mr Qaddoumi told a news conference in Rome that 'the Vatican and particularly the Pope can have an important role in bringing about Middle East peace'.

Haig's policy in tatters

'HAIG'S POLICY in tatters as Middle East tour ends,' was the headline carried in the Daily Telegraph on 9th April, as the US Secretary of State flew into Europe on the last leg of his tour through the Middle East and Europe. Secretary Haig's travels, the first since his appointment in the new Reagan administration, was intended to rally support for America's new emphasis in the Middle East, centred on the establishment of US military bases in the region and the assertion that a Soviet threat to the Middle East is the priority issue, writes Louis Eaks.

However, with the exception of the rapturous welcomes which he received in America's two surrogate states of Israel and Egypt, Haig and his US entourage found little Arab patience with the American view. Both conservative and radical Arab leaders spoke out bitterly at America's continued massive backing for Israel, and Washington's blatant disregard for the Palestine question.

Haig's motives were well summed up by Mr Farouk Qaddoumi, Head of the PLO's Political Department, when he addressed the Palestine National Council in Damascus on 13th April. Mr Qaddoumi said that Haig had tried, during his tour, to set up a pro-US military alliance. The US government, Qaddoumi added, had

adopted a 'hostile, offensive policy in the area' to expand its influence and exploit local resources. His bid for an alliance between Egypt, Israel, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Oman had failed because the Arabs do not share the Haig vision of a Soviet threat to the region, Qaddoumi said.

Haig's purpose in visiting the region, US officials said, was to establish a 'strategic consensus' among US friends in the region. The United Arab Emirates newspaper *Gulf News* retorted in an editorial on 9th April that his visit to the region was 'a further extension of American interference in the region' and added, 'What cannot be understood is how such a consensus can be won when he himself has begun the search with a definite set of ideas which he is trying to impose on those so-called friendly countries.'

With US policy in the Middle East firmly rooted in maintaining the Zionist regime in occupied Palestine, and the Sadat regime in Cairo, and Washington's firm resolve not to respect the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, Haig was soon to discover that there was little ground for consensus between the Arab commitment to Palestinian rights, and Haig's support for the Zionists.

In Israel Haig stressed Israel's

important role in protecting US interests in the Arab homeland. Haig declared that Israel's 'security and well being' is 'central to US policy in the Middle East'. Israel, he said, 'has an important role to play in safeguarding the strategic interests in this region.'

The Zionists seized the opportunity of Haig's presence in the region to escalate their aggressions in Lebanon. Israeli troops raided deep into southern Lebanon as far north as Beirut, and Israeli advisers participated in the Phalangist assault on Zahle. Haig publicly supported the Zionists. In a bid to increase Western influence in the region, Haig quickly backed a French proposal for a multinational force in Lebanon. Haig (and President Giscard) was again rebuffed as Arab opinion rejected such a proposal.

Haig's paranoia concerning the alleged Soviet threat to the Middle East, coupled with his obsessional support for the Zionists and his myopic view regarding Palestinian rights was underlined by his comments concerning the Israeli backed conflict in the strategic Lebanese city of Zahle. He described the events as extremely dangerous, accused the Soviet Union of being responsible, described Syria's actions as brutal and unacceptable, and warned of the

danger of Israeli intervention. He said the US was taking measures to ensure a stop to the fighting.

It is difficult to believe that Haig was not aware that Israeli advisers were involved in the Zahle fighting (if he was ignorant of the fact, there is little to say about the abilities of US intelligence to accurately report world events).

In Jordan and Saudi Arabia, Haig was informed that the Arabs' relationship with the US depended on Washington's stand on Palestinian rights, and recognition of the PLO.

This view was also emphasised in London by Foreign Secretary Lord Carrington. A major divergence of views concerning the Middle East exists between the US and the ten EEC states. The EEC is committed to bringing the PLO into any future peace process, and to the establishment of a Palestinian state.

That difference remains despite Haig's talks in London with Lord Carrington and Prime Minister Thatcher. Lord Carrington hastily ended an informal press conference on the steps of the Foreign Office when Haig was asked for his attitude on the PLO. Lord Carrington intervened to remark that Haig must go for lunch, although the press conference had lasted on a few minutes.

'The Vatican has a weight which is both religious and moral, and therefore political. It can put pressure on the interested state, and not only on the interested states but also on the general population,' Qaddoumi said.

Mr Qaddoumi said the Holy See has 'a position of solidarity' with the Palestinians and condemns Israel's annexation of East Jerusalem.

Last June, the Vatican warned that 'any unilateral action tending to modify the status' of Jerusalem 'would be very serious' and called for safeguards enforced by an international body to guarantee the religious beliefs of Jews, Muslims and Christians in Jerusalem.

Mr Qaddoumi's talks with Cardinal Casaroli were followed on 6th April by talks between Pope John Paul II and Mr Habib Chatti, Secretary-General of the Islamic Conference.

'I came away from the meeting convinced that the Pope shares our sentiments,' Mr Chatti said after the 35 minute meeting. 'He is the most militant Pope I have met, who believes in solving the problems in terms of justice and equity, and who has injected the moral element in finding solutions to political problems in the world. Neither the Vatican nor the Islamic Conference accepts the Judaization or annexation of Jerusalem.'

Legal suits filed against Arab-American groups

IN WHAT is a move clearly designed to intimidate public groups in the United States which support the Palestinian cause, two law suits have been brought separately in the US District Court in Washington on behalf of 29 Zionist settlers in Palestine killed in 1978 resistance operations.

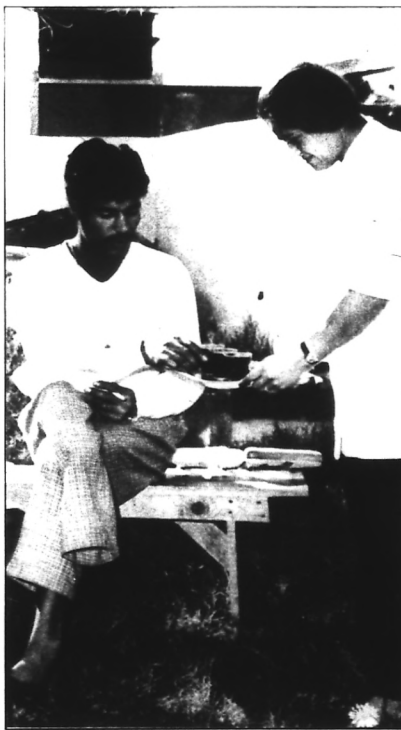
Targets for the suits include the Libyan government, the Palestine Liberation Organisation and three related organisations in the United States. The cases are based on the argument that Libya provides training facilities for Palestinian resistance commandos. The suits also seek damages from the Palestine Information Office, The National Association of Arab Americans, and the Palestine Congress of North America.

Will Reagan give boost to Zionist arms sales?

ISRAEL NOW ranks seventh amongst the world's arms exporters, according to the latest issue of the British military publication *Defence Attaché*. According to the journal, Israel sold around 1.3 billion dollars of arms and related military equipment during the year ending 1st April.

Israel's ranking is in no small part due to American support. The Kfir warplane has an American made engine, and its sale to a third country is subject to the regulations of the US Arms Export Control Act. Last year the US gave Israel clearance to sell arms with American components to Mexico, Colombia and Bolivia, and since then the defence ministers of Mexico and Colombia have visited the Zionist state, while Israel's foreign minister has recently held talks with officials in Mexico and Bogota.

World Business magazine reported on 6th April: 'Israel hopes its arms industry will be among the bene-



Medical and rehabilitation services provided to the Palestinian people through the PLO's medical wing, the Palestine Red Crescent.



Year of the Disabled in Palestinian Red Crescent

1ST APRIL saw the launching of the first census of the physically and mentally disabled among the Palestinian auspices of the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) during the Year of the Disabled.

The Palestine Liberation Organisation, of which the PRCS is part, aims at the social rehabilitation of the disabled in the ranks of the Palestinian society and Palestinian institutions. Priority is being given to efforts to bring back the disabled and those wounded in battle to active

participation and production in their society, writes Janine Albina in Beirut.

Another project to be completed this year by the Palestinian affiliate of the Red Crescent Society, an organisation similar to the Red Cross, is the creation of a home for the disabled, which will be known as the 'Haifa Home for the Disabled'. This home will regroup existing clinics, rehabilitation centres, physiotherapy and occupation therapy units, as well

as artificial limb and orthopaedic shoe manufacturing units.

The census of the physically disabled will be a relatively easy job, since most of them are former combatants who have been wounded in action. The real problem will be the census of the mentally disabled. It will be difficult to get families to declare them since, as in all societies, they are considered the 'shame' of their families. But the head of the Disabled Department in the PRCS, Um Walid, says, 'We are giving the

utmost attention to this problem, and before starting the census we have launched a vast consciousness raising campaign among the families on the delicate question of the mentally disabled.'

University students who have volunteered for the job are making the census possible.

With four hospitals in Beirut and three in the south of Lebanon, the PRCS has been providing medical assistance ever since it was founded in 1968. Dispensaries have also been established in all the Palestinian refugee camps. Since most of the serious cases treated in the PRCS are war injuries which leave a great number of handicapped, rehabilitation centres had to be developed. These centres, which include a manufacturing unit of artificial limbs and orthopaedic shoes, are run for the most part by the disabled themselves.

The PRCS employs over 120 disabled in different lines of work: blind telephone operators working on specially equipped switchboards, technicians in the manufacturing units, and workers in the orthopaedic shoes department. In the rehabilitation centres one can see paralysed former combatants, in wheelchairs, massaging their bedridden comrades and then moving on to the occupational therapy centre, where a special pottery unit has been installed. The exercise of the arms and legs, for those who still have the use of their limbs, is part of rehabilitation, as is participation in production. The various items produced — vases, lathes, ashtrays, and lampstands — are put on sale in the PRCS Co-operative and the benefits of the sales are reinvested in the co-operative. The artificial limbs and orthopaedic shoes manufactured by the handicapped are also sold to the patients treated in the PRCS hospitals.

As far as the totally paralysed are concerned, they are transferred permanently to the convalescent home, where they remain under medical control unless their family situation allows them to return to their homes. But these cases are rare and this is one of the main problems that the PRCS has. The totally paralysed need space and attention, which the hospitals of the PRCS often lack, considering the prevailing unstable situation of the Palestinians in Lebanon.

ficiaries of the swelling US military budget. In recent talks with US officials, Ezra Sadan, Director General of the Israeli Treasury, said Washington was inclined to support increased US purchase of Israeli arms. The purchases could amount to hundreds of millions of dollars in the 1980s.'

'The Israelis are particularly hopeful that they can supply desert-warfare weapons and expertise to the US Rapid Deployment Force, which is designed to fight under Middle East desert conditions,' the magazine added.

The PLO is amongst widespread opposition in the Arab world against the planned US RDF. Critics of the RDF point out that its most likely use would be to impose its political wishes on the Arab world, particularly in breaking any future Arab oil embargo.

Cluster bombs 'Made in Israel'

THE INTERNATIONALLY condemned 'cluster bomb' is being manufactured in Israel for use against Palestinian refugee settlements, it has been disclosed.

For more than 10 years, Reveal, the

armaments development authority in the Zionist state, has been manufacturing cluster bombs, including anti-personnel bomblets. Confirmation came during a new conference in Tel Aviv by top Reveal officials on 22nd March, which was reported on Israel television that evening.

The report stated, 'Upon detonation, the Israeli cluster bombs spread miniature grenades; thus, the grenades can cover a wide range.'

Cluster bombs were widely used by US forces in Vietnam, and the injuries which they inflict have been condemned by humanitarian organisations throughout the world.

Peres' Intentions recognised

FREE PALESTINE'S focus on the difference between the reality of the Israeli Labour Party's programme and the moderate image being peddled in the West by Labour leader Peres has been accepted by *The Times*, which in its 12th March editorial noted that Peres cannot be expected to dismantle the settlements created by the Beigin government, and added, 'There are in any case doubts over whether Labour will really wish to do so. It was a Labour government, after all, which

first established settlements in the occupied territories.'

