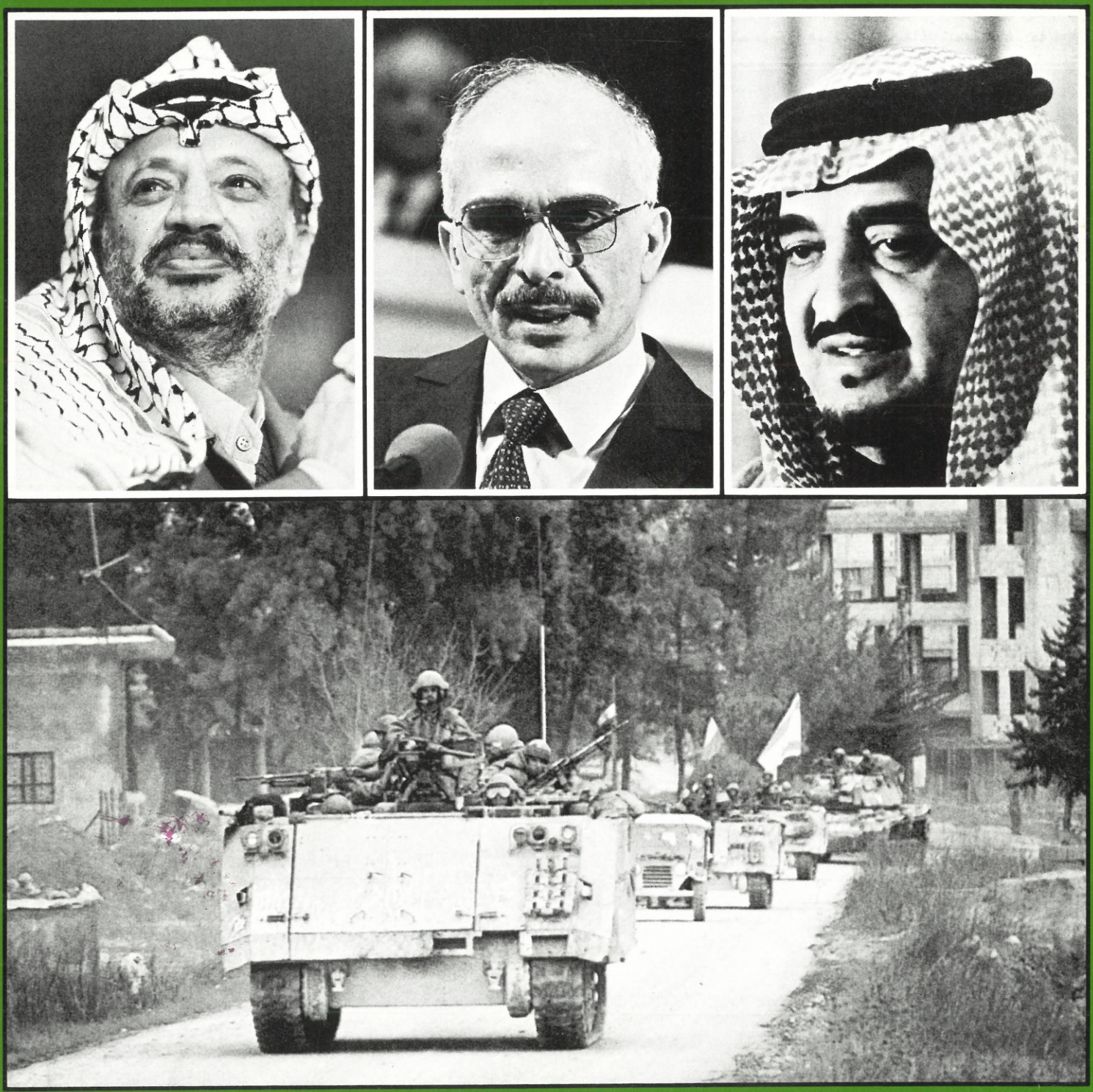
Palestine Perspectives

Number 14 March 1985



ISRAEL FUMBLES: WAR AND PEACE

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Palestine Perspectives is published monthly from October to May and bimonthly from June-September by:

Palestine Research and Educational Center
818 18th Street, NW, Suite 645
Washington, DC 20006

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Signed articles express the views of their authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Palestine Research and Educational Center.

Subscription rates: In the U.S. and Canada, $15/year ($10 to students). Elsewhere, $25/year. Single copies, $1.50.

MUCH ADO ABOUT WHAT?

Reports about a PLO-Jordanian agreement on a joint political initiative occasioned all sorts of speculation, not only about the reported agreement itself, but about its implications to the future of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Following that debate, one would get the impression that the Arab-Israeli conflict is a Palestinian-Jordanian dispute whose resolution hinged on a rapprochement between these two parties. As is often the case, Israel emerged as an innocent bystander caught in the complexities of Middle Eastern politics.

The whole concept of a PLO-Jordanian agreement (as distinct from a joint Arab position) is based on the premise that Israel is prepared to withdraw from the Palestinian territories it occupied in 1967 if it can find an agreeable heir to bequeath them to. Needless to say, Israel cannot be blamed for this unwarranted assumption, because it had never said or done anything to encourage it. On the contrary, Israel missed no opportunities, in words and deeds, to make it clear that it has no intention of withdrawing from the occupied territories, and that its sole purpose is to find Arab parties willing to accept that arrangement.

In fact, this is the real reason for Israel's uncompromising hatred of the PLO and the Palestinians. Israelis, politicians and journalists, have frequently admitted that it is the idea of withdrawal which is anathema to them. Israel's foreign minister Yitzhak Shamir said, when he was prime minister, that "we hold territorial compromise to be unrealistic and unavailable." But Israeli withdrawal is the only item on the agenda that the Palestinians cannot afford to drop, because without it the whole idea of Palestinian rights becomes philosophical. All other parties to the conflict can exist without Israeli withdrawal, except the Palestinians. It is their homeland, all of it, that is occupied.

That is why consenting to negotiate with the Palestinians is incompatible with Israel's commitment to keep the occupied territories. As the Israeli journalist David Krivine once put it: "The only group we won't talk with...is the PLO—but not because they are nasty people. The obstacle is the subject on the agenda. It can only be the creation of a Palestinian state on the West Bank, and that we can't agree to."

President Reagan tried to solve that problem for the Israelis. In his proposal of September 1, 1982, he ruled out Palestinian statehood, leaving Jordan as Israel's partner to negotiate the exchange of territory for peace. The Israelis rejected his proposal, making it clear that it is territorial compromise the Israelis reject, and not a particular negotiating partner.

In view of these facts, why all the excitement about news of a PLO-Jordanian agreement? Given Israel's determination to gobble up the occupied territories, any PLO-Jordanian agreement would be irrelevant to peace in the Middle East. Then, to repeat the question, why the excitement?

As long as Israel rejects the possibility of withdrawal from the occupied territories, and as long as the United States refuses to pressure Israel or to permit international involvement in the peace process, the Arabs need more than a joint position. In the fall of 1982, they developed a unanimous position at the Fez Summit. Israel and the U.S. did not dignify it with a response. The weakness of the Arab side convinced their adversaries that the Arab-Israeli conflict no longer constitutes a threatening situation which needs to be resolved. Until the Arabs convince their adversaries otherwise, they will continue their futile search for a negotiating partner, and they will continue to negotiate among themselves. □

M. Hallaj

BE AN ENVOY TO

The Middle East



AN ESSAY COMPETITION

The Arab-Israeli Conflict: A Solution

Sponsored by The Arab Women's Council Research and Education Fund, Inc.

TO PARTICIPATE IN THE COMPETITION: Any high school student in good academic standing may participate. Interested students should send their name, address, date of birth, name of school, academic year, together with written confirmation of their good academic standing from their sponsoring teacher, to the Arab Women's Council Research and Education Fund, by March 30, 1985.

GUIDELINES: The Middle East is a complex, diverse and vital region of the world. This history of the area and the conflict should be carefully researched. Students should demonstrate knowledge of the history of the area generally, and the Arab-Israeli conflict particularly. The proposed solution should be feasible, and should take into consideration the needs and aspirations of the peoples of the area. Submitted essays should be between 10 to 12 double-spaced typewritten pages on standard 8½ x 11" typing paper. Essays should be free of typographical and other mechanical errors.

MATERIALS: A suggested bibliography may be obtained upon request from the AWC.

SUBMISSION OF ENTRIES: Entries should be postmarked no later than April 30, 1985. Each entry should include: (1) the student's name, age, academic year, permanent address and telephone number; and (2) a letter signed by the sponsoring teacher confirming the student's good academic standing.