The editorial was prompted by an interview with Mr Peres which appeared in the same day's paper. Reporting the interview, the Jerusalem correspondent of *The Times*, Christopher Walker stated, 'The tone of the interview confirmed recent assessments by Western diplomats that the next Israeli government would not necessarily be as flexible as politicians in Europe and America appear to have assumed.'

The Israeli Labour Party continues with its efforts to project its 'dovish' image in the West. It is, therefore, interesting to read the comments of the ILP's Tel Aviv branch secretary, Eliyahu Speier in the *Jerusalem Post* on 19th February. He warned against 'entertaining false illusions that any future Labour government will go overboard with concessions... the dominant mood of our party is far from dovish. It may be that the dovish wing has managed to project an image of exerting the predominant influence over the party's policy, yet it is only a fabrication of the media.'

Speier advises foreign governments not to anticipate the kind of policy that a future Labour government would pursue: 'I suggest they

read our foreign policy and defence platform, and not just rely on wishful thinking so they won't have to suffer any disillusionment once Labour takes office.'

Zionists reject aid because of mayor's lunch

THE MAYOR of occupied Beit Sahur, Hanna al-Atrash, was summoned by the Bethlehem military governor on 8th March and told that any requests by his municipality or residents of his town would be turned down because of a meeting that took place at a women's club a few days earlier had turned into a political rally.

However, the real reason appears to be a lunch given by Mr Atrash for the mayors of Nablus and Ramallah, about which the military governor had not been informed.

According to Mr Atrash, a number of requests for development projects were submitted over six months ago, and these will now be frozen. In addition, he expects that a request for a transfer of 131,000 Jordanian dinars from the joint Jordanian-PLO fund will not be approved.



ISRAEL LAUNCHES NEW WAR AGAINST LEBANON

EARLY APRIL brought renewed heavy fighting as the Zionist state launched a major new offensive against Lebanon. Israeli military forces moved into southern Lebanon, and made air and sea attacks against towns as far north as Beirut the capital. In central Lebanon, through which the important highway linking Beirut to Damascus, Phalangist forces backed by Israeli advisors moved to seize control of the strategic city of Zahle, writes Louis Eaks.

Coming on the eve of the meeting of the Palestine National Council — the Palestinians' parliament — in Damascus the Israeli-US motive may

also have been to undermine the authority of PLO leader Yasser Arafat and the Al Fateh organisation which dominated the Palestinian resistance movement. It is Arafat and the Fateh leadership who have been behind efforts to move the resistance struggle into the diplomatic arena to secure a solution to the Palestine question. The Israeli-US offensive appears designed to add to the argument of those who believe that Palestinian rights can only be achieved through a protracted armed resistance struggle. The general shift in Europe's position in responding to Mr Arafat's diplomatic initiative has deeply alarmed the Zion-

ists and the Reagan administration.

Although Palestinian forces have responded to defend the refugee camps under heavy Israeli air and sea attack, the PLO leadership has energetically avoided becoming involved in the confrontations between the Israeli backed Phalangists and the Syrian forces. On 9th April, Mr Arafat told the UN Under-Secretary for Special Political Affairs, Mr Brian Urquhart that 'despite constant provocations by shelling Palestinian camps, the Palestinians will maintain a high level of discipline and will not be involved in the current fighting in Lebanon.'

However, the Palestinian leader-

ship has been convinced for some time that Israel and the Phalangists are planning a pincer movement in Lebanon on the Syrians and Palestinians, whose main military positions are located between the Israeli occupied border enclave controlled by renegade Saad Haddad and the Phalangist strongholds north of Beirut.

According to PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, preparations for this attack, which he terms 'Operation Accord' have already begun.

The Phalangist-Zionist offensive to gain control of Zahle and end its demilitarised status, is seen by observers as a move to ease pressure on the Haddad forces which exist purely as a result of Israeli backing. The Lebanese government has been attempting to re-assert its army's control over the enclave held by Israel and Haddad — a move by the Beirut government which is backed by the United Nations peace-keeping forces in the area.

The series of Israeli raids left scores of civilians dead. The main thrust of the Israeli assault came on 10th April, with Israeli air, ground and naval forces struck at two areas of southern Lebanon and around Beirut. In raids, UN observers reported that Israeli and Haddad forces fired 650 military, mortar and tank rounds at Palestinian positions at Beaufort Castle and Nabatiyeh. Israeli planes and helicopters dropped more than 250 flares during the commando operation, and 24 shells were fired from Israeli patrol boats into the Tyre region, but were met with heavy return fire from the coast. Six Israeli jets also bombed southern districts of Beirut, blasting the village of Delhamiyeh for 30 minutes.

Europe silent as Zionists plan Palestinian genocide

AS ISRAEL and Israeli backed Phalangist forces launched a major military campaign in Lebanon which brought the region close to a major Middle East war, there was silence from the European capitals. In London, however, a statement issued by the Office of the Palestine Liberation Organisation called for the European Community and western nations to take a firm stand against Israeli attacks on southern Lebanon.

'The subject of Israel's violations of Lebanese territory, and the genocidal attacks against the Palestinian refugee camps cannot be isolated from the overall Palestinian question,' said the PLO statement.

'We call on all EEC governments and other western governments to make clear their firm and unequivocal opposition to the Israeli policy of genocide against our people, and all acts which are intended to destabilise Lebanon and undermine the authority of President Sarkis and the Lebanese armed forces over Lebanese territory.'

The PLO statement added, 'We demand firm action from the United States to stop its surrogate regime in Tel Aviv from using American weapons to kill our people. The President of the US is now well placed to understand the horror of such violence, following the brutal attack which he himself has suffered recently.'

'Israel is enacting its aggressions against our people in the firm knowledge that it has the support of the State Department.' The PLO pointed out, 'It is ironic that the Reagan administration should call for actions against terrorism, only to be seen as the principle supporter of the Zionists' terrorist campaign against our refugee people in southern Lebanon.'

'Secretary of State Haig tells the Arabs of a threat to their security from the Soviet Union, while he actively encourages the Zionists in their aggressions and turns a blind eye to the threat which Israel poses to innocent civilian lives. The real threat of today has more meaning than Haig's imaginary threats of tomorrow.'

The PLO added, 'We urge the Western nations to act immediately to stop these acts which will escalate into a major war. The consequences of such a war will be damaging to both Arab and European peoples.'

'The Zionist response to all our efforts to secure a diplomatic initiative and a just solution to the Palestine question, based on the resolutions of the UN General Assembly, has been one of confrontation and genocide. If the EEC wishes to be serious about its proposed initiative to resolve the Palestine question,' said the PLO statement, 'then the EEC cannot remain silent and inactive in the face of such Israeli aggressions.'

Western press accused of accepting Zionist propaganda over Zahle

THE LEFTIST Lebanese newspaper *As-Safir* has been carrying a small column entitled 'Phalangist Fictions'. Four or five items broadcast by the radio station of the right-wing Christian Phalangist Party the previous day were picked out and shown to be utterly fabricated.

One example was the news of Soviet advisors operating alongside Syrian troops of the Arab Detachment Forces in their battles with heavily armed Phalangist militiamen in and around the eastern Lebanese town of Zahle.

Phalangist Radio, which is the most widely quoted local source for foreign newsmen, reported the news shortly before Lebanese President Elias Sarkis was due to meet the Soviet Ambassador Mr Aleksandr Soldatov, and shortly after US Secretary of State Alexander Haig had

blamed the Soviet Union for the latest eruption of violence in Lebanon.

Questioned on the subject of the advisors after his meeting with President Sarkis, Mr Soldatov said the news was completely untrue. A government source later denied that there was any substance to the report, or to the Phalangist claim that President Sarkis had summoned the Ambassador expressly to discuss this issue.

Another 'Phalangist fiction' was the report on 3rd April that Syrian MIG 21 warplanes had bombed several areas in Zahle. The news, which was later shown to be completely untrue, was prominently featured in the main news broadcast of Monte Carlo Radio, which is beamed all over the Middle East. Monte Carlo's local correspondent files all his reports from Phalangist controlled East Beirut.

The most serious instance of Phalangist misinformation has been over civilian casualties in Zahle.

Red Cross teams who entered the town late in the second week of April evacuated a total of 47 people to hospitals in Beirut, while a 'Trans-all' plane sent from France under the instructions of President Giscard d'Estaing has taken 22 people for treatment in French hospitals.

Continued clashes and Phalangist sniper activity prevented the Red Cross teams from entering all areas of the town, but it is evident that Phalangist accounts of over 500 civilians being injured and some 200 killed are heavily exaggerated.

The 'Abisi' Buiding, which Phalangist sources said had collapsed under Syrian shelling, leaving tens of civilians buried under the rubble, turns out to be one of the main Phalangist strongholds and the

majority of the people killed in it Phalangist militiamen.

The Tel China Hospital, which the Phalangists alleged to have been shelled repeatedly by the Syrians, is reported by local newsmen to have been relatively unscathed in the fighting.

What is particularly infuriating to many Lebanese, particularly those living in mainly Muslim West Beirut or in the south of the country, is what leftist leader Mr Walid Junblatt last week called West's 'Racist attitude' to the events in Lebanon.

Mr Junblatt's 'National Movement' — unlike the Red Cross or even the Lebanese Government — has issued precise casualty figures based on hospital sources for the last period of violence in the country.

The figures show that between 31st March and 6th April, 32 Lebanese were killed and 164 wounded in Phalangist shelling of West Beirut, while 13 Lebanese were killed and 72 wounded in Israeli attacks on South Lebanon in this period. At the same time, some 15 Palestinians were killed in Phalangist shelling of refugee camps in West Beirut, according to hospital sources.

In the 9th and 10th April Israeli attacks by land, sea and air on villages in South Lebanon, another 16 people were killed and over 30 wounded, most of them civilians.

Mr Junblatt has pointed out that the casualties in West Beirut had gone largely unacknowledged in the West, while extraordinary measures were taken by the French President to show that his concern for the Christians of Zahle was no less than that of M Chirac or the French Socialist Party against which he is soon to fight an election.

Mr Junblatt said that the Phalangists were trying to draw the Christians of Lebanon into a 'suicidal enterprise'.

Trade Unionists condemn destabilisation of Lebanon

'IF ANY other refugee population had suffered such sustained aggression in past war years, the international newswires would buzz with indignation and diplomats from Washington and Westminster would be engaged in effecting a solution not circulating meaningless initiatives,' declared the London based Trade Union Friends of Palestine.

In a statement issued in response to the heavy Israeli aggression against south Lebanon, and the Israeli backed fighting in the Zahle area of Lebanon,

TUFF backed the PLO call for European governments to condemn the Israeli actions.

TUFF Chairman, Ernie Ross, the Labour MP for Dundee, said on 13th April, 'We can see what America's real interest is when Haig is concerned to provoke a joint US-French initiative to deal with the situation in Beirut, but he chose not to call for a strengthening of the UNIFIL force to prevent further aggression against southern Lebanon.'

The TUFF statement added, 'A further example of this double

standard is the orchestrated outcry over the battle for control of Zahle, while the continual systematic shelling of southern Lebanon is ignored.'

'When the central role of successive British governments in helping to create the current plight of the Palestinian people is considered, it is time our administration acted to help rather than hinder a lasting Middle East peace,' declared the British trade unionists. 'A firm stand against Israeli backed aggression in the Lebanon might be seen as a starting point.'

Palestine National Council: Democracy in action

WHEN PALESTINIAN leaders are challenged about their goals to establish a democratic state in liberated Palestine, they naturally enough turn to the existence of the Palestine National Council as positive evidence that democracy is a Palestinian reality, even in the difficult years of exile and liberation struggle.

Unlike most revolution liberation movements, the Palestinians have ensured in the PNC that all shades of opinion are reflected in the movement's decision making process. In Damascus in early April Palestinian delegates from exiled communities around the world gathered in the Syrian capital, alongside representatives from resistance groups and trade union and labour organisations. Students sat alongside peasant workers, and commandos from resistance groups mingled with academics and intellectuals. Their

views range from conservative to radical Marxist. Their role is to play a vital role in formulating the PLO's strategy and policy.

Their place in the PNC may be the result of elections within the organisation they represent; they may be there as the elected leadership of an organisation within the PLO; additionally, the PNC has the powers to invite respected Palestinian personalities to become members. Composition of the body is the result of vigorous efforts to ensure that all sections of the Palestinian community, whether in exile or from the occupied homeland are present to put their views.

The Zionists, ever keen to challenge the PLO's status as the representative body of the Palestinian people, constantly attempt to subvert the authority of the PNC. The body includes representatives from the occupied home-

land, but Israel has always banned PNC members from the occupied territories from travelling to attend meetings of their people's supreme authority.

The PNC is the most important of the institutions within the PLO, and is widely seen as being the Palestinian parliament. Constitutionally, the Council is the supreme authority, formulating policies and programmes for the PLO. It meets irregularly, but in normal times its term of office is for a two year period. The PNC has a presidential office, composed of the Chairman, two Vice-Chairmen, and Secretary, each elected by the Council.

At its ordinary sessions, the PNC considers the report of the Executive Committee on the achievements of the PLO and its constituent bodies; the report of the Palestine National Fund and the PLO budget; the recommen-

dations of various Council committees, and any other issues submitted for consideration.

Two-thirds of its membership form the quorum and decisions are taken by a simple majority.

In 1973, the 11th PNC created a Central Council from its membership to follow up and implement its resolutions. This 21-man body is headed by the chairman of the PNC and its membership distributed amongst the resistance organisations, unions and independents. The Committee serves a consultative role to the PLO leadership.

The PNC also bears the important responsibility of electing the Palestinian 'Cabinet', the PLO Executive Committee from its own members. The Executive Committee is in permanent session, and its members work on a fulltime basis. It is responsible to the PNC collectively and individually for

the execution of policies, plans and programmes adopted by the PNC.

The Executive Committee, of 15 persons, performs four major functions: it represents the Palestinian people officially; it supervises the various Palestinian bodies within the PLO; it issues directives and policy statements, and it executes financial policy and prepares its budget.

Executive Committee Members each hold a specific portfolio, like members of a Cabinet, covering matters such as foreign affairs, information, education and culture, defence, and responsibility for the occupied territories.

Additionally, there is the Palestine National Fund, responsible for the PLO's treasury, with powers to levy taxes and handle all financial matters. The PNC elects a Chairman of the board of directors of the PNF, who automatically becomes a member of the Executive Committee.



The struggle goes on

THE DOUBLING of financial assistance to Palestinian communities under Zionist occupation was approved by the Palestine National Council. In his speech Mr Arafat disclosed that £75 million had been channelled by the PLO into development projects in the occupied territories through the Arab financed joint PLO-Jordanian administered fund.

According to Majid Abu Sharar, a member of the Central Committee of Al Fatah, material support was also approved for Palestinian communities in the Galilee and the Negev, regions which fell under Zionist occupation in 1948, but which under the UN Partition Plan were designated to be within an independent Palestinian Arab state.

The PNC also expressed its backing for the National Guidance Council, which unites Palestinian municipal leaders and other personalities in the occupied territories to oppose the continued Israeli military occupation, and to protect the welfare of Palestinians living under occupation. Israel has just declared the NGC to be 'an illegal organisation', and its leaders face the prospect of imprisonment or deportation.

The Council declared Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine, thereby challenging the Zionist claims to the Holy City as 'the eternal capital of Israel'.

The development and escalation of the armed struggle for the liberation of Palestine was termed 'the cardinal task that rests on the shoulders of the Palestine Revolution' in the PNC Political Statement issued on 21st April.

PNC asks: 'Where is the European initiative?'

THE PLO will continue to co-operate with the European Community, and to encourage it to formulate an initiative to resolve the Palestine question. Support for Yasser Arafat's moves to bring the European Community into the move to secure a just settlement came from the PNC, but only after the 301 member body had listened to Chairman Arafat and Mr Farouk Qaddoumi, Head of the PLO's Political Department with responsibility for the Palestinians' international relations, warn the EEC that moves taken so far do not measure up to the PLO's criteria for an initiative, writes Louis Eaks.

The political statement issued at the end of the PNC said 'the soundness of any initiative is measured by its non-recognition of the Camp David process and agreements as the basis of a settlement, and the recognition of the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, as well as our people's right to repatriation, self-determination and to their independent state on their national soil.'

The PLO's strategy in seeking a European initiative was one of the key issues under debate by the PNC. Critics argue that any move by the EEC will be designed within the scope of the Camp David accords, and even amongst the PLO leadership there is increasing concern that the EEC, by its repeated delays in presenting an initiative, has shown that it is not capable for formulating a political position on the Palestine question which is independent of the American administration.

While Europe stalls, the Palestinians point to the positive proposals being made by the Soviet Union, and in particular the proposals by President Brezhnev at the 26th Communist Party Congress in Moscow, which call for a settlement based on the inalienable rights of the Palestinians and recognition of the PLO — a formula based on the resolutions adopted by the UN General Assembly.

Nevertheless, the PNC recognised, in the words of Majid Abu Sharar, a member of the Fatah Central Committee: 'Western Europe is a political force which has weight and bear-

ing on the making of international decisions, and this means that we do not neglect this important section of world public opinion.'

Abu Sharar, commenting on the PNC debate, continued, 'However, we must not fall into illusions. We must understand that Western Europe's political decision has until now been a prisoner of US politics. We must develop the West European position on our cause, because there is no European initiative.'

'Give me an initiative, instead of asking me questions,' declared Mr Arafat, commenting on what he would say during his subsequent

meeting with the President of the EEC Council of Ministers, Dutch Foreign Minister, Mr van der Klaauw.

Apart from the failure to produce an initiative, Palestinian leaders also made clear their disquiet at European moves to bring the Egyptian ruler Anwar Sadat into the equation, despite Egypt's isolation, and rejection by the PLO and other Arab states.

However, the PNC, in backing the PLO leadership on the question of a European initiative, clearly recognised the need to counter American efforts to subvert Palestinian national rights with a positive move in the form of a new political initiative from the EEC.

Beware of United States conspiracy

'A WAR of attrition has begun,' PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat declared to the Palestine National Council. 'In this war the Israeli army is using the most modern US weapons, including ones internationally banned. The United States and Israel are making south Lebanon a testing ground for modern weapons that are unknown to us.'

Warnings of the American inspired assault against the Palestinians, intended to force the Palestinians into submission and to eliminate the PLO, were contrasted during the PLO leader's speech with his assessment of the Palestinians' progress in the political and resistance field.

'I am not desperate,' Mr Arafat declared. 'Not at all. While talking about these perils, I can see the whole Camp David conspiracy. I say this because there are some people who, when faced by regression and the darkness, are gripped by desperation and anxiety. I am neither desperate nor anxious, because the blacker the darkness becomes, the nearer dawn draws.'

However, Mr Arafat also pointed out, 'What is happening in the area now is very dangerous indeed. This is not mere coincidence. Three US fleets are besieging our area in the Gulf, the Indian Ocean, in the Red Sea and in the Mediterranean.'

And he added, 'It is no coincidence at all that some Arab regimes have allowed themselves the liberty, against the consensus of our Arab nation, to grant bases and facilities to the US fleet and the rapid intervention force.'

There was no conciliation towards the United States. The escalation of its military presence in the region, and its open support for Israeli aggressions in Lebanon against the Palestinians, two aspects of the new Reagan administration's approach to the region, remove all possibilities of dialogue. Referring to 'the cowboy mentality represented by the US administration', Mr Arafat declared, 'The hopes of our Arab nation are pinned on our revolution and struggle. Our revolution is an indivisible part of the progressive world liberation movement. I say this so Reagan can hear me. He can sit in the White House and say what he likes about the Palestinian Revolution.'

There was equal scorn for France, which had earlier proposed an international force for Lebanon. Arafat rejected the proposal, and declared, 'France has raised hell about what is happening in Zahle. Why hasn't France showed concern about Israeli shelling of the Christians in Tyre, or the Israeli occupation of Christina Marj Uyn in southern Lebanon?'

Arafat re-elected PLO Chairman

YASSER ARAFAT was re-elected Chairman of the PLO Executive Committee by the Palestine National Council during its Damascus meeting.

Mr Farouk Qaddoumi, Head of the PLO's Political Department was also re-elected to the Executive Committee, along with Abdul-Rahim Ahmad (Arab Liberation Front), Yasir Abd Rabbuh (DFLP), Talal Najl (PFLP — General Command), Abd al-Muhain Abu Mayser (PNF), and two independents: Ahmad Sukki Danjani and Hamid Abu Sittah.

New members of the Executive Committee elected were Ahmad al-Yamani (PFLP), Muhammad Khalifa (Salqa), and two new independents, Jamal as-Surani and Dr Hanna Nasir, the former President of Bir Zeit University in the occupied West Bank, who was deported by the Israelis in violation of the Geneva Conventions. Dr Salah ad-Dabbagh, Chairman of the Palestine National Fund is also a member of the new Executive Committee.

He continued, 'What is their objective? It is a process aimed at outflanking the Palestine Revolution. The reason is that our sole communication line is parallel to the Zahle road, and they want to control it from Zahle. The French and the Americans were shaken because the operation aimed at striking the Israeli-Phalangist design in Zahle succeeded. Then they came out with initiatives and with the proposal for despatching UN forces.'

Mr Arafat was clearly optimistic about the future, despite the formidable battles ahead on the military and political levels. He told the PNC: 'I labelled last year as the year of fire, and we went through with light and hope. This year is the year of the Palestinian option. It is a Palestinian decision and it does not come from anyone else. The option that will prevail is the Palestinian option, the decision will be a Palestinian decision, the peace will be the Palestinian peace, the security will be the Palestinian security, the settlement will be the Palestinian settlement, and the state will be an independent Palestinian state.'

THE 12,000 Palestinian school teachers on the occupied West Bank returned to work on 16th March after calling an end to a fourteen week strike over salaries which forced the Israeli military government to concede a 75 per cent pay increase. Although the strike, which started sporadically last December and became total on 31st January, was prompted by the teachers' pay demand, it soon escalated into a major nationalist struggle, with a series of protest meetings and demonstrations culminating in a one-day general strike on the West Bank.

Israeli inflation (currently approaching a world record 150 per cent)

Victory for West Bank teachers

has had a disastrous impact on living standards in the 1967 occupied territories. Before the pay award, the highest monthly salary a West Bank teacher could earn was \$320 while the average monthly outgoings of a family of seven — not an unusual size for the region — totalled about \$760. Despite the rapid rises in the cost of living, the pay scales of Palestinian teachers have been kept low compared with those of their Israeli counterparts. Prior to

the pay award (which still leaves Israeli teachers earning more than those on the West Bank), a West Bank teacher with ten years' experience could earn only \$276 per month, compared with the \$615, more than twice as much, received by an Israeli teacher.

The teachers remained on strike in open defiance of a military order banning their action, and attracted the active support both of their students and the Palestinian com-

munity as a whole. A series of protest meetings and demonstrations climaxed on 10th March when a one-day general strike was staged on the West Bank. The Zionist response was to send squads of heavily-armed troops to force shopkeepers to open for business, but even this did not succeed in totally breaking the strike. *The Times* reported on 11th March that 'all shops in annexed east Jerusalem remained firmly shuttered and many of the elected municipi-

palities in the West Bank were closed'.

Meeting in Beirut on 10th March, the PLO Executive Committee issued a statement declaring its full support for the general strike and for the teachers, saying the Zionists' refusal to meet the teachers' pay claim was part of a systematic policy aimed at forcing skilled and educated Palestinians to emigrate from the West Bank, to make easier the task of Zionist colonisation. Executive Committee member Abdul Jawad Saleh sent messages to the UN Secretary-General and to the head of UNESCO calling on them to intervene on the teachers' behalf.

WITH RARE candour, the Zionist military governor of the occupied West Bank has confirmed that municipal elections in the region have been indefinitely postponed because of the certainty of a landslide victory for supporters of the Palestine Liberation Organisation. He also disclosed that he has personally delivered a strong warning to Mayor Bassam Shaka of Nablus, who lost both his legs in a Zionist terrorist car bomb attack last year, to curtail his activities in support of the Palestinian cause, or face deportation.