JUDGING AND FINAL SELECTIONS: Essays will be judged for political objectivity, creativity, analytical presentation and accuracy. 15 finalists will be forwarded to a distinguished judging panel in May, 1985. The judges are: the Honorable Andrew I. Killgore, former United States Ambassador to Qatar; Dr. Michael Hudson, Director of the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies at Georgetown University; Dr. William Quandt, Senior Fellow, Middle East Affairs, Brookings Institution; Ms. Elizabeth Scott, former Associate Director of the National Council for the Social Studies; and Mrs. Hala Maksoud, President of the Arab Women's Council.

FINAL AWARDS: Fifteen finalists will receive certificates of commendation for their superior efforts and talents. The awards, solely in the form of fellowship grants for a three week study tour of the Middle East in July/August of 1985, are not transferable. Round-trip airfare from the recipients' home town, accommodations, meals and transportation within the region as required by the itinerary will be provided. An orientation session will be held in Washington, D.C. prior to departure.

INQUIRIES: Inquiries concerning the essay competition may be addressed to the AWC Research and Education Fund, 5010 Wisconsin Avenue, NW; Suite 205; Washington, D.C. 20016.

FORUM

VILLAGE ON DEATH ROW

B. Michael

*[**Editor's Note:** On December 6, 1984, the Israeli conciliation court in Acre ordered the release of five Bedouin prisoners, all members of the Arab al-Sawa'id tribe. The five residents of al-Kamaaneh village spent ten months in jail for contempt of court. Why were they jailed for so long? What crime have they committed?*

*In the following article, Israeli journalist B. Michael attempts to answer these questions by relating the story of a Palestinian village stubbornly resisting Israeli attempts to erase it off the surface of the earth. The article was originally published in Hebrew by **Ha'aretz** of 11 December 1984 under the title, "The Village That Must Not Remain."]*

For the last nine months, five Bedouins have been sitting in Damoun jail. They have not been convicted of any offence nor have they committed any crime. They were merely found "in contempt of court." This contempt consists of having refused to carry out the ruling handed down by Acre's justice of the peace, who ordered them to demolish their homes with their own hands. Neither the housing authorities nor the police but they themselves must destroy the roof over their children's heads! They are refusing to do so, and so they remain in jail.

Theirs is a simple story of discrimination and aggression. It is quite clear-cut. It is about the people of Jabal Kamaaneh, a hill above the town of Carmiel, who are members of the Bedouin tribe of Arab al-Sawa'id. The story goes back to the Ottoman period when the tribe decided to abandon nomadic life and to settle on the hill. Most members hold Ottoman or British deeds to the land in question. In July 1957, their ownership of the land was recorded in the land registry (tabu), but in July 1963 it was declared null and void, and the names of the Bedouin land owners were replaced by that of the new owner: the state of Israel. Whoever was in charge of the area then decided that Jabal Kamaaneh had done its duty and could go. The inhabitants were to descend from the hill, go elsewhere and disappear. The crucial date, however, is 1976, when a certain document, now known as the *Koenig Report*, was written. It was named after one of its authors, Israel Koenig, the Northern District (Galilee) Commissioner of the Ministry of Interior. It was a racist document. For example, it stated that the Arab character is "superficial and Levantine...whose imagination tends to exceed rationality...." The document did not just state genetic-racist facts, however. It also contained recommendations on how to reduce the number of Arabs in Galilee.

Mr. Koenig continues to serve in his post as commissioner of the northern district. The publicity surrounding his report has not done him any harm, but what happened

(continued on page 3)

VILLAGE *(continued from page 2)*
in Jabal Kamaaneh certainly looks as if someone had decided to carry out his proposals in full. However, one cannot blame Koenig alone, for as we have been told, "policy is determined by the Ministry as a whole."

Some arguments often voiced to justify discrimination and injustice can be dismissed in this case. Firstly, the members of the Arab al-Sawa'id tribe are "loyal to the state." Many have served in the security forces. Secondly, they are not "communists," for they always vote either for Labor or for Mapam. Thirdly, they are not "squatters on state land." Much of the land on the hill belongs to them, and this is not challenged by the authorities. Moreover, the houses scheduled for demolition are built on their own private plots, and nobody has (so far?) questioned their ownership.

As for background information, the inhabitants of the village are Bedouins, and the Israeli establishment does not like Bedouins, whether in the Negev or in Galilee. So the Jewish mind has come up with all sorts of ideas on how to solve the Bedouin problem, mainly by concentrating them in "reservations." This is carried out by the "Committee for the Concentration of Bedouins." Although this committee determines the fate of so many Bedouins, it has only one Bedouin member.

In the Negev, the Bedouins are harassed endlessly, so that they would abandon their tents and agree to settle in the neglected and ugly townships constructed for them. In Galilee, however, a large part of the Bedouins ceased to be nomads over a generation ago. The inhabitants of Jabal Kamaaneh have been sedentary since the 19th century. What is the point of uprooting them from their present place and transferring them to a new "concentration"? One of the answers lies with "the Judaization of Galilee," that sacred cow which demands that land be forcefully taken away from Arabs and handed over to Jews who show little interest in it....

Another explanation relates to the fact that once a committee has been established, it must naturally do something, and so it decided in the 1960's that the inhabitants of Jabal Kamaaneh must leave their hill and move to Wadi Sallameh, where they would be provided with water, electricity, education and health facilities. And once it had been decided that Jabal Kamaaneh had to go, the harassment started. The original excuses for forcing the Bedouins off the hill had long become invalid. It had been said that the area was a closed military zone, but this had ceased years ago. It was also said that the building of a road and the installation of electricity and water networks on the hill was too expensive, but this argument, too, has become absurd, because two Jewish strongpoints were established five years ago in the Bedouins' own backyard on the hill. Of course, money was found to equip them with water and electricity, but these are only for Jews. Somehow, the budget ran out 500 yards from the Bedouin village.

Even after some of their land had been confiscated, the villagers refused to leave the hill. But the administrative process continued. The village was simply abolished, as if it had never existed. In 1964, the authorities closed the village school, which had been built in the 1950's, when the village was still in existence. Now that there was no village here officially, there was no need for a school. The children of Jabal Kamaaneh started walking to school 5 miles each way to the neighboring village of Nahaf.

Today, the village no longer appears on any map. It is not entitled to any public services, facilities or official actions. It does not exist. "You do not appear on our maps," is what the villagers are told whenever they ask for electricity, water or a different use of the land registered in their name. Yet their identity cards still specify Jabal Kamaaneh as their birthplace and place of residence. A ballot box with the name Kamaaneh on it appears at every election, yet there is no such place. Just a few hundred people determined to live in a "cancelled" village, which to them is their patrimony.

In 1979, the strongpoints were established. They got water and electricity. The Bedouins didn't. In 1980, the Bedouins were forbidden to keep flocks. They had about 2,000 animals, cows and goats, which were confiscated. They were given a ridiculous amount in compensation. The strongpoints were allowed to keep grazing animals, and their cows still graze in the area. The Bedouins may only keep one cow per household. They have become sharecroppers and work as laborers in Carmiel and its surroundings. They can only do very little farming, but still they will not leave the hill....

I met with Mahmoud Sawa'id near the police station in Carmiel. He is 30, single, and teaches biology and chemistry in (the Arab village of) Majd al-Kuroum. He was born in Jabal Kamaaneh, went to the village school "until they closed it down," then to Nahaf. He obtained his B.S. degree in biology from the Negev University before returning to live in his village and teach in Galilee. His brother is among the detainees. Mahmoud takes us to the top of the hill, where the view is breathtaking. He leads us up to the gate of the strongpoint of Michmorim, because "from there you have a good view of our village," and so we do. The strongpoint consists of some ten houses surrounded by a fence. Two Arab laborers are engaged in construction work there.

Near the gate of the strongpoint is an Arab stone house, which belongs to Khaled Nimer Sawa'id. It cannot be demolished, because it was built before 1948. The owner cannot be evicted and holds the title deed to the land. Water pipes and electricity cables are only twenty yards away, well within his sight, but they don't reach his house. Later, he tells us: "I once asked them for water, because my well had run dry. They said they could not give me any, because the Jewish Agency did not allow it."

A paved road leads up to the strongpoint and stops there. The asphalt ran out 200 yards short of the Arab village. Only a dirt road leads here. Many of the houses are built in the Ottoman style or the style common under the Mandate. The newest house is ten years old. When we arrive at two houses scheduled for demolition, which belongs to two brothers, Ismail and Salah, we are greeted by Ismail's wife. Her nine children are still at school. Salah's wife, a slim and pretty woman, is holding her youngest child in her arms. The five others are still at school. This is western Kamaaneh, further up the hill is eastern Kamaaneh, and between them, in a dip, is another group of houses. In their midst are the ruins of a house, like an open wound. Its demolition was carried out, as ordered by the authorities, who smashed it to bits with their bulldozers two months ago.

Mahmoud lives in eastern Kamaaneh, which does not even have a path leading up to it. Mahmoud jumps from stone to stone. "What do you do in winter?" I ask. "I get wet," is his reply. The houses of the second strongpoint, Kamon, are almost adjacent to those of eastern Kamaaneh. This strongpoint too enjoys the water and electricity allocated on the basis of the Law of Return. Such services are available only to those who either have a Jewish mother or have converted to Judaism.

Abu Ahmad, who retired from the Border Police after 22 years as a tracker, invites me to his home, which is the most ornate one in the village. He brings out the villagers' weapon: their thick file of documents—endless pages whose contents reveal indifference, viciousness, discrimination, narrow-mindedness and cruelty. Other villagers come into the room, but they remain quiet. Even anger cannot be discerned here, only amazement. "I just don't understand," Khaled tells our photographer. "Why are they doing this to us? What have we done to them? Have I not served in the army for five years? Why is it?"

From Mahmoud's documents, whole stories begin to emerge. In 1979, when the strongpoints were being established, the Ministry of Education started to transport the [Jewish] settlers' children to school. The Bedouin children had to walk to school, and so Ahmad Sawa'id, a man with initiative, approached the Ministry with a request to provide similar transportation for the children of Kamaaneh. The Ministry agreed and the children began riding the bus. Within a year, however, the service stopped. Someone had found another way of putting pressure on the Bedouins to leave their village. On October 14, 1984, the Education Department sent them a letter which simply said: "We are concerned that the children of Arab al-Sawa'id should all attend the school in Wadi Sallameh."

Knesset Member Ora Namir questioned the Minister of Education on this, and received the following answer: "Transport was provided during the past year by mistake." The mistake was rectified and the village children walk to school again, until their parents would agree to leave the village. Sometimes they pass the empty minibus of the strongpoints, which is ferrying two Jewish children....

Hamda Khader Sawa'id, Ismail's wife, is an invalid. A Syrian rocket wounded her in 1967 and she carries a document describing her as "an invalid due to enemy action." She is entitled to and receives an invalid allowance, as well as child allowance for her nine children. This has now been cut back thanks to the amendment in National Insurance Law, which was designed to reduce the amount of money paid to Arabs. Since the two allowances together still amount to less than the minimum wage, the law entitles her to have the sum raised. The social worker in Damoun jail appealed on her behalf to the National Insurance Office (NI). For three months, Hamda received what was due her, but then the payments stopped. The National Insurance discovered that she had "property." This consisted of an old Peugeot pickup truck. She does not have a driver's license and the vehicle was broken, but the authorities did not care. She was asked to hand back the permit to the NI to ensure that she was not earning money from the vehicle in her spare time, and did so. The allowances were not renewed. She was told that she must also sell the vehicle. She did. This produced a change in payments: they were reduced. The NI began deducting from her invalid and children's allowances the money she had been paid "by mistake" for three months....

Ali Mustapha Qasim, who is also in jail, has four children, three of whom suffer from hemophilia which means that any scratch requires them to have hospital treatment or they will die. The children are registered as invalids, so their father was authorized to purchase a tax-free car to transport them to hospital. However, he did not have the money to do so. Only when he himself was injured in an accident and received compensation did he manage to buy a car. The next day he was arrested. Now the car stands in the yard while its owner is in jail. His wife has no license, and because of the car, she too is not getting National Insurance payments. She cannot even sell it, for the NI does not allow quick sale of tax-free cars.

"Why don't you want to move to the wadi?" I ask Mahmoud. "What is so bad about Wadi Sallameh? It has electricity, water, dispensaries, a school." Mahmoud smiles, for he is used to the question. "How many answers do you want?" he asks. "Firstly, they have told us quite clearly that we will not get any land at all there. In exchange for all our land here we will get half a dunum to build a house on and keep a goat in the yard. No money and no land."

"Moreover, there are already other Bedouins living there. They are, understandably, not keen on having us. We will be there as refugees. Anyway, our relationship with them is not very good. Thirdly, and most importantly, the land they want to give us there has been confiscated from Arabs in Arrabeh and Sakhneen. What do they want us to do? To accept land that was taken by force from other Arabs? Why should we leave here? Whom are we disturbing? Koenig thinks there are too many Arabs in Galilee. Does he believe that if we leave the hill we are going to die on the way or somehow decline in numbers? This is no longer a military zone, and electricity and water have already been installed in the strongpoints. Why should we go away? Why abandon our land, just because someone wants us to?"

When the children return from school, the village is swept by them. Through Abu Ahmad, who speaks some Hebrew, they say to me: "Write that the children are asking for the bus to come back and take them to school."

The Koenig report said: "We recommend the examination of possibilities to thin out existing Arab population concentrations." It proposes ways of making it difficult for the Arabs of Galilee to provide their children with education. It advises on how to bring about "an increase in [Arab] emigration from the country," and how to restrict the rights of citizens supposed to have equal rights. It also recommends finding "a way to neutralize the payment of 'large family' grants to the Arab population, either by linking them to the economic situation or by taking this responsibility from the National Insurance system and transferring it to the Jewish Agency or the World Zionist Organization, so that the grant will be payable to Jews only." This month, Knesset Member Meir Kahane submitted a proposed bill, which is reminiscent of these proposals. Part of the bill said that "National Insurance payments should be transferred to the Jewish Agency so that only Jews will benefit from the money."

In Jabal Kamaaneh that document has already been put into practice, letter by letter, day by day. Shame on us. □

FORUM

GOVERNMENT BY INTIMIDATION

Donald Betz

At the end of January, Israeli Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin visited the United States and secured a pledge from President Reagan for additional economic and military assistance beyond the already-granted record amounts. If his requests are fulfilled, US assistance to Israel will top $4 billion in the coming year, most in the form of grants never to be repaid. US assistance would then amount to more than one thousand dollars for each and every Israeli.

Apologists for such philanthropy justify it in the name of securing a steadfast ally in the Middle East, one of a precious few democracies extant. But there are unsettling characteristics of Israeli policy which must be addressed. One was bluntly raised when Mr. Rabin was canvassing Washington with his shopping list.

A report released jointly by the International Commission of Jurists and its West Bank affiliate, Law in the Service of Man, casts incriminating shadows across the administration's image of Israel as a fortress of democratic values. *Torture and Intimidation in the West Bank* contends, through the affidavits of former Palestinian prisoners, that the Israeli military authorities operate a prison center at al-Far'a to intimidate Palestinians through harsh treatment in order to extract contrived confessions. Rabin and other Israeli officials immediately rejected the study as "total nonsense" and "...web of false claims and baseless facts originating from hostile organizations."

In contrast to this severe reaction stands the 56-page report, written in an understated style, that reproduces the statements of some twenty Palestinians who were detained in al-Far'a prison near Nablus on the West Bank between April 1982 and May 1984. The report was hand-carried by one of the founders of LSM to the State Department Human Rights Bureau in late January in the hope of winning support for improving the living conditions of the detainees.

The affidavits presented one after the other build a cumulative sense in the reader that something is seriously wrong on the West Bank. The editors offer little commentary beyond the words of the affiants themselves. Little else seems to be needed.

This is not the first time such charges have been leveled at the Israeli military authorities governing the territories occupied since the 1967 war. Earlier in 1984 the Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights, which includes Jewish Israeli citizens, held a press conference claiming proof of torture at al-Far'a.

The former prisoners appear to have much in common. Most are young male students. They were generally apprehended during the night, handcuffed and hooded. Initially, no charges were leveled against them, yet some were detained for up to thirty days.

All were subjected to personal humiliations that became routine by the closing pages of the study. All of them recounted long periods of waiting, defamations of family, riding for extended periods on the floor of military vehicles, bound and masked. Sanitary living conditions were nonexistent. In some cases detaining rooms were stables or toilets, often filled with standing water. Those who were not locked in toilets were allowed little time to use them. The food was branded as unedible. All testified to repeated assaults with fists, boots, electric cords and/or rifle butts. Two of the affiants speak soberingly of direct reprisals against them for speaking to representatives of the International Red Cross. Some of the testimony is even more harrowing.