The disclosure added credence to recent reports that the Nablus mayor, and all who associate with him, have become the targets of a campaign of intimidation orchestrated by the Zionist military government of Nablus. The confirmation that the elections have been banned and the reports of the latest wave of harassment against the elected municipal representatives of the West Bank Palestinians underline once more the contempt in which democratic principles are held by Israel — a state which Zionist propagandists never cease hailing as 'the only democracy in the Middle East'.

In the last elections to the 25 West Bank municipalities, in 1976, councillors who openly sympathise with the PLO won nearly all the seats contested. This was a severe embarrassment to Israel, which exerts tireless efforts to portray the PLO as nothing but a 'gang of terrorists' without broad support amongst the Palestinian people.

A second round of municipal elections was scheduled for April last year but they were postponed on the pretext that they would have clashed with elections due at about the same time to the local 'autonomous' Palestinian council called for by the Camp David agreement. At the time, observers regarded Israel's explanation for the postponement with scepticism, since the Camp David autonomy talks had already been moribund for some time. In fact, as the sceptics expected, no elections for any local Palestinian council were ever held.

Suspensions that the true motive for postponing the elections was Israel's fear that PLO supporters would sweep the board were confirmed on 26th March when Brigadier-General Benjamin Ben-Eliezer, military governor of the West Bank, told newsmen in Ramallah that there was still no prospect of the elections being held, explaining: 'I knew then [last April] and I still know what would be the result of such an election. The message that we received from the local population was only one: No to the [Israeli-Egyptian] peace treaty. No to Egypt. No to Israel. Yes to the PLO.' He added that whenever the Israelis tried to 'discuss things' with the local Palestinians, 'they send us to the PLO'.

Ben-Eliezer also revealed that a few days earlier he had issued a strong personal warning to Mayor Bassam Shaka of Nablus to cease all



WEST BANK ELECTIONS BANNED BECAUSE PLO WOULD WIN

political activities outside his home town. Mayor Shaka, who was swept to power in the 1976 municipal elections, has been amongst the most active West Bank politicians in support of his people's right to self-determination in an independent state, a fact that doubtless explains why he was selected as a target by the Zionist car bombers, along with Mayors Khalaf of Ramallah and Tawil of El Bireh.

According to *The Times* on 27th March, Ben-Eliezer strongly hinted to Mayor Shaka that he would be deported if he ignored the warning to curtail his political activities. Zionist anger at the Mayor's efforts in support of his people's cause has grown particularly strong since January when he returned to the West Bank, to a hero's welcome, following treatment in England for the injuries he sustained in the car bombing.

Shortly before the military governor's Ramallah press conference, Nablus councillor Hildon al Heyk gave newsmen a terrifying account of

the harassment being directed at Palestinians who associated with Mayor Shaka. Speaking in Jerusalem on 23rd March, he described the aftermath of a visit paid by the Nablus mayor to the village of Rama, to pay his respects to the family of an Israeli Knesset member who had recently died. On returning to Nablus, the driver of the Mayor's car, Dr Tahsin Sakhsir, was summoned to police headquarters to explain why he had driven the Mayor to Rama, said councillor al Heyk. Dr Sakhsir explained to the police that the Mayor's regular driver had been arrested the week before. Another Nablus councillor, Khalil al Tyer, who had travelled with the Mayor to Rama was also summoned to police headquarters for interrogation.

Councillor al Heyk also described the events surrounding a visit he had made to the West Bank town of Anabta on 26th February with Mayor Shaka and several trade union leaders from Nablus in order to express their solidarity with Anabta residents whose land had been seized

for the illegal Zionist settlement of Shavei Shomron B. On the way they were stopped at a military checkpoint, said councillor al Heyk, and a soldier had demanded to see all the Mayor's documents. If they were not produced, the soldier said, he would 'smash up the car'. A few hours later the driver of the car was arrested and held overnight, on the grounds that he had been 'cheeky' to the soldiers at the roadblock. The rest of the travellers were ordered to report to the headquarters of the Israeli military government of Nablus the next day. There, said councillor al Heyk, the trade unionists had been beaten up, while he himself had been forced to wait in the building from the early hours of the morning until late at night. An Israeli officer had told him: 'We have ruled you for 13 years, and we will go on stepping on your heads. We will take your land and do whatever we want with you.'

Councillor al Heyk said that while Mayor Shaka was not formally banned from travelling outside Nablus, all

those who drove his car or travelled with him became targets for Israeli intimidation. Since the Mayor is crippled, and cannot travel alone, the intention is clearly to confine him to his town. Councillor al Heyk said Mayor Shaka had intended to attend the Jerusalem press conference himself, but had decided against it after two Israeli military vehicles had followed him from his house to the town hall that day.

The Shaka household, and those who visit it, are also targets for harassment, said councillor al Heyk. At Sam that morning, he said, the Shaka family had heard someone digging up the ground outside their house. When Nablus council workers dug up the ground later, they discovered bundles of wiring, which were probably bugging equipment, said the councillor. He added that the day before, a military vehicle had been parked outside Mayor Shaka's home throughout the night and the attendant soldiers had demanded to see the identity papers, and had recorded the names, of everyone who visited.

Zionist councils strengthen grip on Arab territories

WHILE THE Belgian government continues its frenzied programme of land seizures in the occupied West Bank in a bid to strengthen the Zionist presence there to the point where no future Israeli government could relinquish the territory, major new steps have been taken towards the region's annexation with the promulgation of military orders permitting the creation of municipal councils in the illegal Zionist settlements, and sanctioning the establishment of the first Zionist civilian court in the Arab region.

The orders allowing the creation of municipal councils were issued in March and apply to Kiryat Arba, Ma'ale Aduin, Elkana, Ariel and Ma'ale Ephraim. Previously the colonies came under the jurisdiction of the military governor of the West Bank and, in theory at least, were subject to the same harsh military regulations that West Bank Palestinians must suffer. Henceforth, the settlements will be able to establish their own bye-laws and collect taxes from their inhabitants. The enthusiastic backing for the move

from the Belgian government has underlined by the presence of interior minister Yosef Burg at the 4th March ceremony inaugurating Elkana as a local council.

The military order sanctioning the creation of the first Zionist civilian court in the West Bank was also issued in March. To be established in April at Kiryat Arba on the outskirts of the Palestinian city of Hebron, the court will have jurisdiction over the settlement's 4,000 Jewish residents. Similar to a British magistrates court, it will have powers both to fine and imprison.

All appeals will be made through the normal Israeli civilian legal system and be heard by judges at the district court in Jerusalem. The court will mainly deal with such matters as the enforcement of council bye-laws in fields such as taxation and licensing. Previously the Zionist settlers on the West Bank have all been subject to trial by military courts, in the same way as the local Palestinians, although in practice very few settlers have ever been brought to trial, compared with thousands of Arabs.

THE RICKETY Arab bus lurched to a halt in front of an Israeli army road-block outside Jerusalem, one cool desert morning last summer. Two tough, border patrolmen brusquely pushed down the crowded aisle routinely inspecting identity cards. A proud, young West Bank Arab caught the eye of one soldier.

'If you're 24,' the Israeli sneered as he glanced at the man's ID. 'Why aren't you married?'

'Why don't you introduce me to your sister?' the Arab shot back.

The Israelis dragged the youth off the bus, and left him by the roadside with a broken nose and a cut lip. He staggered into Jerusalem under a pulsating sun — woozy, tired and afraid. When fear turned to anger, Hamza el-Tawil filed charges against the soldiers who assaulted him.

The following day the story ran on page three of the *Jerusalem Post*. It was also picked up by several Hebrew-language newspapers. The newspaper later reported that the soldiers were fined by a military court for brutality, and Tawil was fined for 'cheekiness'. None of this, however, was reported by East Jerusalem's three Arabic dailies — *Al-Quds*, *Al-Fajr* or *Al-Sha'ab*.

'Of course we had the story,' said *Al-Fajr*'s editor, Mamoun el-Sayyed, when asked about it later, 'but the Israelis censored it.'

According to the Arab editors stories like Tawil's are always censored.

'Anything that shows Israel in a bad light is killed,' said *Al-Sha'ab*'s editor, Ali Ya'ish.

Under an order published by the Israeli military government after the '67 War, no Arab newspaper may be delivered to the occupied territories without a permit from the military government. Any article, picture or advertisement deemed a security risk is censored.

It is even illegal for the Arab papers to show anybody that they have been censored. Photostats of censored articles were given to me by the editors of *Al-Fajr* and *Al-Sha'ab*, knowing they risk the closing down of their papers.

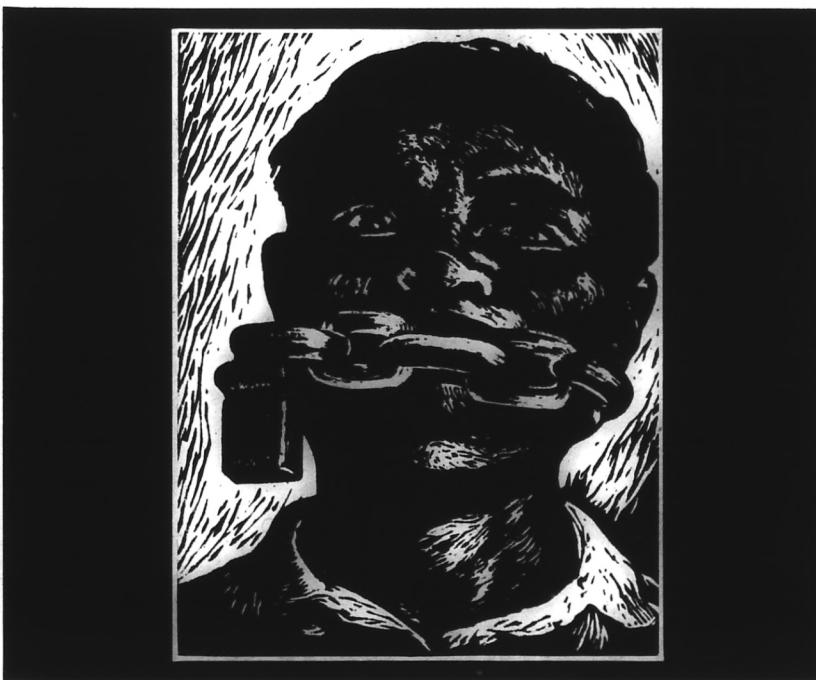
The documents show, for example, that on 15th November 1979, the Israeli military censored in *Al-Fajr* 15 news items about the 11th November arrest of Bassam el-Shaka, the Mayor of the Arab West Bank town of Nablus. (The Israeli authorities attempted to deport the mayor after he allegedly told an Israeli general he sympathised with PLO terrorism.) Thirteen of the censored articles dealt with local Palestinian reaction to Shaka's arrest. Two of the censored articles were about the international reaction to the Shaka affair.

One item translated from Israeli Television simply announced that the Mayor of Hebron was calling a general municipal strike to protest Shaka's deportation.

The other 14 articles were equally bland.

Two days earlier, on 13th November, *Al-Fajr*'s story about a demonstration in West Jerusalem by the Israeli Peace Now group protesting Shaka's deportation was censored. The featured speaker at the demonstration, Hebrew University's Professor of Political Science Daniel Amit, accused the Israeli government of trying to deprive Palestinians of one of their strongest spokesmen. The story ran in many Hebrew language papers, but was banned in the Arab press.

'Censorship such as this is designed to destroy our political solidarity and our sense of national consciousness,' declared Mamoun



Palestinian editors live with 'the news that never happened'

IN OCCUPIED Palestine it is not simply opinions which are censored from the Arabic press by the Israeli occupation authorities; news itself is often subjected to total censorship. Robert Friedman, an American journalist contributing to the *Jerusalem Post*, the *Los Angeles Times* and *The Nation*, provides this report.

el-Sayyed, *Al-Fajr*'s 44-year-old editor.

'We haven't definite guidelines. We know that provocative, libelous and anti-security articles are strictly forbidden. But what is considered provocative? As far as the Israelis are concerned, it's anything that shows our displeasure with their rule. What am I to think when articles translated directly from the Hebrew press or taken from Israeli Radio or Television — even the official Arabic language broadcasts — are censored? I've come to the conclusion that there is no way to deal with censorship,' he said angrily.

Lt Col Ami Gulska, the Israeli Military Spokesman in Jerusalem (his authority extends to the West Bank), admits that there is at times a thin line between military and political censorship.

Even articles taken from the Israeli

press can be very incendiary in Gulska's eyes. He admits, however, that censorship is 'sometimes arbitrary, of course. But censorship is not mathematics. Different people sitting in the censor's office have different subjective attitudes. Some stories would pass one censor and not another. A man's mood, whether he slept well or had a fight with his wife, probably has something to do with it too.'

Of the three Arabic newspapers published in East Jerusalem, *Al-Fajr* and *Al-Sha'ab* most clearly speak for the self-determination of the Palestinian people. Thus, they are more heavily censored than *Al-Quds*, which is less nationalist in tone, proving the point that the thin line between political and military censorship carries over into the way the Arab newspapers are censored.

Al-Fajr and *Al-Sha'ab* began publication in 1972. In 1974 *Fajr*'s former editor, Yusuf Nasir, vanished on the way home from work. He was never found. Also in 1974, the former editor of *Al-Sha'ab*, Ali-al-Khatib, was deported.

Both papers are pro-PLO but aren't allowed to say so.

'We are allowed to write that we want an independent Palestinian West Bank-Gaza Strip state, but when we write that the PLO is the sole representative of the Palestinians, this part is cancelled,' said Sayyed.

Fajr's circulation is about 8,000 and growing. *Sha'ab*'s circulation is about 3,000.

Sha'ab has tried to build its circulation with investigative reporting. Most of its investigative pieces are censored, however. A detailed report about the expansion of West Bank settlements under the Beigin govern-

ment was cancelled in *Al-Sha'ab* for example. The article cited official Israeli government documents, as well as interviews with Israeli government officials.

Fajr and *Sha'ab* are read by students, intellectuals, and Palestinian nationalists of all classes. Both papers are favourites at the politically volatile Bir Zeit University on the West Bank.

'They are the only newspapers that speak for the Palestinian cause,' said one 23-year-old chemistry student. Friends nodded their agreement.

Al-Quds is East Jerusalem's largest newspaper with a circulation of around 15,000. Founded in 1966, it was closed after the Six Day War. It resumed publication in 1968, and for four years, it was the only Arab newspaper in East Jerusalem.

In the context of Palestinian politics, *Al-Quds* is by far the most moderate newspaper. It is widely read by the working class, the merchant class and the former ruling class, largely for its extensive society news which is very important in a traditional society. Although the paper at first opposed the Camp David peace accords, it cautiously endorsed the accords several months ago. It is also the only Arab newspaper that is favourable to Jordan's King Hussein.

Al-Quds is noted for its excellent relations with the Israeli Military Government. It is the only Arab newspaper Arab prisoners are allowed to read, and it is the only one that accepts Israeli advertisements. Teddy Kolek campaigned for the office of the mayor of Jerusalem from its pages.

Al-Quds would not provide me with examples of censored material. *Al-*

Quds' critics charge that the paper is being groomed by the Beigin government for a post-autonomy role. Therefore, goes the argument, *Al-Quds* is allowed a wider range of editorial freedom, in hope that it will keep its credibility with the Arab masses while it obliquely supports Israeli politics.

Abu Zulef, *Al-Quds*' flamboyant publisher, denied his paper was treated more leniently than the others. Zulef had just returned from Amman the morning we met. On that same day, 16th January, *Al-Quds* went on sale in Cairo as part of the Israeli-Egyptian cultural exchange programme.

'We know what to send the censors, and what not to send,' Zulef asserted. 'The other newspapers are spoiling our job. We can cover the West Bank, as long as we do it factually.'

Ammon Kapeliuk, for one, a journalist for the Hebrew-language daily, *Al-Hamishmar*, and the Jerusalem correspondent for *Le Monde*, thinks Israeli censorship of the Arab press is politically motivated with *Al-Quds* coming out virtually unscathed by the censors' axe.

Kapeliuk wrote two articles last December for *Al-Hamishmar* about censorship of the Arab press, in which he claimed that *Al-Quds* was an anti-PLO, pro-Jordanian newspaper, while *Sha'ab* and *Fajr* were politically emasculated because of their pro-PLO stance.

Abu Zulef threatened to sue Kapeliuk but later dropped it.

'When I started to research the subject I was really astonished at what was censored,' said Kapeliuk, who is a sabra, a former Kibbutznick, and who speaks and reads Arabic.

'Arabs are well informed in the territories,' said Ammon Kapeliuk, confirming the theory that the grapevine is almost as fast as the press, though less reliable. 'They resent the censorship. On the other hand, the Israelis are trying to prove they are the most liberal occupying force in history, yet they consistently undermine the image by censorship designed to stifle criticism of the autonomy plan, and undermine Palestinian national consciousness.'

Bombings and other signs of political unrest are increasing as a result of widespread opposition to the autonomy talks. At the same time, censorship of the Arab national press has increased during Beigin's rule.

Some in the military are frustrated with the Palestinians' growing resistance to Israeli rule. They feel the Arab press incites the masses to violence.

In the aftermath of the killings of six Jewish settlers by Palestinians in Hebron last May, the military government suspended *Al-Fajr* and *Al-Sha'ab*'s licence to distribute on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip for ten days. The military government rescinded its order when the papers pressed their case in the High Court.

On 2nd August, exactly three months after the Hebron killings and two months after the attempted assassination of three West Bank mayors, *Al-Fajr*'s offices were bombed. Both *Al-Fajr* and *Al-Sha'ab* have received letters in Hebrew signed by an unknown terrorist group called 'Youth for Israel' demanding the papers shut down. Several days after the bombing the military government placed the editors of *Al-Fajr* and *Al-Sha'ab* under town arrest 'for the maintenance of security, public order and safety in the area.' Since both editors reside in Ramallah, they have been, in essence, removed from their jobs.

THE FORGOTTEN PALESTINIANS

A report on the 'Israeli Arabs'

DESPITE FIERCE Zionist opposition, on 15th February the CBS Network in the United States broadcast a feature on the plight of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel on its '60 Minutes' news programme. The following is the commentary of CBS reporter Mike Wallace, edited from the official transcript. Wallace ended his report thus: 'We asked the Israeli government to make a spokesman available to us to comment on the subject of Israel's Arabs, but they declined.'



Livelihood of the Palestinians threatened as the Zionists drive farmers from their land. Photo above:

THE WORLD CAN JUDGE

CHAIM WEIZMANN, the founder of the State of Israel, said, 'I am certain that the world will judge the Jewish state by what it will do to the Arabs.' He was speaking of the Arabs inside Israel, not the Arabs of the West Bank, the ones we hear about so often in protest against the occupation policies of the Israeli government. The Arabs inside Israel are the ones we seldom hear from. There are more than half a million of them — 15 per cent of Israel's population.

Most of the Arabs of Israel live in the villages of the Galilee in northern Israel. About eight per cent of the Arabs are Druse, 14 per cent Christian, 78 per cent Moslem. The population of the two groups, Arab and Jew, is about equal; but in some parts, like the western Galilee, the Arabs far outnumber Jews. In fact, as many see it, they are engaged in a kind of silent struggle — a struggle over land and people, over who will predominate in the Galilee, Israel's Arabs or its Jews.

Karmiel is a key to Israel's plan to bring Jews here to the Galilee. Karmiel, was planted here, built

from scratch beginning in 1964. Tens of millions of dollars went into making Karmiel a comfortable town that would attract Jews from other parts of Israel and abroad to the comparative emptiness of the Galilee, to create a truly modern Jewish town. All this either paid for outright or largely subsidised by the State of Israel and by contributions from Jews abroad. But despite the attractions a town like this can offer and the huge amount of money invested in it, the Jews in this part of the Galilee are far outnumbered by the Arabs of the neighbouring villages.

And at the rate new Arabs are being born, that gap will continue to widen.

As the Arabs see it, the town of Karmiel, like the Jewish state, is being built to a large extent on what was once Arab land. And the struggle over land has led to confrontation. There is a monument, for instance, in the Arab cemetery at Sakhnin. 'In memory of those who

fell on Land's Day,' that monument says. It was in March of 1976 that Israel's Arabs staged violent protests against the expropriation of their land by the Israeli government. Six Arabs died that day in 1976, shot to death by Israeli troops, who said they were acting in self defence. That Land Day protest and this violence that followed represented the first major outcry by Israel's Arabs since the State of Israel was formed in 1948.

During Israel's war for independence, hundreds of thousands of Arabs fled their homes in Israel, some out of fear, some because they were forced out, some because they were told to leave by their own leaders. Few were permitted legally to return.

Instead, their land was confiscated by the state. Even if they remained in Israel but just moved from one village to another, in most cases, their land was taken. Since 1948, thousands of additional acres of Arab land have been expropriated. Some Jewish-

owned land has been taken as well, but in much smaller amounts. And what compensation was offered either Arab or Jew frequently represented only a fraction of the true market value of the land. Such expropriations have dropped off of late, but they have not ended. And even today, many Arabs still feel they are being pressured off their land.

Case in point: High on one of the hills of the Galilee lies a village of Bedouin Arabs. They say they own the land their village is on, and they graze their flocks on government land nearby, as they have done for generations. But the government wants to move them out to other villages and has offered them compensation.

At the same time, much of this same land is being leased by the government to new, mountaintop, Jewish settlements, or watchtowers, like this one on a hill just across from that Bedouin village. Six Jewish families

live there now, volunteers, all strong Zionists. One of the settlers, British-born Mrs Leslie Miller, who came to Israel 15 years ago. The major mission of volunteers like Mrs Miller is to keep an eye on the Bedouins, to make sure they don't built on government land. (See inset dialogue.)

Ninety per cent of Israel's Arabs live in exclusively Arab villages and, in the Galilee, most of those villages have run-down streets, almost no recreation facilities. Not a single Arab village in all of Israel yet has a working sewer system. The government has been building many new schools in Arab villages, but far from enough. The government argues that the Arab villages don't get more because they don't pay what they should in taxes, but this does nothing to explain special funds poured by the government into avowedly Jewish projects all over the country, like Karmiel and the 26 other development towns in Israel, none of which is Arab.

'They don't belong here in the first place'

The following is part of a dialogue between Mike Wallace and British Zionist Leslie Miller, now a settler in Galilee:

Leslie Miller: We are guardians here.

Wallace: Guarding against whom?

Miller: We're guarding against the Bedouin building. You see, they are squatters, really. I — I get on okay with the Bedouin; they're not thieves or a — or murderers like some of the others, but they are liberty takers. I mean, you — you give

them the finger and they'll take not your whole hand but your whole body.

Wallace: While the Bedouin Arabs have to draw their water from backyard cisterns, the privately financed Jewish agency laid several miles of road and water pipe to service Mrs Miller's tiny Jewish settlement nearby, then the Bedouins were refused permission to tap into the water supply.

Miller: If they run water them — to them, then that's admitting that they belong here. You understand?

Wallace: The Jewish settlement is also fencing off increasing amounts of grazing land, forcing several Bedouin families to sell off their flocks.

Miller: Now they're not permitted to run their goats on that land.

Wallace: And if their goats come over onto your land?

Miller: Then I confiscate them. I've done it and I'll do it again.

Wallace: But they say they've been grazing in the property around here for generations.

Miller: Well, then that's just their bad luck that they can't do it anymore, isn't it? Because it didn't belong to them in the first place.

'Never met an Arab'

The following is part of the transcript of Mike Wallace's report on the 'Israeli Arabs', in which a Zionist settler Arlene is faced with Nadji, Wallace's Palestinian taxi-driver:

Wallace: Arlene, you've been here for?

Arlene: Thirteen years.

Wallace: And when I asked you at the beginning of the —

Arlene: Never met an Arab.

Wallace: You've been here for 13 years and you've never met an Arab?

Arlene: Except as a taxi driver or as a client in our office, et cetera.