Under the Israeli military orders that control life for the Palestinian residents of the West Bank, the rights of the individual are usurped in the name of national security. Beyond all the personal deprivations and degradations, the former prisoners confirmed that they are living in their homeland under a system where they can be held without being questioned, without being charged. After days of insults, third-degree interrogation and inhumane living conditions, some of the detainees were enlisted as collaborators. "On the 25th day, they proposed that I join them as a collaborator; they'd make me the headmaster of a school before I'd even graduated from university, get me a job at the university, and give me cash and a permit to go and visit any country I liked in the world." Others eventually confessed to anything just to end the torment and were tried on the basis of manufactured confessions. In documented cases medical treatment was withheld in violation of the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners as well as Israeli military orders.

The compilers of the report submit that the individual mistreatment and the barbaric prison conditions are components of a system of domination and control "designed to break the spirit of any detainee brought to al-Far'a, regardless of whether or not he committed any act against the occupation." The aim of this report by Law in the Service of Man is to alter these conditions through external pressure brought to bear by the USA and others upon Israel.

This information should move the American public to ask some critical questions of Israel and the continuing special relationship it enjoys with the USA. Its claim to be repository of democratic values in the Middle East is incompatible with these accusations. Such action would be at odds with a legal tradition that safeguards the rights of the accused through due process of law.

Al-Far'a prison conditions cited in this brief report raise major questions about Israeli military rule over the West Bank and Gaza and the reflective impact of such practices upon the USA which stands as the guarantor of Israeli economic and military viability. The issues raised by Law in the Service of Man warrant further detailed examination and public discussion. □

[Donald Betz is currently Professor of Political Science at Northeastern Oklahoma State University. From 1982-84 he served with the United Nations as the Liaison Officer for the International Conference on the Question of Palestine and as Political Affairs Officer with the Division for Palestinian Rights. Copies of ***Torture and Intimidation in the West Bank*** *are available for $4.50 from the Palestine Human Rights Campaign, 220 S. State Street, One Quincy Court, Suite 1308, Chicago, IL 60604.]*

PLO-JORDAN AGREEMENT

A Palestinian-Jordanian dialogue which stumbled along for about two years culminated with the recent announcement of an agreement on a joint PLO-Jordanian political initiative. Following is the official text of the accord:

Emanating from the spirit of the Fez Summit resolutions, approved by Arab states, and from United Nations resolutions relating to the Palestine question,

In accordance with international legitimacy, and

Deriving from a common understanding on the establishment of a special relationship between the Jordanian and Palestinian peoples,

The Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Palestine Liberation Organization have agreed to move together towards the achievement of a peaceful and just settlement of the Middle East crisis and the termination of Israeli occupation of the occupied Arab territories, including Jerusalem, on the basis of the following principles:

1. Total withdrawal from the territories occupied in 1967 for comprehensive peace as established in United Nations and Security Council Resolutions.

2. Right of self-determination for the Palestinian people: Palestinians will exercise their inalienable right of self-determination when Jordanians and Palestinians will be able to do so within the context of the formation of the proposed confederated Arab states of Jordan and Palestine.

3. Resolution of the problem of Palestinian refugees in accordance with United Nations resolutions.

4. Resolution of the Palestine question in all its aspects.

5. And on this basis, peace negotiations will be conducted under the auspices of an International Conference in which the five Permanent Members of the Security Council and all the parties to the conflict will participate, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestine people, within a joint delegation.

Subsequent PLO explanations of the agreement addressed ambiguous provisions contained in it, especially those pertaining to Security Council Resolution 242 and the status of the PLO as a party in the peace process. Published accounts of the agreement left it open to conflicting interpretations of such points.

Two days after the announcement of the agreement, Farouq Qaddoumi, head of the PLO Political Department reaffirmed the PLO's commitment to the Palestinian right to statehood, the PLO's right to independent representation, and the rejection of Security Council Resolution 242, the Camp David accords, and the Reagan Plan. In an interview with Radio Monte Carlo, Mr. Qaddoumi stressed that the PLO does not agree to mandate or deputize any other party to speak on its behalf **[see box].**

The Executive Committee of the PLO, after meeting on the 17th and 18th of February, issued a similar clarification of the PLO position, and affirmed that the PLO-Jordan agreement is a nucleus for a common Arab position. It said that it approved the PLO agreement with Jordan on the basis of this understanding **[see box].** □

PLO News and Views

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE STATEMENT

The Executive Committee of the PLO affirms that the framework for joint PLO-Jordanian action is based on Palestinian legitimacy as defined by the 16th and 17th session of the Palestine National Council, Arab legitimacy as defined by the Rabat and Fez Summit Conferences, and international legitimacy as defined in U.N. resolutions.

On the basis of these positions, the PLO-Jordan agreement affirms the following principles:

1. The termination of Zionist occupation of the occupied Arab territories including Jerusalem.

2. The achievement of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people including the right to return, to self-determination and the establishment of an independent state on their national soil.

3. The rejection of separate deals and solutions which infringe on the national rights of the Palestinian people, such as the autonomy plan, the Camp David accords, the Reagan initiative and Security Council Resolution 242.

4. The rejection of sharing representation or the delegation of that right to any other party.

5. Joint PLO-Jordanian action aims to establish a nucleus of common Arab action based on full Arab solidarity.

6. The establishment of a confederation between the two states of Jordan and Palestine.

7. The convening of an international conference under U.N. auspices, with the participation of the PLO on an equal footing with all other parties to the conflict. □

QADDOUMI'S INTERVIEW

The position of the PLO is derived from the resolutions of the 16th and 17th sessions of the Palestine National Council and includes the following elements:

1. The right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, including independent statehood, without foreign intervention.

2. The right of the Palestinian refugees to return to their homeland.

3. The right of the PLO to independent and equal representation in any effort to find a just solution to the conflict. The PLO will not mandate, authorize, or deputize other parties or share representation.

4. The PLO rejects Security Council Resolution 242, which does not constitute an acceptable basis for a political settlement, and consequently rejects the Camp David accords and the Reagan Plan.

In my capacity as head of the PLO's political department, I emphasize that any formula which contradicts these principles would be unacceptable. □

Life Under Occupation

GAZA: FROM OCCUPATION TO SLAVERY

The Gaza Strip, a 99-square-mile sliver of Palestinian territory, hosts the largest concentration of Palestinian refugees relative to its size. The 26 by 3.8 mile strip of sandy beach along Palestine's southern Mediterranean coast is the home of nearly half a million Palestinians, most of whom are refugees from the war of 1948 and their descendents. Since its occupation by Israel in 1967, the Gaza Strip has been transformed into a huge labor camp in the service of Israel's economy.

During the twenty years before the Israeli occupation, the Gaza Strip witnessed an agricultural revolution, based primarily on citrus products, which along with a thriving fishing industry supported its population. Gaza became a place where the desert really bloomed. Grapevines and citrus groves increasingly covered its sandy fields until it became one of the most successful stories of agricultural development anywhere in the world. It not only fed itself, but it became an exporter of food products from the sea and the land. Gaza oranges were enjoyed in many European countries.

Then, in 1967, Gaza was occupied by Israel, and the economic pressure began. Palestinian fishermen were confined to increasingly smaller areas of the sea and were subjected to increasingly restrictive licensing requirements and to burdensome taxation. Fish processing and marketing was increasingly controlled by Israeli monopolies. Fishing declined and Gaza fishermen and their sons drifted into the Israeli labor market.

The use of water for irrigation was restricted and closely monitored. Export was controlled and permitted only to Arab countries

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ANALYSIS...LAND DAY

Palestinians throughout the world, especially in occupied Palestine, commemorate March 30 of every year as Land Day. The occasion is intended to symbolize the Palestinian people's determination to resist unrelenting Zionist usurpation of their land.

Although Zionist usurpation of Palestinian land and Palestinian resistance to it are as old as the Arab-Zionist conflict, and constitute the essence of that conflict, Land Day as an explicit occasion to symbolize that struggle originated in 1976. It was on March 30 of that year that six Palestinians from the Galilee lost their lives during a clash with Israeli forces during a demonstration against Israeli attempts to confiscate more of the lands of their villages: Sakhnin, Arrabeh, and Deir Hanna.

To appreciate the significance of this struggle for the protection of Palestinian land, three salient facts about it must be pointed out. One, that the Zionists throughout their history met with their greatest failure when they sought to acquire Palestinian land by nonviolent means. The Palestinian people, mostly a peasant society, resisted the alienation of their land, and when the state of Israel was established in 1948, Jewish-owned land in Palestine was less than 6 percent of the area of the country. The Zionists acquired land in Palestine through armed aggression rather than by other means.