Wallace: You mean, this — this young man is the first —

Arlene: I'm embarrassed to say

so, yes.

Wallace: You said at the beginning of this conversation, 'They deserve to be second class.' Does he deserve to be second class?

Arlene: No, no, I take it back. I take it back. I feel badly. In a general way Arabs who want to destroy the State of Israel deserve to be second-class citizens.

That goes for Jews, because there are some of them around as well.

Wallace: Nadji, do you want to — honestly, if you dare say it — do you want to destroy the State of Israel?

Nadji: No, I have nothing against Jews, but I do have something against Zionists.

Wallace: Do you want to destroy the State of Israel? Hard to answer.

Nadji: How do you mean?

Wallace: Do you want Israel to disappear as a Jewish-Zionist state?

Nadji: Yes, but — let me — let me finish. I will not fight for that. That's not what I mean. Not by force. I think the Jews themselves — themselves can change

the Zionist aspect of the state and can be more democratic for Arabs.

Equal rights not debatable

The following is an exchange of views between Dr Sami Ma'ari, an Arab professor at the University of Haifa, and Phyllis Pepper, introduced by Wallace as a settler in Karmiel from Denver, Colorado:

Dr Ma'ari: Yet these people need land, and the Arabs own the land, they don't want to sell it, so it's confiscated. It's not only confiscated, it is developed, apartments are built on it, and the owner of the land cannot buy an apartment for his kids on that.

Pepper: I didn't uproot my life and leave my family and my children and lifelong friends to sit here and debate equal rights right now for Arabs, for Jews, for this, for that.

THE SECOND attempt in less than four months to incorporate the occupied Syrian Golan Heights into the Zionist state failed on 11th March when the Israeli Knesset threw out a bill calling for their formal annexation, introduced by the ultra-right wing Tehiya (Renaissance) Party member Goula Cohen. Last December a similar bill sponsored by Mrs Cohen was vetoed by the Belgian government, but only for fear of the international repercussions that would follow annexation.

The veto of the Golan annexation bill in December was merely a delaying tactic. As an Israeli spokesman was quoted on 23rd December in *The Times* as saying: 'The time is not appropriate'.

Annexation in fact commands wide support both from all the major parties in the Knesset and from the Israeli public as a whole. A year ago 72 Knesset members out of a total of 120, and 750,000 other Israelis, signed a petition calling for Israeli law to be extended to the region — annexation in all but name. And opinion polls at the time of the March vote were showing 75 per cent of Israelis in favour of annexation. The Cohen bill was rejected by 45 votes to 14, with 5 abstentions, but more significant than the votes registered was the number of Knesset members who chose to be absent for the vote — 56.

With the two attempts at annexation, the Golan Heights briefly commanded headlines in the international media. But such media attention has been rare for the region, seized in 1967 along with the West Bank, Gaza Strip and Sinai. The Golan issue is essentially peripheral to, and stems from, the basic conflict in the Middle East — between the Zionists and the Palestinians. Crucial questions of sovereignty, nationality and self-determination do not arise as they do in the areas of Palestine under Zionist occupation. Another reason for the media indifference is the absence of a large population. If human rights violations can be quantified, then there are fewer Syrians than Palestinians suffering at the hands of Zionist occupation forces. The focus of media attention has perhaps inevitably been the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, where human rights violations are so widespread, and which are the stages on which the latest phase in the Zionist Palestinian conflict is being played out.

The small Arab population on the Golan Heights, however, is the direct result of Israeli action. Before the 1967 war there were 142,000 inhabitants, most of them Syrians of the Druse religion — an offshoot of Islam — but including about 18,000 Palestinian refugees from the fighting of 1947 and 1948, when the Zionists seized most of Palestine. With the 1967 Israeli invasion of Syria, 134,000 of the Golan residents either fled or were expelled by the Zionists. By the end of 1967 the population had dropped to a mere 8,000, although high natural growth rates have led to a rapid increase and the Syrians living under Zionist occupation now number about 15,000.

Since the invasion, the Zionists have been as busy colonising the region as they have the other territories seized in 1967. Almost all the land on the Golan Heights has been seized under one pretext or another — usually for 'security reasons'. 30 Israeli settlements have so far been established, with a population estimated at 7,000. One, Kazzrin, is being developed into a major town. Five more settlements are scheduled to be established by the end of this year, and the settler population is planned to grow to 10,000 by the end



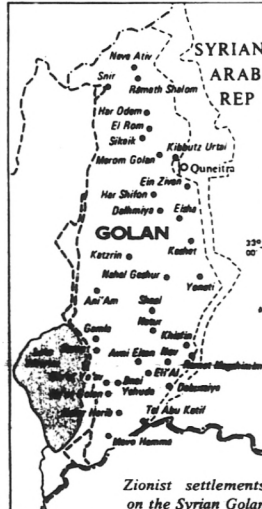
Kuneitra before occupation



Kuneitra willfully destroyed by the Israelis

THE GOLAN HEIGHTS: Syrian territories under Zionist occupation

IN 1967, Zionist forces marched into the towns and villages on the Golan Heights, bringing an important region of Syria under Israeli military occupation. A flourishing community of 142,000 was mostly thrown into exile, to make way for permanent occupation and the traditional establishment of Zionist settlements in the newly seized territories. Dr Alan George looks at the plight of the Golan citizens remaining under occupation, and assesses Israel's motives in the area.



of 1981. Plans call for an Israeli population of 50,000 by 1985.

Side by side with the colonisation of the Golan has gone the destruction of Syrian towns and villages, with about 150 having been destroyed. Only five villages remain intact. The most notable example of Israeli vandalism, however, was their systematic demolition of the Syrian city of Kuneitra, located on the eastern edge of the area occupied in 1967. Under the ceasefire agreement following the 1973 Middle East war, it was agreed that the city should be handed

back to Syria, but by the time of the transfer, in May 1974, the Israelis had blown up virtually every building in the town. Israeli claims that the destruction stemmed from the fighting in 1967 and 1973 were firmly rebutted by UN personnel who witnessed the Israelis at work on the city's destruction.

Although not as numerous as the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the residents of the Golan are subject to the same harsh military law, with the attendant human rights abuses, as their Arab

brethren in the other Israeli occupied territories. The hardships and deprivations of life under Zionist occupation were graphically chronicled by Sheikh Kail Kanj, one of the leaders of the Druse community, in an interview with the *New York Guardian* on 18th March this year. The people of Golan, he said, are 'forced to travel to do other kinds of work inside Israel or on the kibbutzim, because three quarters of our land has been confiscated, land on which the Israelis do nothing because they say they need it for "security reasons".'

Sheikh Kanj reported that, echoing military orders in force in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the Druse are forbidden from all building construction, except in the confines of their villages. The only newspapers allowed are those in Hebrew approved by the military government. West Bank papers, and the organ of Rakah, the Israeli Communist Party, which favours the return of the region to Syria, are strictly forbidden, he said.

Belying Zionist assertions that there is little or no opposition to their occupation of the Golan Heights, Sheikh Kanj reported that he had himself been imprisoned in 1973 during a wave of resistance to the occupation which resulted in the arrest of 85 people. 15 of these are still in Israeli jails. Another resident showed the *Guardian* reporters the remains of his former home, demolished by the Zionists as a punishment for alleged opposition activity.

Sheikh Kanj also gave the lie to

Israeli assertions that the residents of the 1967 occupied territories have benefited from Zionist rule through access to improved welfare facilities. He said education, housing and health conditions had all seriously deteriorated. There are currently only eight elementary schools for 4,000 pupils, and only one school had been built since 1967, he said. There is only one Israeli-sponsored health clinic, which is visited by a doctor for only a few hours each day. The only hospital in the region had been seized by the Israeli army for use as a headquarters.

In a bid to weaken the ties of the Golan Druse with Syria, and at the same time to prevent the emergence of a sense of solidarity with their fellow Arabs under occupation elsewhere, the Zionists offer Israeli nationality to those who 'volunteer' for it and, under a law passed last year, encourage the Golan Druse to carry Israeli identity cards. These measures have met with a conspicuous lack of success, however. On 7th December last Israel radio reported that only 500 Druse had taken up the offer of Israeli IDs. Sheikh Kanj spoke bitterly of the pressures put on his people to accept Israeli citizenship. 'You need a permit to do anything here,' he said, 'even to build inside the village. You need a permit even to get a licence to buy a car or truck. And in order to get a permit, the Israelis tell us that we must first accept Israeli citizenship.' He added: 'I would say that about 99 per cent of our people are against this. We are against annexation and we are against Israeli IDs.'

The myth of the Heights' security value

ISRAEL ALWAYS argues that the Golan Heights are vital for the security of her 'vulnerable' settlements in the Hula Valley in the north east of occupied Palestine. Before the Heights overlook. Before the 1967 war, these settlements were frequently shelled by Syrian artillery stationed on the Heights, the result of Israeli violations of the 1949 Armistice Agreement. Under this, a demilitarised zone was created along the border, comprising Arab-owned land. Israel, however, decided to 'misinterpret' the terms of the agreement, deploying military personnel in the zone and sending in settlers to farm the land.

It is a myth, however, that the settlements have been rendered safe from Syrian artillery simply

because the Golan Heights have been occupied. As Israeli General Mattityahu Peled wrote in the Hebrew daily *Ha'aretz* on 30th October last year, 'As for the peace enjoyed by the regions close to the Syrian border, this cannot be explained by Israel's control over a thin strip of the Golan Heights. Today, the Syrian artillery occupies almost the same place as before the Six Day War.'

He continued: 'All the Hula Valley settlements are within firing range of the Syrian artillery, just like before our conquest of the Golan.'

The real reason for the absence of Syrian shelling now, he explained, is that the terms of the ceasefire agreement currently in

effect are much tighter, and therefore less open to violation by Israel, than those of the 1949 agreement. He placed responsibility for the shelling before 1967 squarely on Israel: 'Israel preferred to display its strength, although we knew this would result in sharp Syrian reactions and bring suffering to the Israeli settlements in the area. It was a calculated risk, accepted by all Israeli parties and public agencies.'

The argument that the Golan Heights are vital for the security of Israel's settlements in the Hula Valley also rings hollow in view of the 30 new settlements Israel has established on the Heights themselves, even closer to the Syrian artillery than those

in the Hula Valley. These would surely not have been established if the sole aim was the protection of Israeli settlers from artillery attacks.

It was, in fact, the Golan settlements that demonstrated the falsity of that other argument used by Israel to justify her expansionism — that the illegal settlements in the 1967 occupied territories are themselves vital for her security. In the early days of the 1973 Middle East war, several of the Golan settlements were overrun by the Syrians, and Israel had to divert forces desperately needed to stem the Syrian advance to rescue the settlers, who had taken refuge in the old fortifications that constituted the pre-1967 Syrian front line.

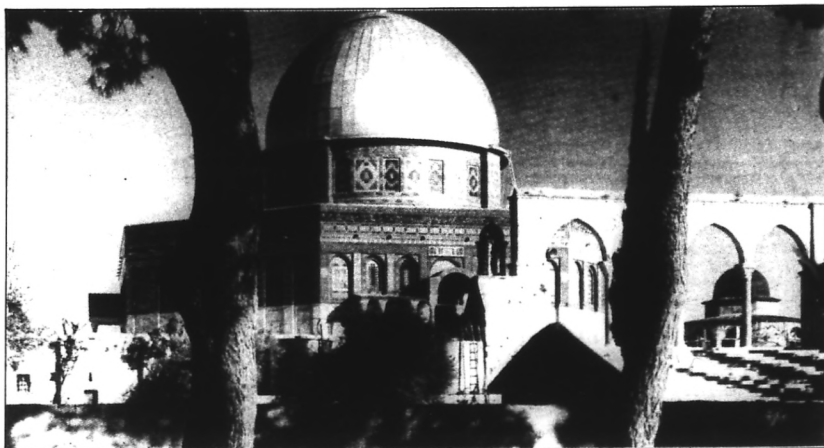
Resistance Poetry

To: Taghrid, A Bride of This Land

Slowly, Slowly, She's Gone

Suddenly
you fall on the chest's firebrand
and you cross death's threshold
you get washed with wail and sadness,
the wail I desire
was, when birds took off
I have loved you
while soldiers were taking you suddenly
from me.
You were dark beauty
Who used to love sudden breaths
and used to love politics and drawing on
school walls
you fall suddenly
like the pigeon's feather, white
while you were turning round the sudden
bullets
you were singing poems silently
and moving to the school's door.
How this girl tries to cross fearlessly
yet your name falls like small letters at the
cross-road,
between pain and shot songs.
I write that the drizzle
which falls on cities
is the songs,
and the brides do not wait for spring to
carry their babies to the priest who lives on
top
of the mountains.
When could you come suddenly
to prepare me
and dress my tall stature,
when could you come suddenly
while you have a date with flowers and death
at the guillotine?
I love you,
she said,
then blood suddenly turned
and the bird's voice turned green.
She was trying to draw the map in her notebook,
and Karmel mountain falls
Haifa falls
Jaffa falls,
and Taghrid was gathering her names
trying to settle on the wound's place,
or to bear a burden which equals Palestine's
face this is a hard time,
a country of yellow papers and shoes,
and "Nablus"
is a beautiful girl trying to settle down,
then sudden bullets fall on it,
a child walks out with a piece of sweet
or stone,
and threw it at a tank outside his camp,
or bombs a car full of soldiers,
is he, the innocent child who tries to blow
up a tank on the road
is he a child who tries to settle down
and destroy the remains of a car full of
soldiers?
Suddenly,
you fall on the chest's firebrand
and move to the wedding with a new dress,
oh Taghrid
wash me with you cry
or take back the remains of your blood.

Ibrahim Abu Ammar



Jerusalem under Zionist occupation: City of peace or war?

JERUSALEM: HISTORY PROVIDES 'WRITING ON THE WALL'

IF THERE is one thing on which all Zionists agree, it is that the occupied eastern sector of Jerusalem, which includes the ancient walled city, will never be returned to Arab rule. The wide support this view commands in Israel was highlighted by the voting on last July's law declaring the whole of the occupied city, including the eastern part, seized in 1967, as the 'eternal and indivisible capital' of the Zionist state. The 120-member Knesset voted by 69 to 15 in favour of the law, which had been introduced by Mrs Geula Cohen, a former member of the infamous Stern Gang that perpetrated a succession of bloody terrorist outrages against both the British and the Palestinian Arabs in the days of the British Mandate over the country. The only Knesset members to oppose the move were the tiny number belonging to leftist and progressive parties.

The Zionists attempt to justify their continuing occupation of the Holy City by a series of spurious claims, the most important being the historical attachment of the Jews to Jerusalem. Zionists assert that this is of greater significance than the rights and wishes of the Palestinian Arabs living there today, and whose forebears have inhabited the city since time immemorial. It is true that the city has religious importance for Jews, as it has for Christians and Muslims, but that does not confer the right to seize it by force of arms. That this is so has been repeatedly affirmed by the international community in a series of UN resolutions condemning the 14-year Israeli occupation. And in any event, the religious importance of Jerusalem to Jews is a very different thing from the city's significance for Zionists. Their perception of the city is coloured mainly by their lust for territory.

While the city has been occupied many times during its long history, the Zionists' occupation is different from all the others since they are actively pursuing the aim of ousting the entire native population of the city. Large tracts of Palestinian land have been seized for the establishment of fortress-like housing estates for Zionist immigrants. Palestinian homes have been demolished to make way for Zionist 'redevelopment' projects. Accompanying this determined effort to Judaize the city have been all the violations of the human

rights of the city's Palestinian residents that have become the hallmark of the Zionist occupation in all the Arab lands seized in 1967. These attempts to change the character of the city, and the attendant human rights violations have been condemned by the UN and other world bodies as repeatedly and firmly as they have denounced the occupation itself.

Two new books by the distinguished Palestinian international lawyer Henry Cattán, himself a native of Jerusalem, offer a detailed refutation of the Zionist claims on the city and, in language easily understandable to the layman, document the legal status of the city as it has developed in the period since the Zionists began their usurpation of Palestine in the late nineteenth century. Also provided is an interesting overview of the history of the city since its origins in around 1800 BC, and a review of the illegal acts perpetrated by the Zionists in the eastern part of the city seized in 1967. The two books cover essentially the same ground, but *Jerusalem* does so in considerably greater detail than *The Question of Jerusalem*. A particularly valuable component of the former is a long appendix containing the texts of all the resolutions adopted by the UN and its agencies pertaining to the status of the city and to Israel's actions there. That is not to say, however, that the shorter *The Question of Jerusalem* is any less worthwhile. It will make invaluable reading for those not well acquainted with the issue.

There is true irony in Cattán's main conclusion on the city's legal status: that the western part of the city is as much occupied as the eastern half. The Zionists' insistence on treating the city as an indivisible whole may backfire badly on them. 'There can be no doubt,' says Mr Cattán in *The Question of Jerusalem*, 'that on legal and logical grounds there exists no difference in regard to their illegality and invalidity between the measures taken by Israel in modern Jerusalem since 1948 and those it has taken in the Old City since 1967. Those illegal measures comprise, *inter alia*, the annexation of the city, the transfer of Jews to Jerusalem in order to modify its demographic structure, the deportation and displacement of its Arab inhabitants, the refusal to

allow their repatriation and the expropriation and confiscation of their property.'

Underlining that the city indeed cannot be treated as two separate entities, he continues: 'The city is indivisible and it is evident that Israel's illegal acts in Jerusalem since 1948 are on the same footing as its illegal acts since 1967. What is illegal in 1967 was illegal in 1948. In both cases, Israel's actions are invalid and cannot change the status of the city. In both cases Israel's actions must be rescinded.'

As an international jurist, it is no surprise that Cattán advocates the solution of the Jerusalem issue peacefully, through the machinery of the UN. But he is too much a realist to expect real progress through such avenues, in view of Israel's consistent floutings of rulings of the world body. 'One would hope that the problem of Jerusalem should not, as in the case of the Latin Kingdom (a reference to the Crusader occupation of the city), have to be settled by the sword,' he says in *Jerusalem*. But, given Zionist disregard for international law, he continues, 'The conditions seem to be present to make war the only alternative available for correcting the situation. So long as the Israelis do not recognise the gross injustices they have committed in Palestine and show no willingness to redress the wrongs done, of which there exists no sign whatsoever, it is futile to imagine that the Palestine Question and the problem of Jerusalem can be peaceably resolved.'

Cattán issues a clear warning as to the future of events if Israel continues its illegal policies: 'The Latin Kingdom lasted in Jerusalem from 1099 until 1187, a period of eighty-eight years, and then collapsed at the point of the sword. The lesson to be drawn from its rise and fall is the handwriting on the wall. If Israel persists in its obduracy in refusing redress of the wrongs it has done, it might well suffer the same fate.'

Dr Alan George

□ *Jerusalem*, by Henry Cattán, Croom Helm, London 1981. Price: £12.50

□ *The Question of Jerusalem*, by Henry Cattán, Third World Centre for Research and Publishing, London, 1980. Price: £4.50.

LONDON NOTES

Requisitions and cancellations at the FO

SHORTLY AFTER the publication of the February issue of *Free Palestine* a letter was received from the Foreign Office asking for their complimentary copy to be discontinued. The request was promptly processed, but a few days later, following the publication of the March issue, which reported the Foreign Office talks at which a meeting between Lord Carlington and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat was discussed, the Foreign Office came through on the telephone. Apparently while other newspapers had the story, the Foreign Office had not received a copy of *Free Palestine*. Could they send a messenger to collect a copy, they asked.

Meanwhile, the American Embassy in London has written requesting a copy of Fayeze Sayegh's excellent analysis *Palestine and the Camp David Accords*. Published by the Libyan People's Bureau in London as part of the *Arab Dawn Reports* series, the analysis was published in late 1978. Could it be that at last the State Department is prepared to listen to criticism of Jimmy Carter's self-proclaimed major achievement in foreign policy?

Guilt until proven Innocent

A NEW concept of American justice has been unveiled by President Reagan's National Security Advisor.

Re-asserting his administration's views of the PLO, Allen said in a 30th March television interview: 'There is no question we must identify the PLO as a terrorist organisation until it provides convincing evidence to the contrary'.

By this reasoning many people must be waiting for the Reagan administration to produce some evidence as to its many other claims concerning world affairs, and the purported Soviet threat to world stability.

Whatever Reagan and Haig may have told Arab leaders in recent weeks, there appears to be a major problem back at the Reagan ranch. According to the *New York Times* on 29th March: 'A draft report produced by the Central Intelligence Agency has concluded that there is insufficient evidence to substantiate Administration charges that the Soviet Union is helping to foment international terrorism, Congressional and Administration sources said today'.

The report continued, 'Some CIA officials [are] concerned that the agency is coming under pressure to tailor its analysis to fit the policy views of the Administration.'

Who shot Reagan? Zionists have the answer

THE ZIONISTS, never missing an opportunity to shoot off about the PLO, come up with a neat line of argument with which to exploit the recent assassination attempt against President Reagan. A front page ban-

ner headline in the New York *Jewish Press* proclaimed 'Condoning terrorism of PLO encourages assassination'. In what the paper boasted as a 'special to the Jewish Press', the Zionist propaganda organ cited 'one official', from 'a number of high government officials' as declaring: 'We must hold the Russians and the PLO responsible for creating the mood of permissive violence in the world.'

The paper continued, 'Although the assassin is in custody and is described as a mentally unbalanced individual, many in Washington feel he is the product of the times and mood of violence that has been created by the PLO terrorists.'

Perhaps we are entitled to ask how 'many' in Washington hold this curious line of thinking, and whether the author of the report is not himself 'a mentally unbalanced individual'. The *Jewish Press* might also like to enlighten its readers on PLO complicity in the assassination of President and the long line of American leaders shot by Americans before the Palestinian resistance movement was formed in 1965?

What's the difference between Young and Kirkpatrick

WHEN ANDREW Young, the former US Ambassador to the United Nations, held an informal conversation with a PLO official he was forced to resign. Last month Reagan's new ambassador to the UN, Jeane Kirkpatrick, held talks with five high-ranking South African intelligence men. In the *Washington Post* on 30th March, columnist Dorothy Gilliam questioned why Kirkpatrick, who had 'violated official US policy' had not 'even received an official slap on the wrist', while Young 'was practically pistol-whipped and drummed out of the UN building'.

Ms Gilliam does of course know the answer. She continued: 'Maybe it's because nobody cared enough — clearly the administration didn't care about outraging 26 million American blacks and most of the African continent. Maybe it's because the Jews are potent and quick to react when the interests of Israel are threatened, quick to use the levers of power, while blacks neither control the levers of power nor use them frequently enough.'

Israel's officials missing

ALARMED BY the continuing exodus of Zionist settlers from Palestine, the Israeli government's immigration agencies have launched a move to encourage emigrants to return again. We suspect that the Zionist officials knew very well why so many had abandoned the Zionist state. According to *The Guardian* on 18th March 'now an inquiry has been appointed to discover why officials sent abroad to drum up immigration failed to return'.

Washington wants its paper shredder back

THE *Los Angeles Times* reported on 19th March: 'The State Department has stripped the shuttered Iranian Embassy of high-value items ranging from Persian rugs to priceless paintings. They may be returned to Iran, but meanwhile there are some things the United States wants returned from its embassy in Tehran — like its paper shredder.'

EDITORIAL

'The Times' and what the Palestine National Council did not declare

THE FAILURE of the Palestine National Council in Damascus to grasp the nettle of recognition of Israel means that an opportunity to advance the cause of peace in the Middle East has slipped away. The PLO's continuing refusal to make any positive gesture toward Israel whatever is a disservice to the Palestinian cause,' declared *The Times*, opening its 20th April editorial.

That the paper should have devoted space to an editorial came as a surprise, since *The Times* failed to report most of the Council's debates, and none of its decisions.

However, we cannot ignore the fact that certain changes in PLO policy were hoped for, not only by *The Times*, but also by the European governments, perhaps even in the White House.