Two, Zionist usurpation of Palestinian land never ceased. After it became a state in 1948, Israel continued to confiscate Arab property. It not only seized the lands of the Palestinians who became refugees, but it also confiscated most of the land which belonged to Palestinians who remained and became "Israeli-Arabs." The clash which gave birth to Land Day in 1976 resulted from efforts to confiscate Arab land in the Galilee, not in the territories occupied by Israel in 1967.

Third, Palestinian land seized or confiscated by Israel becomes available to Jews only. In that sense, Palestinian resistance to Zionist usurpation of Palestinian land is not only in defense of Palestinian rights, but it is also in defense of contemporary human values. It is a struggle against aggression and against *apartheid*. For that reason, it is a struggle which should interest not only Palestinians but all those who object to discrimination. □



Palestinian woman remembers Land Day victims.

ISRAELI NAZI LAWS

A member of the Israeli Knesset, Michael Eitan, described two pieces of legislation proposed by Meir Kahane during the current session as "Nazi laws." Eitan's statement was not rhetorical but a conclusion based on a comparison he had made between Kahane's bills and the infamous Nazi Nuremberg laws of 1935.

Eitan, in a survey he submitted to the Knesset in November 1984, identified several provisions in the Kahane bills which are similar to provisions of the Nuremberg laws and in fact appeared to have been copied from them. In his report to the Knesset, Eitan wrote: "I have reached the conclusion that we are dealing with Nazi laws. Kahane may actually have copied them in fact."

The Nazi Nuremberg laws in question are: "the law on Reich citizenship" and the "law for the defense of German blood and German honor." The corresponding Israeli proposed laws are a "law on Israeli citizenship" and a "law for the prevention of assimilation and the preservation of the sacred honor of the Jewish people."

The Israeli newspaper *Hadashot* reported on 13 November the following similarities between the proposed Israeli legislation and the Nuremberg laws, in addition to the similarity between their titles based on Eitan's analysis:

1. The Nazi law called for the withdrawal of citizenship from German Jews. Kahane's bills call for the withdrawal of citizenship from Arabs in Israel.

2. The Israeli and Nazi laws propose restrictions on where Jews can live in Germany and on where Arabs can live in Israel.

3. The two laws ban mixed marriages.

4. The two laws prohibit "interracial sexual" relations.

5. The two laws call for the segregation of school children.

6. The Nazi law called for the segregation of Jews in public bathing areas, and the Kahane bills call for separate Arab and Jewish bathing areas.

Concluding his comparison between the two sets of legislation, Eitan said that "Kahane's proposals are thus a Nazi document that has been produced in Israel."

The dangerous implications of this Israeli fascism is that it has considerable support in Israeli society which goes beyond the people who actually voted for Kahane and similar candidates and parties in the elections. A recent public opinion poll conducted by the Israeli Pori Institute on behalf of *Ha'aretz* newspaper, published on 11 December 1984, revealed that although only 3.3 percent of Israelis "support all Kahane stands for," which includes the forceful expulsion of all Arabs, 25.8 percent say that "there is something" in what Kahane is saying. Another 16.9 percent took a neutral position on Kahane's brand of Israeli fascism.

ISRAELIS RAID REFUGEE CAMP

In apparent retaliation for increased acts of resistance by Palestinians in the occupied territories, Israeli armed forces swept into the Deheisheh refugee camp on February 2, arresting 50 residents. A statement issued by the military justified the raid on the camp, located south of Bethlehem, as "a response to stone throwing and firebomb attacks on residents of the area."

The Israeli raid came at the end of an eventful week which witnessed several local attacks against Israeli military and settler presence in the territories. However, none of the attacks were attributed to Deheisheh residents. The raid was preceded by intensive agitation and lobbying by extremist Jewish settlers seeking a crackdown on Palestinian residents of the occupied territories. Spokesmen for the settlers accused the Israeli government of "growing leniency toward Palestinian extremists" and threatened to take matters into their own hands.

The Deheisheh camp has been the target of settlers agitation for several years. Rabbi Moshe Levinger, a leader of extremist settlers, has been holding a provocative vigil at the entrance of Deheisheh for almost five months. The camp has been repeatedly invaded by settlers shooting their automatic weapons and chasing Palestinian children suspected of stone throwing.

Although the Israeli government has dismissed the increased acts of Palestinian resistance throughout the occupied territories as just another "sporadic increase in West Bank violence," the phenomenom has stirred a national debate among Israelis. Some fear that deteriorating economic and political conditions have created an explosive atmosphere that could lead to general grass-roots uprising throughout the occupied territories. Observers point out that Israel's unilateral withdrawal from Lebanon has convinced many Palestinians that Israel can be forced to retreat when faced with determined guerrilla warfare. This, coupled with economic difficulties, has led to a "qualitative change in violence on the West Bank." □

GAZA

(continued from page 7)

via Jordan. Land and water resources were confiscated for the benefit of Jewish settlements, and the importation of equipment for the processing of farm products was denied. As a consequence, at least a third of Gaza's orange groves have become unprofitable to be maintained by their owners, and Gaza agriculture is on the way to ruin.

An increasing number of Gaza residents, including children, are being compelled to seek survival as wage earners in Israel. Every morning, laborers line the roads waiting to be hired. Israelis come in their pickup trucks and, in the manner of slave traders, inspect the merchandise and pile a few workers in the back of their trucks and drive off to Israeli farms and construction sites. The Gaza workers have no job security, no health insurance, no unemployment compensation, and no social security. Such blessings, in a Jewish state, are reserved for Jewish workers.

As the world ponders Israel's intention to annex the occupied territories, the people of Gaza slide from occupation to slavery. □

ISRAEL IN LEBANON: THE ELUSIVE VICTORY



"BYE... THANKS A LOT..."

ISRAEL RETREATS IN LEBANON

For the second time since it occupied the southern half of Lebanon, Israel retreats to minimize the cost of its occupation. Although the area it is vacating this time is less than 10 percent of the area it occupied (340 sq. km. out of 3,600 sq. km.), it includes the majority of the population of the south of Lebanon (about 400,000 out of a total of three-quarters of a million people).

By withdrawing from a small part of occupied Lebanon, Israel hoped to accomplish much to secure its control of the rest of the country. It would still keep most of the territory and most of the coveted water resources; and it hopes that it would diminish Lebanese resistance. Furthermore, by retreating out of Saida, Lebanon's second largest city, and a surrounding area which includes two large Palestinian refugee camps, Israel is giving itself hostages and relatively safe targets for future air raids against Lebanese and Palestinian population centers.

Furthermore, Israel hopes that the small area it is vacating would become the scene of sectarian conflict which would distract the resistance from its effective struggle against the Israeli occupation. The assassination attempt against the Sunni leader Mustafa Saad was intended to spark such a sectarian strife.

There are indications, however, that the Lebanese may still frustrate this Israeli plan. The various communities in Sidon and its region seem to be aware of the potential dangers and determined to avoid them. The majority of the people of the area, including its Christian population, have been demonstrating increasing unity against the Israeli occupiers, and have been showing readiness to allow regular Lebanese troops to enter the area to diminish the chances of communal conflict.

Once again, Israel tries a tactic it used repeatedly in Palestine: getting rid of people to keep the land. This is the principal objective of Israel's move in Lebanon. It wants to "rationalize" its occupation and to reduce its cost in order to ensure its effectiveness and continuity. The Lebanese are determined to end it, by increasing its cost. So far, the nationalist resistance in Lebanon has been achieving its objective. □

THE ORDEAL OF SOUTH LEBANON

"While Israel talks of its wish to withdraw from south Lebanon... systematic arrests continue, villages are besieged, individuals are killed or disappear, and houses are blown up." This was the conclusion of a report on the ordeal of civilians under Israeli occupation in south Lebanon, prepared by the Paris-based International Center for Information on Palestinian and Lebanese Prisoners, Deportees and Missing Persons.

The 36-page report covers the period from 4 September 1984 till the end of the year. It details more than 70 cases of "encirclement and harassment of villages" and a similar number of cases involving the shooting of civilians and the blowing up of houses. The report also charged the Israeli occupation forces of the "deliberate economic strangulation of south Lebanon." It recorded methods used to do "deliberate damage to Lebanese fishing, industry and agriculture for the benefit of the Israeli economy." These methods include the destruction of Lebanese farms, such as the uprooting of citrus trees and the burning of plantations in the Saida region and along the coastal highway.

The report confirms that although "it is not always easy to distinguish between the general repression in the region and incidents specifically affecting Palestinians," about 60 incidents occurred during the 13-month period covered in the report involving "kidnappings, murders or shooting at Palestinians in different [refugee] camps."