In particular, those who have no record of having supported the Palestinian people in their years of dispossession and exile, and their agony under military occupation by foreign settlers, demand that the PLO should recognise Israel's 'right to exist' and that a Palestinian state, possibly created on the West Bank and Gaza territories of Palestine, would co-exist with the Zionist state of Israel.

Such demands appear to come from a different world to the one in which the reality of the Palestinian experience is taking place. A people, now some 4.4 million strong, has been, in part, driven from its homeland by the Zionist forces of Israel. About half of the Palestinians today endure a wretched existence under Zionist military occupation.

The Palestinian exile and the Palestinian experience under occupation are not the result of PLO policy. Indeed the PLO's existence is a response to the Zionist threat which the Palestinians have endured.

The question has to be asked whether peace would emerge in the Middle East if the PLO were to declare its recognition of Israel. There is no evidence to suggest that the Zionist leaders would respond to such an initiative. Indeed, on the contrary, Beigun and Peres speak as one man on the subject: No recognition of the PLO, no recognition of a Palestinian state, no acceptance of Palestinian rights as defined by the United Nations General Assembly. And all these rejections are prefaced with the proviso that they remain valid even if the PLO were to recognise the state of Israel.

We are entitled to ask whether the Patriotic Front in Zimbabwe was required to recognise the illegal Smith regime as a precondition to independence and

majority rule. Has any liberation movement been required to recognise colonial administration as being legitimate as a prerequisite to independence? Must the African states recognise the South African white regime and declare apartheid legitimate? If not, why should such special demands be made of the Palestinians, and why should they, the Palestinians, be presented in the media, as unreasonable and an obstacle to peace for seeking the same rights as any other people in the world.

The conflict in the Middle East, and the Palestinian tragedy, is the direct consequence of the Zionists' violation of the Palestinian people's rights. The solution to the problem is therefore not the Palestinians' recognition of Israel, their acceptance and legitimising of the Zionists' actions, but in the implementation of a programme designed to ensure respect for the Palestinians' rights.

The Palestine National Council, rightly, devoted its time and energies, to the real issues of today rather than any hypothetical issues of the future. The PNC spent its eight days of discussions considering how to confront the continuing threat to the Palestinian people. It decided on concrete measures to confront this threat — a military response to a military threat, a political and diplomatic initiative in the hope that such a course of action might spare lives on both sides and bring peace to Palestine. It resolved to increase economic aid to the hard pressed Palestinian communities living under Zionist occupation. It agreed to continue to pursue a dialogue with Israeli Jews, who recognise the legitimate rights of the Palestinians, and perhaps through such actions to strengthen the prospects for co-existence between the two countries.

Prior to the PNC meeting, it was widely accepted that PLO recognition of Israel would be 'premature'. *The Times*, along with many political leaders in the West, conceded this position. What has changed in the Zionist position over the past year to make such recognition less premature and more justified?

The Zionists, and the state of Israel, remain committed to a policy of confrontation and oppression. *The Times* does itself a great disservice by adopting a position equivalent to proposing that in future the criminal in court should have rights which must be respected by the aggrieved party. So long as *The Times*, along with others, makes such absurd comments, there is surely little reason for the Palestinian people to take any notice.

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ZIONIST FURY OVER DUNDEE- NABLUS TWINNING

AGAINST THE background of an intense propaganda campaign launched in Britain by Zionist groups and designed to denigrate Dundee city councillors as anti-semites, the twinning agreement between the Scottish city and the West Bank town of Nablus has been ratified at a ceremony attended by a five-man delegation from Dundee headed by the Lord Provost.

On their return to the UK, the Dundee officials declared their continued firm backing for the twinning move. They expressed their abhorrence of Israeli practices in the 1967 occupied territories, and emphasised that throughout the West Bank they had found strong support for the Palestine Liberation Organisation from all sections of society.

The twinning agreement was ratified on 2nd April at a ceremony held in the grounds of the Nablus city library, at which Provost James Gowans presented Mayor Bassam Shaka with the flag of Dundee. Last autumn, while undergoing treatment in Britain following the loss of both his legs in a Zionist terrorist car bombing, the Nablus mayor had travelled to Dundee and presented the Lord Provost with a Palestinian flag, which is now hoisted proudly in the Dundee city chambers.

Mr Gowans and the four Dundee councillors — three Labour and one Independent — addressed the several thousand Palestinians present at the Nablus ceremony on what they had learned during their visit to the occupied region. Independent councillor Ian Mortimer denounced the practices of the Israeli army, saying: "What I have seen is a highly educated and highly cultured people under the heel of an occupying force. I have seen a refugee camp outside this town and I weep for the plight of the people who stay there. I have visited places of worship and seen armed soldiers inside them."

He added: "I have seen all this and when I go back to Scotland I will be telling the truth about the plight of this land."

Labour councillor Colin Rennie was even more forthright. Denouncing what he termed the 'apartheid' system operating at Israeli checkpoints in the West Bank, whereby all Palestinian but no Israeli vehicles were stopped, and also the systematic torture employed in Israeli jails, he declared: "It is the Zionists who are the terrorists."

The Lord Provost told the crowd: "In Dundee and elsewhere in the UK, they ask: 'Who speaks for the Pales-



The brutality of Zionist occupation: Tell the British people, Dundee delegation is urged during historic visit to Nablus.

tinians?" and we always answer: "The Palestine Liberation Organisation."

He continued, "We are then asked how anyone can enter into negotiations with a terrorist organisation, and we answer quite simply that the PLO is not a terrorist organisation."

As if to prove the delegation's point about the harshness of the Israeli occupation regime, within hours of the ceremony Israeli military vehicles surrounded the Nablus library grounds. A member of the library staff was arrested and another 20 townspeople taken away for 'questioning'.

In Britain, Zionist groups have mounted a determined campaign against the twinning, with charges of anti-semitism at its centre. Shortly after Dundee council agreed on the twinning arrangement last November, the local synagogue was daubed with swastikas and other right-wing

graffiti. The Zionists claim this as evidence that the twinning move has prompted a wave of anti-semitism in Scotland. The Dundee councillors, and Dundee West Labour MP Ernie Ross, strongly denied the allegation, saying that such slogans as those daubed on the synagogue had nothing to do with the Palestine or Nablus issue, and could be seen on walls throughout Britain. The malicious charge that opposition to Israel and support for the Palestinians is motivated by anti-semitism is a familiar means with which Zionists attempt to silence their critics.

The attempt to denigrate the Dundee councillors reached a crescendo on 8th April when Michael Ancram, South Edinburgh's Conservative MP, speaking in the House of Commons, accused them of 'anti-semitic ravings', and Bill Walker, Conservative MP for Perth, said the twinning reminded him of the early days of Hitler, and that the Dundee councillors were 'promoting anti-Jewish activities'.

These allegations prompted a firm response from councillors Ken Fagan and Colin Rennie, both of whom are members of the West Bank delegation. They challenged the two MPs to repeat the charges outside Parliament, and thus without the protection of parliamentary immunity from prosecution, saying that if they did, they would sue for defamation.

No evidence

The Zionist campaign designed to overturn the twinning and to silence the Dundee supporters of the PLO lost much of its potency, however, after Mr George Younger, Secretary of State for Scotland, told the Board of Deputies of British Jews that there was no evidence of an upsurge of anti-semitism in Dundee as a result of the twinning of Nablus.

Mr Younger was speaking with the Board on 15th April after they had requested a meeting in the hope of persuading the government to take some action against the council. Mr Younger told them, however, that twinning arrangements were a matter only for local authorities. He added that Tayside police had confirmed that no other incidents of anti-semitism had taken place since the widely publicised daubing of the synagogue.

On 8th April the Dundee delegation held a press conference in the city chambers, at which they elaborated on what they had seen on the West Bank. Colin Rennie repeated his description of the Israeli regime as terrorist, saying, "The theft of land, the conditions we witnessed in the camps where the Palestinians have lived for 33 years in intolerable circumstances, apartheid at checkpoints, the incredible number of people who had been jailed for minor offences; terrorism is an accurate word to describe this."

And Provost Gowans emphasised the extent of support amongst West Bankers for the PLO. "Every organisation we spoke to, everywhere we asked, every section of society said that the PLO is their true representative," he declared. "Every single person we met echoed this sentiment."

British journalists protest Zionist censorship

THE NATIONAL Union of Journalists, with 30,000 members, and the only trade union representing journalists in Britain and Ireland, has hit out against Israeli censorship of Palestinian publications. A resolution passed by a large majority at the Union's recent Annual Delegate Meeting in Norwich called on the NUJ's National Executive Council to protest to the Israeli government over actions of censorship, and to make contact with the General Union of Palestinian Writers and the editors of Palestinian journals which had been censored, in order to make the issues better known to NUJ members.

The resolution was put forward by the London Freelance Branch of the union. It declared: "This ADM views with concern the activities of the Israeli occupation authorities in Palestine in suppressing and harassing the Arab and English language press, and in censoring and banning journals, books and other media. ADM deplores the recent arrest of three Palestinian editors by the occupation authorities. It urges the NEC to protest to the Israeli government over these actions, and further to contact the General Union of Palestinian Writers and the editors of the journals concerned with a view to making these matters known to the NUJ's membership as a whole. This ADM

further condemns the lack of press freedom in surrounding Arab countries."

Proposing it, branch delegate Phil Kelly told the 300 assembled delegates that the censorship practised against Palestinian papers and other media was not ad-hoc censorship which could be justified because of the military situation. It was directed to the suppression of Palestinian national identity. He cited the banning of books of Palestinian poetry and history, and the refusal by the Israeli occupation authorities to allow the Jerusalem paper Al-Fajr to subtitle its English language weekly edition 'A Palestinian weekly', and quoted the editor of the Jerusalem daily Al-Sha'ab as saying that his paper was not allowed to print news which had appeared in Israeli, Hebrew and English language papers, or was supplied by the major international news agencies.

The resolution was opposed by the Union's National Executive, but they will now be bound to take steps to bring the situation in occupied Palestine to the attention of British journalists.

* On page 7, Robert Friedman provides a feature report on the censorship of the Arabic press in the Israeli occupied territories, and discloses that 'it is even illegal for the Arab papers to show anyone that they have been censored'.

GLASGOW: Students ban Jaffas

QUEEN MARGARET Union at Glasgow University has passed a motion banning all Israeli produce, which includes the famous Jaffa products, along with goods from South Africa and Chile. The move could cost the union some £5,000, according to local Zionists, who are urging Jewish students to withdraw their membership from the student body.

Meanwhile, the Student Representative Council at Glasgow University, which represents all students has announced plans to twin with the union of Bir Zeit University on the Israeli occupied West Bank. Also in Glasgow, Strathclyde University has announced

plans to twin with the university in occupied Bethlehem.

James Black, President of the SRC has defended the Bir Zeit twinning decision in the face of strong Zionist pressures. He points out, "We have condemned the treatment of Soviet Jews in the USSR; we equally condemn the unacceptable treatment of Palestinian students at Bir Zeit University."

Mr Black reportedly told *The Scotsman* that the SRC hoped the move would bring the Palestinian issue to the attention of Scottish students and 'somehow get rid of the image that the Zionists are the good guys'.

BRADFORD: 16th May Day School planned by Labour group

TO COINCIDE with the 1981 Palestine Day, marking the anniversary of the Zionist occupation of Palestine, the Bradford Labour Movement Campaign for Palestinian Solidarity (BLMCPs) is staging a day school on the theme 'Labour and Apartheid in Palestine'.

The school, which starts at 10.30am at Bradford University's Communal Building, is sponsored by four local Labour MPs and the

Bradford Trades Council. Speakers will include the well-known anti-Zionist Israelis Dr Uri Davis and Elif Pallas, together with a representative of the PLO. Bradford University Students Union is also sponsoring the event.

A statement issued by BLMCPs says the organisation believes that 'the rights of the Palestinians must be fought for internationally'. Further information from Roy Stoves by telephone (evenings) on Bradford 497644.

Campaign activities

If you are organising a Palestine campaign in your area, or any activities, please send information and newspaper cuttings to the

Campaign Editor, Free Palestine, PO Box 492, London SW19 4PJ. Photographs (black and white) are also welcomed.