Quoting sources of the International Committee of the Red Cross, the report said that the Ansar detention camp (which was supposed to be closed and dismantled according to the PLO-Israel agreement on the exchange of POWs in November 1983) is again full of political prisoners. According to the ICRC, it had 982 prisoners in September, 1006 at the beginning of November and more than 1200 at the present. □

JEWISH SETTLERS
Recent Statistics

A new population study released by the West Bank Data Project in Jerusalem put the total number of Jewish settlers in the West Bank at 42,500. The study follows official Israeli practice of excluding the 140,000 Jewish settlers in a ring of Israeli settlements built on confiscated Arab land around Jerusalem. Nevertheless, this total far exceeds most previous estimates by Israeli sources which place the number of settlers at 28,000-30,000. The West Bank Data Project is an independent research group headed by former Deputy Mayor of Jerusalem, Meron Benvenisti. Other publications by the group include *The West Bank Data Project: A Survey of Israel's Policy* (Washington, DC: AEI, 1984), which details Israeli practices aimed at the permanent annexation by Israel of the occupied territory of the West Bank.

According to the *New York Times* (10 February 1985), the population study confirms that there are 9,000 Jewish families living on the Israeli-occupied West Bank as of January 1, 1985—a total of 42,500 settlers living in 114 Jewish settlements. At the end of 1982, there were 71 settlements with 20,600 Jewish settlers and 5,000 families. In 1983, the figure grew to 27,500 settlers and about 6,500 families. It is estimated that there are 900,000 Palestinians living in the occupied West Bank, including the Arab city of Jerusalem.

In his interview with Thomas L. Friedman of the *New York Times*, Dr. Benvenisti claims that, "given the present growth rates—and if nothing intervenes to stop it—by the end of the decade there will be 100,000 Jewish settlers on the West Bank." His study furthermore reveals several demographic trends among Jewish settlers. First, 52.5 percent of all Jewish settlers live in eight large settlements within commuting distance of Tel Aviv or Jerusalem. A total of 25 percent of all Jews residing in the West Bank live in one settlement or urban center, the town of Ma'ale Adumim, East of Jerusalem. The remaining 47.5 percent of Jewish settlers (20,187) are distributed among more than 100 smaller settlements, with 42 percent of these made up of 20 families or less. Only 11.5 percent of the settlements have more than 100 families.

Second, according to Benvenisti's findings, most of the recent increase in West Bank Jewish populatin has been in existing settlements and not in the building of new settlements meant as a political statement by the Israeli government. Benvenisti insists that a settlement freeze at this time is totally meaningless since most of the growth takes place in thickening existing settlements and not in the building of new ones. He concludes that "The debates about additional settlements are irrelevant and have been overtaken by events." □

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA RELEASED

According to the recently published *Statistical Abstract of Israel (1984)*, the total population in the areas controlled by the Israeli armed forces, excluding southern Lebanon, amounted to 5,410,000 at the end of 1983. Jews constituted 63.5% of the total.

The document released by the Central Bureau of Statistics puts the Israeli population at 4,150,000, of whom 3,435,000 are Jews (i.e., 83%). The rest, 715,000, are Palestinians. They include 578,000 who lived under Israeli rule since 1948; and 137,000 residents of Jerusalem, who fell under Israeli occupation in 1967. Israeli sources routinely include the population of Arab Jerusalem in their official statistics since their occupation and annexation of the city in 1967.

The Israeli document estimates the Palestinian population of the West Bank at 767,000 and that of the Gaza Strip at 494,000. Thus, the population of the occupied territories (1967) totalled 1,398,000 in 1983. This represents an annual increase of 2.7% on the West Bank and 3.5% in Gaza, compared to 1.9% for Israeli Jews.

Meanwhile, the Central Bureau figures show a decrease in the percentage of Palestinian residents of Jerusalem vis-a-vis the total population of the city. While the Arab population of Jerusalem increased from 57,500 in 1972 to 122,400 in 1983, their percentage of the city's population dropped from 36 percent to 28 percent respectively. During the same period, the Jewish population of the city grew from 100,980 to 306,000 mainly due to the addition of several Israeli settlements built on confiscated Arab land and housing over 140,000 Jewish settlers. □

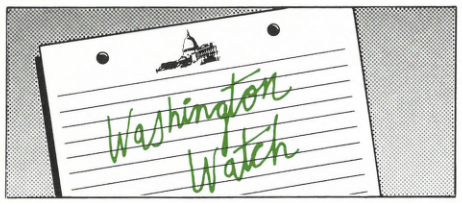
Life Under Occupation

RESISTANCE ESCALATES

The Jewish Telegraphic Agency reported from Tel Aviv that Palestinian resistance throughout the occupied territories has increased considerably in the past year reaching the level witnessed in 1980-81, prior to the Israeli invasion of Lebanon which was aimed at destroying the PLO infrastructure there and bringing "peace for the Galilee."

During the past year, according to Israeli military sources quoted by (JTA), "there was a total of 349 attacks inside Israel resulting in the deaths of five Jews and injuries to 108." The same sources complained that Palestinian fighters are making increasing use of stolen Israeli weapons obtained through the Jewish criminal underground.

Meanwhile, attacks against Israeli occupation forces continue inside Lebanon at an average of three operations a day. Israeli military sources acknowledged that between January 1, 1984, and mid-December 1984, there were 892 operations against Israeli military presence in Lebanon. Israeli casualties for the same period were 28 Israelis killed and 275 wounded. Israel has lost 621 soldiers since it invaded Lebanon in June 1982, in addition to more than 3700 Israelis injured or maimed. □



CASE AGAINST ZIONIST GROUPS DISMISSED

Court Says Israel Insensitive to U.S. Tax Laws

The United States District court for the District of Columbia dismissed a case against the Secretary of the Treasury and the Internal Revenue Service, which sought a court ruling to revoke the tax-exempt status of six Zionist organizations in the United States. The Secretary of the Treasury and the Commissioner of IRS asked the court to dismiss the case "on the ground that plaintiffs are without standing to maintain it."

The case involves the tax-exempt status given by IRS to the following Zionist organizations: The World Zionist Organization, The Jewish Agency, The United Israel Appeal, the United Jewish Appeal, The Jewish National Fund [Keren Kayemeth Leyisrael], and Americans for a Safe Israel. The plaintiffs argued that these organizations were not eligible for tax-exempt status because they are not charitable, educational, or religious groups entitled to tax exemption under the Internal Revenue Code. Furthermore, the plaintiffs charged, these organizations are only conduits for non-deductible contributions from American citizens to a foreign power, Israel, which are used to subsidize Israel's policies of national and religious discrimination and denial of fundamental human rights. The plaintiffs said they have been harmed by such policies, that some of them suffered from Israeli policy of land confiscation and arbitrary dismissal from elective public office.

The plaintiffs included 16 Israelis, Americans and Palestinians.

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COMMENTARY . . .
THE ARABS AND CARAVAN DIPLOMACY

The Reagan administration recently announced the suspension of arms sales to Middle Eastern countries. The ostensible objective is to give the U.S. government an opportunity to study and evaluate its arms sales policy in light of its interests in the region.

It is perfectly proper, of course, for the U.S. government to pursue thought-out policies whether they pertain to arms sales or anything else. The problem is that the circumstances of the U.S. decision to suspend arms sales indicate that it was in reality a cover for an arms embargo against the Arab states. Israel has already secured approval for its shopping list and has no pending applications for more weapons at the present time. The purpose, obviously, is to delay what would most likely be an unfavorable response to pending applications from several Arab states.

Several Arab heads of state are making a pilgrimage to Washington, starting with King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, whose visit took place in February. President Husni Mubarak of Egypt is coming in March, to be followed in April by Algerian President Chadli Benjedid. The U.S. does not want to discourage their illusion that something useful may come out of this "Caravan Diplomacy." It wants to wait until the Arab heads of state have come and gone, and after they emit the agreeable noises Washington wants from them, before it slaps them with the disagreeable decisions on their requests for arms and for some honest brokering of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

After that, as the Arabs had done previously and on many occasions, they will begin to wait again for something palatable to come out of Washington—after the following elections.

The United States has always been committed, and it is still committed to the proposition that the U.S. must see to it that Israel should maintain military preponderance against any combination of Arab states. It is curious that the Arab states fail to understand the implications of that policy, which obviously are:

1. That their dependence on the U.S. for defense needs is self-destructive.
2. That their dependence on the U.S. to play the role of honest broker is an illusion.

The two inevitably go together. ***American support for Israeli military preponderance is inseparable from its acceptance of Israeli hegemony in the Middle East.*** Therefore, the Arabs also need to reassess. They should do so, and then come to Washington. Only when Arab leaders come to bargain, instead of plead, will the peace process become feasible. □



Middle East International

CASE DISMISSED
(continued from page 11)

Among them were the following: John H. Davis, former Commissioner of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA); Rabbi Moshe Hirsch, a U.S. citizen living in Jerusalem; Edward Keenan, UCLA linguistics professor; Charles M. Fischbein, the former regional director of the Jewish national Fund, and Charlie Bitton, member of the Israeli Knesset. They also included several Palestinians from the occupied West Bank, including mayors who have been dismissed from office and replaced by Israeli officers, and others whose land has been confiscated for the benefit of Jewish settlers.

Lawyers for the plaintiffs, Mark Lane and Linda Huber, in a press conference in Washington, said in October 1983 that "American Jews should know that their 'charitable contributions' are used for oppression, that they have made the region bloom only with barbed wire." They revealed that through the six Zionist organizations involved in the case, about three-quarters of a billion dollars annually are sent to Israel as tax-deductible donations from U.S. citizens, and that as a consequence "the American treasury is being deprived of revenues needed for domestic programs." [See *Palestine Perspectives*, November/December 1983.]

Charles Fischbein, who resigned his position with the Jewish National Fund on 15 March 1984, accused the JNF of "legal and moral violations" in its fundraising activities on behalf of Israel. He said the JNF used tax-exempt donations collected from American Jews to subsidize "exclusionary and racist" projects in the occupied Arab territories, and that it used funds earmarked for charitable work for "purely military purposes" in Lebanon and the West Bank. In a sworn affidavit he made when he joined the plaintiffs in the case, Fischbein said that Israeli officials told him during a tour he had made of occupied southern Lebanon, that JNF bulldozers "went in front of the Israeli tanks to cut roads for the Israeli army" during its attack on Lebanon in June 1982 [see *Palestine Perspectives*, June/July 1984].

The Palestinian plaintiffs charged that the Zionist organizations were helping to finance the Israeli government's policy of confiscating their property and the property of their constituents to build Jewish settlements from which non-Jews are excluded. This act negates the charitable status of the Zionist organizations under which they claimed tax exemption under U.S. laws.

In its decision on the case, the D.C. District Court ruled that not only harm to the plaintiffs must be proven, but also that the harm would be removed by denying tax-exemption status to the Zionist organizations. Moreover, it ruled that it must be shown that it was the act of the defendants (the U.S. Treasury and IRS) which caused the harm. Although the court did find that in the cases of some of the plaintiffs injury has been inflicted, that injury—it said—cannot be attributed to U.S. tax laws and is not likely to be removed by their elimination. It is "fanciful," the court said, "to assume here that the government of Israel is so responsive to changes in U.S. tax laws that the withdrawal of benefits from U.S. contributors will work any alteration whatsoever in the character of its occupation of territory it now holds by force in the Middle East."

The court's ruling, which did not deny that the Zionist organizations were abusing U.S. tax laws by channeling tax-deductible donations from U.S. citizens to a foreign country which uses them for discriminatory and military purposes in violation of their privileges as tax-exempt organizations, seem to be a political interpretation more than a legal determination. The argument that Israel's behavior is not likely to be affected by the outcome of the case is legally irrelevant, even if it is granted. The legal question is whether or not the Secretary of the Treasury and the Commissioner of IRS are authorized by law to confer tax-exempt status on organizations which violate the legal requirement of that status. Even the court's decision did not contradict the fact that the Zionist organizations in question have done so. □

In Brief

SUCKERS IN LEBANON

An Israeli Officer with the occupation army in the south of Lebanon arranged for the soldiers in his unit to send live radio messages to their families. *The Other Israel* reported in its January 1985 issue that one soldier took advantage of the broadcast to send the following message to Ariel Sharon: "To Arik in New York. Greetings from the suckers you have sent to Lebanon."

PROFESSOR AMIT JAILED

The well-known Israeli peace activist, Professor Danny Amit of the Hebrew University, was sentenced to 14 days in prison for refusing to serve with the Israeli occupation army in Lebanon.

RETROACTIVE CENSORSHIP

Representatives of Jewish settlers in the occupied territories asked the Israeli government to review all articles published in the Arab press over the past 6 months and to try the writers of "inflammatory material." Radio Israel's domestic Hebrew service reported on 5 February that this was one of several demands the settlers prepared to submit to the Israeli prime minister.

EXPLOSIVE TOYS

Beirut Radio reported on 4 February that the Israeli occupation forces, in the process of withdrawing from the Sidon area, are leaving behind them booby-trapped toys and poisoned food.

JAILED FOR SINGING

A Palestinian university student was sentenced to 9 months in prison for singing "nationalist songs." The 22-year-old student of Najah National University in Nablus, Jihad Fahmi Salim, was also found "guilty" by the Israeli military court of writing pro-PLO slogans on walls one year ago.



FISCHBEIN: BRUTALIZATION AND RACISM IN ISRAEL

[Charles Fischbein served for 12 years as a high-level administrator in various U.S. Zionist organizations. He had been regional divisional director of the United Jewish Appeal, and until he resigned a year ago, he had served for 4 years as the Executive Director of the Jewish National Fund in the Mid-Atlantic Region.

*In March 1984, Mr. Fischbein resigned from the JNF and renounced his affiliation with the Zionist establishment. In an interview conducted by Abdulsalam Massarueh in Washington on 3 January, Mr. Fischbein revealed that, in addition to his objection to the use of charitable contributions made to Zionist groups for the support of the aggressive policies of Israel, his disillusionment with the Zionist establishment and Israel were caused by Israeli racism which victimized even his own family. The following are excerpts from the interview—**Editor]:***

Massarueh: *Mr. Fischbein, you broke away from the United Jewish Appeal, the United Jewish Fund and from the Zionist establishment. Why?*

Fischbein: It was a long progression...Over the 12 years that I have been making frequent trips to Israel, I was able to see a different aspect of Israeli society that I did not like, that was changing in a very negative, very radical way. ***I saw a brutalization of the people of Israel, I saw a tremendous racism developing within Israel.*** The catalyst, the key thing that really turned me off was a trip I made to Israel in 1980, although it took about another year or year-and-a-half to break away after that trip. It was a trip at which time I was thinking of emigrating to Israel.

My wife and I farm. We have a small farm in the Shenandoah Valley about 80 miles from here. My wife has a master's degree in animal science and we were courted by a couple of *moshavim*.

Massarueh: *Settlements?*

Fischbein: Exactly. I took a trip on my own, with my own funds, over a vacation, to go and see two of the *moshavim*. After a week at each *moshav*, spent primarily looking at the facilities, the housing, and the school, and talking to the members, getting to know the key families, I was supposed to have been voted on.

My wife in the meantime was arranging to put our farm on the market and we were all set to go. Prior to going, the Jewish Agency here wanted a family profile and I gave it to them. I have three children, my oldest boy is an adopted black Vietnamese child. They wanted photographs and I submitted them. There was no problem at all. When I got to Israel, the last night at the meeting of the regional council, the members of the *moshav* were all set to vote for me. They asked why I preferred their particular *moshav* and kiddingly I said: "because you have more Yemenite Jews there and my oldest boy, David, will get along a lot better and he'll find himself a girl to marry." They said, "What do you mean?" I said, "You know I never really brought it up and I didn't think it was an issue and I'm assuming it isn't an issue but my oldest son is a black Vietnamese—he's adopted." Their response was: "What?" "Yes," I said, "he's adopted, half-black." "Well, how black?" "What's going on? You want me to bring out a color scale?" "Is he Jewish?" "Yes he's Jewish, he was converted by a rabbi. I don't think you could be more kosher or more Jewish than that. Besides, he speaks Hebrew a hell of a lot better than I do." It went back and forth. I was told that night that they wanted to wait for the vote. The next morning I was told to get into a car and drive up to the Sokhnout (Jewish Agency) office in Beersheba and meet with the people there, who told me that after due consideration they felt that David would not be happy on the *moshav*, and that we were not going to be allowed to go to Israel to live.

I was stunned. I mean they were the ones who came to me. I had twelve years in Jewish fund raising and Jewish communal work and national reputation. I looked at them and I said: ***"You know, the United Nations resolution equating Zionism with racism was something that I always thought was absurd, but you're finding a very quick way for me to become a believer."*** They were quiet. I asked if they would reconsider, and at that point I was absolutely stunned. They said no and I cut my trip short. I returned to the United States and told my wife and family.

Eight months later I decided to go to Israel. I stayed on in Israel after a JNF fund-raising trip. I spent my own funds and I stayed on for about a week-and-a-half. This experience opened my eyes, it allowed me to take in that which I was seeing but not realizing before. I started seeing a different kind of Israel. I went down to Gaza and saw Arab day laborers being trucked into the cities. I saw the Bedouins being really exploited as day laborers at the *kibbutzim* and at the *moshavim*. ***I started feeling as though I were in South Africa instead of Israel.*** I certainly would not be a fundraiser for South Africa—it's not a country that I'm at all enamoured with. It's interesting that one of Israel's major allies is South Africa. I guess they teach each other some very interesting mutual experiences. ***But I saw that the country that I had really loved, a country that had gained promise, had turned into a racist and brutal society and it was expansionist beyond belief.*** This was even before Lebanon and the tragedy of Sabra and Shatila. I came back and, to be very blunt, I was trapped. I was making about $39,000 a year, I had just bought a new farm and thus didn't have the ability at that point to switch jobs at the salary range that I was accustomed to. So I quietly acquiesced and stayed on for a while. I thought that I would be able to deal with my own problems and conscience by seeing to it that the money that I raised would either go into social projects or agricultural projects. That was not in fact to be the case and that became the final straw that caused me to leave. □

U.S.-SOVIET MIDEAST TALKS

At the highlight of increased diplomatic activity on the Middle East, the United States and the Soviet Union held two days of secret talks in Vienna on a variety of subjects related to the Middle East. Richard W. Murphy, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs headed the U.S. delegation. The Soviets were represented by Vladimir Polyakov, head of the Near East Division of the Soviet Foreign Ministry.

Prior to the opening of the Vienna talks, U.S. officials went out of their way to emphasize that the talks should not be seen as negotiations. State Department spokesman Bernard Kalb stressed that the talks "are merely an exchange of views. They do not represent any change in the U.S. position regarding issues affecting the region." He concluded that no agreements would be concluded. Other U.S. officials said the talks are aimed at exchanging views in order "to help avoid miscalculation and to reduce the potential risk of U.S.-Soviet confrontation."

The Vienna talks were agreed to shortly after the January meeting in Geneva between Secretary of State George P. Shultz and Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko. The talks are the first attempt by Washington and Moscow to look for common ground in the Middle East since the Soviet-American communique of 1 October 1977, signed by Secretary of State Cyrus Vance and Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko. U.S. officials participating in the dialogue refused to discuss the talks other than to say they were "interesting." No joint statement was released at the conclusion of the talks. □

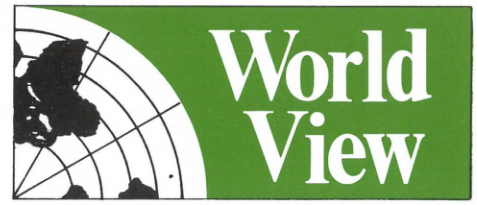
NORWEGIAN RETREAT

The Norwegian government retreated from an earlier decision to permit the PLO to open an office in Oslo. This decision makes Norway the only West European country in which the PLO has not been authorized to have an official representative.

The earlier decision, announced on Norway's television last November, indicated that the PLO office would open early in 1985. But now the Norwegian government found that such an office would create a "security problem" in the Norwegian capital.

It appears that the Norwegian government had been subjected to pressures from pro-Israeli interests, including a minor member in the governing coalition which threatened to withdraw from the cabinet if the PLO office is approved.

Most Norwegian parties found it embarrassing for Norway to renege on its earlier promise, and by the fact that Norway is the only European country to take such an anti-Palestinian position. The leader of the Norwegian Labor Party called it a "scandal" and added that "if the PLO had made this request while our party was in office we would have approved." She continued to say that no settlement of the Middle East conflict is possible without the Palestinians, and the government should have considered this fact when it made its decision. Many of the opposition parties and groups vowed to work for the reversal of this decision. □



ASSASSINATION PLOT FOILED

The British police in London uncovered a plot to assassinate Faisal Owaidah, the PLO representative in London and Jaweed Al-Ghussein, the newly elected head of the Palestine National Fund. Press reports from Tunis and London confirm that four "Syrians" were expelled from London after British police arrested them under the Prevention of Terrorism Act. The four were members of an eight-person team which arrived in London through France to carry out the assassination mission. The remaining four found refuge in the Syrian Embassy before escaping to West Germany. All eight persons were carrying Syrian diplomatic passports. The Syrian government filed a complaint with the British government over the mistreatment of "members of a Syrian commercial delegation in London." □

ABDEL MEGUID URGES U.S. INVOLVEMENT

Egyptian Foreign Minister Esmat Abdel Meguid called on the Reagan administration to play "a reactivated and vigorous role...to bring about a prompt resumption of the peace process." Addressing a group of scholars, government officials and journalists at the American Enterprise Institute, Mr. Abdel Meguid invited the United States to assume its role as a "full partner in peace," thus joining the chorus of Arab voices calling for more U.S. involvement in the search for a Middle East peace. A similar call was voiced by King Fahd of Saudi Arabia during his recent visit to Washington.

Abdel Meguid, who arrived in Washington to prepare for President Mubarak's visit to the U.S., urged the Reagan administration to begin a dialogue with the Palestine Liberation Organization. He stressed: "You don't need to recognize the PLO, you have to establish a dialogue with it." Such dialogue, according to the Egyptian diplomat "would also be an important step in building the confidence of Palestinians and encouraging moderation amongst them."

The Egyptian Foreign Minister welcomed the U.S.-Soviet exchange of views on the Middle East and criticized Israel for failing to heed Egyptian advice by adopting "confidence-building measures towards the Arab world." He welcomed Israel's unilateral decision to begin withdrawing from southern Lebanon "as long as it will be part of a complete withdrawal."

Alluding to Israel's adamant refusal to negotiate with the PLO, Abdel Meguid called on Israel "not to make it impossible for authentic representatives of the Palestinians to take part in a future round of negotiations." He emphasized that "a Palestinian delegation, hand-picked by Israel, will not be in a position to deliver." □

URI AVNERI ON ISRAEL'S ECONOMY

"The Appetite Grew with the Eating"

What's happened to Israel since 1967 is very simple and easily accessible to common sense: we have taken on missions that are beyond our powers to execute. Everyone knows from personal experience that if he tries to live like Rothschild on a postal clerk's salary he will end up either in prison or in the poorhouse.... If a country sets itself political and military goals that are far in excess of its economic capacity, it will end up in ruins. And that is precisely what is happening to the State of Israel.

Israel's national goals became more inflated with each passing year. In the process the country had some help: the international situation, the attitude of its friends and the weakness of its enemies meant that it faced no serious obstacle in pursuing its fantastic goals. Like a child who suddenly finds himself alone in a candy store, it couldn't stop itself until its insides rebelled. Fighting. Occupying. Annexing. Colonizing. Maintaining "the fourth largest armed force in the world." Forging an empire of arms industries. Launching a war in order to establish a "new order" in a neighboring country. Being a "regional power." Flying in the face of the superpowers....

The State of Israel cannot tolerate the tremendous burden of maintaining an army which is larger than that of countries ten times its size. The defense budget must be chopped: not by tens of millions, not by hundreds of millions, but by billions of dollars and more—and immediately. In other words, the IDF must be reduced to the level of a force capable of defending the country effectively against an average potential army. No less, but no more...

The appetite grew with the eating. And the eating grew with the appetite. The country went mad; nationalism and racism ran rampant—and all of it cost money, money and more money. Shimon Peres can't say it, because he's trapped in a national-unity government. Yitzhak Rabin won't say it, because no defense minister reduces the army. The economists don't say it, because they "deal only with the economy"—political matters they "leave to the political echelon." The country has a choice: economic suicide or a change in the national goals. In simplistic, but accurate terms: peace or unemployment, compromise or starvation. □

[Uri Avneri, a former member of the Israeli Knesset, is publisher and editor of the weekly Ha'olam Hazeh. *This article appeared in its November 7, 1984, issue.]*

"QUOTE UNQUOTE"

"We [Jews] take a special joy in proving how much everyone hates us...We said "no more war" and went ahead and made war. We went into Lebanon which is, after all, an Arab state. We killed and bombed, and then we have the effrontery to complain that Egypt is returning to the Arab World!"

Ezer Weizman
Israeli Minister
Yedi'ot Aharonot (interview)
2 November 1984

"Israel's Arabs find themselves living in the same aura of fear as the Jews in Czarist Russia."

The Other Israel
January 1985

"After the establishment of the national unity government, voices...were heard in our region expressing the belief that this government is different from the former ones and will be ready to give up parts of Eretz Yisrael. This, however, is an illusion...Israel will not give up any part of Eretz Yisrael in the framework of peace negotiations."

Yitzhaq Shamir
Deputy Prime Minister
Radio Israel
31 January 1985

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Address Correction Requested